



## REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

26 February 2020

---

**Report by:** GwE Managing Director & GwE Lead Director / Chair of Management Board

**Subject:** Education Improvement Grant - Review

---

### 1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To seek approval from the Joint Committee to undertake a review of the Education Improvement Grant.

### 2.0 Background

2.1 In 2015, Welsh Government decided to merge 11 existing grant-funding streams into one main grant, to be known as the Education Improvement Grant (EIG) as from 1 April 2015. The grants merged were:

- Foundation Phase
  - 14-19 Learning Pathways
  - School Effectiveness Grant (SEG)
  - Welsh in Education Grant (WEG)
  - Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant (MEAG)
  - Education of Gypsy and Traveller Children
  - Induction of Newly Qualified Teachers
  - Higher Level Teaching Assistants
  - Lead and Emerging Schools
  - Support for Reading and Numeracy Tests
  - Funding for Band 4 & 5 Schools
-

2.2 Some of the above grants were universal, whilst others were targeted at schools in particular circumstances. Some of the above grants were delegated almost entirely to schools whilst others were retained centrally by local authorities to deliver targeted services to schools or their staff.

2.3 By today, the grant structure has been amended further, in that it is now incorporated into the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG). There are clear expectations that the RCSIG supports WG's aspirations for schools and education outlined within Ambitious and Learning from our national strategy, Prosperity for All, and our plan of action for education, *Our national mission*.

### 3.0 **Funding pre-requisites (2019/20 awaiting confirmation for 2020/21)**

3.1 The following pre-requisites are in place:

- **Delegation to schools**  
For 2019-20, a minimum delegation of the total gross EIG funding (including the match-funding element) of 80% is required.
- **Local Authority Match funding for each region**  
Local authorities must match fund the EIG. The 2019-20 level is set at the match funding level to the EIG for 2017-18.
- **Administration and management costs**  
The administration and management level will be up to a maximum of 0.75% of the total gross EIG (including match funding).
- **Foundation Phase**  
The Funding must be used to support the Foundation Phase staff to learner ratios as part of the delivery of a high quality and effective Foundation Phase curriculum (including payment for supply cover for absences other than for training purposes) working towards or to achieving the Foundation Phase ratios of 1:8 for 3 to 5 year olds and 1:15 for 5 to 6 year olds. The funding must also be used to support Foundation Phase practitioners in non-maintained settings to deliver high quality education provision.
- **Welsh in Education Strategic Plans**  
The Funding must be used to support the delivery of local authority Welsh in Education Strategic Plans in working towards the aims of Cymraeg 2050.
- **School Development Plans**  
Consortia challenge advisers will provide support and challenge to schools to ensure their school development plans appropriately reflect their improvement journey and local priorities.
- **Supporting a self-improving system**  
Where appropriate, the consortia will facilitate, schools, foundation phase providers and PRUs' consideration of cluster models, and collaboration across the four consortia regions when determining the most effective use of funding to support the delivery of improved outcomes for learners.
- **Equity of approach**  
LA's & the consortium must be able to demonstrate equity of approach across the consortium and its related authorities in delegating the funding to schools.
- **Cluster working**  
Where appropriate the consortia may facilitate the consideration of cluster models for schools, foundation phase providers and PRUs when determining the most effective use of funding to support the delivery of improved outcomes for learners.

### 3.2 WG Monitoring requirements (2019/20 awaiting confirmation for 2020/21)

The following reporting mechanisms / documents are required by WG:

- a copy of your consortium business plan and completed outcomes framework.
- participation in termly review and challenge sessions and submit a short report against the outcomes framework ahead of each termly review and challenge meeting (dates to be notified) to the Project Manager, which will outline evidence of spend, value for money, and progress to date against each *Our national mission* objective;
- access to papers for discussion at your Joint Committee or Company Board and Advisory Board meetings as appropriate through your nominated Welsh Government representative, including self-evaluation reports and regular progress updates against your business plan;
- updated reports to the Delivery Board as appropriate; and such other information as reasonably needed to understand impact, value for money and progress against delivery of the Purposes of the Funding including as and when required by the Minister for Education and the Wales Audit Office.
- meet with the Welsh Government Official and such other of our representatives as from time to time reasonably required; and provide information to support those meetings as reasonably required including without limit:
  - Regular meetings between consortia Managing Directors and Welsh Government Director of Education and Deputy Directors, with frequency of meetings to be agreed;
  - Any meeting the Director of Education may require you to attend;
  - Attendance at and to support termly Review and Challenge Sessions;
  - Support opportunities for Welsh Government officers to meet with consortia operational leads;
  - Other reasonable access as required for monitoring progress against delivery of the Purposes.
- ensure that the Project Manager (or such other person as we may agree) together with any other person we may require attends all meetings with the Welsh Government Official.

### 4.0 Current situation: GwE

4.1 The EIG continues to be allocated on a historical basis, i.e. allocated against the 11 previous grants that were originally merged. In addition, the grant distribution to schools has remained as per pre 2015/16 historical basis (barring cuts etc) i.e. the delegated proportion of the EIG is distributed to LA's on a historical basis and then distributed by LA's to schools presumably on their historical basis (unless LA's have reviewed their school distribution methods since 2015/16).

4.2 The current situation poses a risk to the consortium & is identified in the risk register, i.e. use of the EIG not fully embedded into the regional approach — reduce speed & impact of the regional business plan. The need to ensure appropriate mitigation is in place is imperative to manage this risk.

4.3 The terms and conditions also state the need for equity of approach thereby reinforcing the need to move to a consistent distribution formula.

### 5.0 Considerations

5.1 The need to align the current EIG allocations with the GwE Business Plan.

5.2 Clarity on the use of the EIG at LA level

5.3 Processes to be in place to monitor the impact of EIG spend at LA level.

5.4 Processes to be in place to assess value for money at LA level.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

6.1 Recommendation 1: Delay in considering a review of EIG Foundation Phase funding (£16,734,803 delegated to schools in 2019/20) distribution until Welsh Government clarifies its position on whether the foundation phase grant will eventually transfer to settlement or not.

6.2 Recommendation 2 : Conduct a review of the EIG School Effectiveness Grant funding distribution (£5,315,978 delegated to schools in 2019/20).

6.3 Recommendation 3: Review the current use of the non-delegated elements of the EIG.

## **7.0 Financial Implications**

7.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report. Any financial implications will be identified & reported as part of the review.

## **8.0 Equalities Impact**

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

## **9.0 Personnel Implications**

9.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

## **10.0 Consultation Undertaken**

10.1 The GwE Management Board has been consulted & are supportive of the review.

---

## **OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS**

### **Monitoring Officer:**

Any comments will be presented at the meeting.

### **Statutory Finance Officer:**

The author states in paragraph 7 that there will be no additional financial implications arising from this report, hence GwE is expected to implement the review within its current budget.