



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

24 March 2020

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

Subject: Education Improvement Grant 2020/21

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Joint Committee regarding the Education Improvement Grant (EIG) 2020/21.
- 1.2 To identify additional resources required to support the implementation of the Wrexham Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP).
- 1.3 That EIG funding for schools causing concern will be not be released until their plans have been approved.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In the Joint Committee meeting held on 26 February 2020, it was resolved to defer the decisions outlined in section 1 of this report in order to have guidance from the region's Chief Executive Officers on financing additional resources for the Wrexham Post Inspection Action Plan. This guidance is summarised in section 4.1 of this report and the basis is set out in full in Appendix 1.
 - 2.2 GwE have received an indicative allocation of £27,103,164 for the Education Improvement Grant (EIG) in 2020/21. This is a cash increase of £524,893 compared to 2019/20.
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- 2.3 Welsh Government confirmed that the EIG for 2020/21 includes an increase of £2.5m (All Wales) for Foundation Phase; this calculates as approximately £560,000 for GwE.
- 2.4 The current terms and conditions (2019/20) note that Challenge Advisers provide support and challenge to schools to ensure their School development plans appropriately reflect their improvement journey and local priorities.

3.0 Considerations

- 3.1 It is proposed that the profile of expenditure for 2020/21 remains as per 2019/20.
- 3.2 There are additional resources required (from GwE) as part of the Wrexham PIAP. The estimated cost of this is approx. £303,450 and will contribute towards:
- Strategic Lead to support the Core Lead
 - Senior School Improvement Adviser for statutory category schools
 - Bespoke and enhanced core support for statutory category schools:
 - Maths x 3 days a week increasing to 5 days a week in Summer Term
 - English equivalent of 1 day a week
 - Science equivalent of 1 day a week
 - Bespoke and enhanced support for supporting schools with strategies to improve provision for:
 - Vulnerable pupils
 - More Able and Talented
 - Developing and delivering a bespoke coaching programme for senior leaders in 6 non-category schools [and potentially for identified cohort of middle leaders]
- 3.3 The Joint Committee is required to consider the source of additional resource in order to fund this additional cost.
- 3.4 The options for consideration are:
- 3.4.1 Option 1: Fully fund from the EIG via the reprioritisation of existing EIG expenditure.
- 3.4.2 Option 2: Partly fund from the EIG via the reprioritisation of existing EIG expenditure.
- 3.4.3 Option 3: Do not fund from the EIG, Wrexham to fund themselves.

The arrangements being for a maximum period of support to Wrexham of two years.

- 3.5 The need to strengthen school's use of the Education Improvement Grant has been identified as a requirement for 2020/21.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 Recommendation 1:

3.4.2 is the preferred option to fund the additional resources required for the Wrexham PIAP. The proposed mechanism for the funding is to:

Split the £300k three ways through re profiling the EIG:

- Wrexham to contribute £100k (not from the additional Foundation Phase EIG grant).
- The 5 other LAs to contribute £100 k split according to core budget % distribution.
- GwE to contribute £100k.

There will be no significant consequences of the redeployment of the 100k from within GWE resources. The GwE contribution will come from three sources:

1. Reducing support to yellow and green schools by half a day.
2. A planned reduction in the breadth of training that will be offered.
3. Reshaping our direct commissioning pot.

4.2 Recommendation 2:

That the profile of expenditure for 2020/21 remains as per 2019/20 but taking into account the decision made by the Joint Committee as per recommendation 1; with the GwE Management Board to agree on the distribution of the balance of the cash increase (once terms & conditions have been received).

4.3 Recommendation 3:

EIG funding for schools causing concern will be not be released until their plan has been approved.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 As outlined above.

6.0 Equalities Impact

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

7.0 Personnel Implications

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

8.0 Consultation Undertaken

8.1 The GwE Management Board has been consulted & have referred the matter to the Joint Committee for decision. In the Joint Committee on 26 February 2020, it was resolved to defer the decision in order to have guidance from the region's Chief Executives.

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

I note that it is the re prioritising of present funding that is under consideration rather than a request for extra funding. I also note that the recommendation specifically provides that additional Foundation Phase EIG will not be utilised for this purpose.

Statutory Finance Officer:

Generally, the Joint Committee must decide it's priorities within the financial resources available. In this instance, the Joint Committee must agree the source of resources (circa £300k from within the GwE EIG expenditure) to fund part of the Wrexham Post Inspection Action Plan.

The report offers a way forward by reprioritising £300,000 of the planned EIG expenditure, split 3 ways: £100k from Wrexham's general allocation of the grant, £100k from the 5 other LAs' allocations, and £100k from 'streamlining' by GwE. There will be no 'ideal' solution which suits all parties, but joint-working requires compromise by regional partners and I support the solution proposed.

Appendix 1

Report requested by North Wales\Chief Executive Officers on

EIG Budget Situation

This report is to help support Wrexham as an urgent one-off solution. It should not be seen as setting a precedent.

This was not and is not a call for extra funding, but about re prioritising present EIG funding to support a group of schools that are a cause of concern and are in Wrexham LA, which itself is in Estyn follow up. This extra funding would help accelerate improvements in those schools and address the Wrexham post inspection action plan (PIAP).

North Wales' LA CEOs have concluded that prioritising Education Improvement Grant funding should have been a Management Board recommendation to the Joint Committee.

Risk 1

The funding that is held by the LAs does not meet the EIG requirements as set out in Schedule 1 of the EIG conditions.

Risk 2

Education Improvement Grant 2020/21 (indicative)	Môn	Gwynedd	Conwy	Dinbych	Fflint	Wreccsam	Cyfanswm
£ Clean Delegation to Schools (cash by formula)	£2,435,409	£4,090,121	£3,507,829	£3,696,775	£5,144,607	£4,577,084	£23,451,825
% Total Clean Delegation to Schools	76.26%	73.48%	78.04%	86.95%	80.41%	80.52%	79.26%
£ Total LA Provision	£658,085	£1,265,350	£822,820	£404,742	£1,018,951	£873,236	£5,043,184
% Total LA Provision	20.61%	22.73%	18.31%	9.52%	15.93%	15.36%	17.04%
£ Total GwE	£ 100,168	£ 210,948	£ 164,385	£ 150,037	£ 234,652	£ 234,245	£ 1,094,435
% Total GwE	3.14%	3.79%	3.66%	3.53%	3.67%	4.12%	3.70%

From the table above, it is clear that only a small percentage of the Education Improvement Grant is held 'centrally' by GwE. This significantly limits the Service ability to improve schools.

Risk 3

GwE meets the need of Wrexham in full which then leaves roughly two thirds of the funding around £600k to meet the needs of the Region. The impact of this will be less support for those causing concern and for those that are already a concern which are in a statutory Estyn category.

Risk 4

GwE through discussion with Wrexham reduces its support to lessen Risk 3, but this may impact negatively on the need for accelerated improvement to Wrexham schools and delivering on the Wrexham PIAP.

Risk 5

By not supporting Wrexham in this instance we are undermining the concept of Regional Working.

Conclusion and suggested way forward

1. Split the £300k three ways through re profiling the EIG:
 - Wrexham to contribute £100k (not from the additional Foundation Phase EIG grant)
 - The 5 other LAs to contribute £100 k split according to core budget % distribution.
 - GwE to contribute £100k.

Appendix 1

SCHEDULE 1 The Purposes, Governance and Monitoring

Schedule 1a Governance and Monitoring

The Purpose of this Funding awarded to you on behalf of the Central South Wales consortium is to support the regional consortium and the related authorities within the consortium in delivering our aspirations and priorities 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*.

Our national mission sets out how the school system will move forward over the period 2017-21, securing implementation of the new curriculum with a focus on leadership, professional learning, and excellence and equity within a self-improving system. The action plan focuses on raising standards for all, reducing the attainment gap, and delivering an education system that is a source of national pride and public confidence, which are our overarching aspirations for *Our national mission*.

Regional consortia in Wales and their related local authorities have a significant role to play in improving educational outcomes for all learners in Wales and in delivering our substantial educational reform.

The Funding Letter issued to Consortia Managing Directors, Local Authority Lead Directors of Education and Banker Authority Section 151 Officers on 22 February 2019 is formalised within two formal grant awards to regional consortia, the Pupil Development Grant and this Award of Funding.

The Funding Letter outlines our overarching national priorities for 2019-20 and how these should be delivered in the context of *Our national mission*. The Funding must support delivery against our national priorities for education, at the centre of which is a transformational curriculum and a focus on four key enabling objectives which your action will support:

- Developing a high quality education profession;

- Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards;
- Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being; and
- Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system.

The outcomes will be supported by a range of measures and key performance indicators, as outlined in the Application.

The Funding will be organised around the following pre-requisites and requirements:

Policy requirements and expectations

These are set out in schedule one and in your Annex B of the funding letter. We will continue to discuss and review the expectations for each policy area through our joint regular meetings and we will review this on a regular cycle thereafter on a mutually agreed reporting format with frequency of the cycle to be agreed.

Sustainability and citizen-focused

Initiatives supported by the grant must be sustainable, learner focused, and in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

National Model for Regional Working

The expectations set out in the National Model for Regional Working guidance remain the same and should continue to be followed. The national model governance structures will also be used to monitor progress, including wherever appropriate to evidence the Funding requirements.

Joint consortia working

In line with the expectations set out in the National Model for Regional Working the consortia will work with other regional consortia across Wales to maximise opportunities for sharing good practice and learning across all *Our national mission* objectives, and especially those newer in development, such as wellbeing.

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 the Funding to support the delivery of improved outcomes for learners.

Equity of approach

You and 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.

Challenge Advisers and School Development Plans

Challenge advisers will provide support and challenge to schools to ensure their school development plans appropriately reflect their improvement journey and local priorities.

Monitoring and reporting

The monitoring requirements are set out in Section 10, explaining how we will evaluate the progress, impact and additionality of the Funding in delivering *Our national mission* against the measures in the Application.

Profile of expenditure

The Funding letter confirms how we have determined your regional allocation. In accepting this award of Funding you agree to allocate funds in line with our allocation within an acceptable tolerance which will be agreed with us.

You will submit to the Welsh Government Director of Education in writing any requests for virement of money between budget lines and *Our national mission* objectives identified within the Funding Letter.

All variances will be reflected in your financial report updates. Payments, however, will be made in accordance with Schedule 3.

Value for Money and additionality

You and the consortium will be expected to evidence the additionality of the Funding, value for money and its impact.

This applies to the total Funding offered within this Award. In addition, evidence of the additionality and impact specifically of the elements of support provided under the Raising School Standards manifesto and Programme for Government commitment within this Award will be expected.

Maximising funding to schools

In planning activity and setting the Application and profile of expenditure evidence of a clear and demonstrable commitment to passporting the majority of funding to schools is required. Assurances of this as part of the Application and quarterly updates will need to be provided to the Welsh Government For the EIG element a minimum 80% delegation must be maintained.

Minimising administration and management costs

The grant arrangements support efforts to reduce the administration costs of managing the Funding. You will demonstrate and evidence a commitment to maintaining a low level of spend in managing and administering the Funding.

The Funding may be used to support the management and administrative costs of delivering the Pupil Development Grant.

Specific conditions of Funding for the period relating to the element which supports the Education Improvement Grant for Schools

EIG - Local Authority Match funding for the consortium

Local Authorities provide match funding to the Education Improvement Grant for Schools element of the Funding. The 2019-20 level is set at the match funding level to the Education Improvement Grant for Schools for 2017-18.

Appendix 2



Draft Minutes
GwE Management Board meeting 14-02-2020



Date: 14.02.2020

Venue: Bryn Eirias, Bae Colwyn

Present: Ian Roberts, Wrexham (IR) (Chair); Karen Evans, Denbighshire (KE); Garem Jackson, Gwynedd (GJ); Claire Homard, Flintshire (CH); Rhys Howard Hughes, (RHH) Anglesey; Arwyn Thomas, GwE (AT); Alwyn Jones, GwE (AJ); Bethan Eleri Roberts, GwE (BER); Susan Owen Jones GwE (SOJ);

David Jones and Debbie Teesdale, Finance Officers, Conwy (for item 4 only) Anwen Gwilym, GwE (AG) (Minutes)

Agenda Item	Notes	Action(s) agreed	By whom / When
4. EIG	<p>IR welcomed David Jones and Debbie Teesdale from Conwy to the meeting.</p> <p>Following the agreement of the Management Board to undertake a review of the EIG, the paper circulated with the agenda had been prepared. AT gave a summary of the paper, giving specific reference to the considerations and recommendations in sections 4 & 5 respectively. It was confirmed that the paper had been discussed & agreed at the Regional Education Finance Meeting earlier in the week.</p>		

Appendix 3



GWE JOINT COMMITTEE DECISION NOTICE

Date of meeting:

26 February 2020

SUBJECT

Item 9 :EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT GRANT 2020-2021

DECISION

It was resolved to defer the decision in order to have guidance from the region's Chief Executives on financing additional resources for the Wrexham Post Inspection Action Plan and an urgent meeting will take place to determine this matter.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

GwE will receive an indicative allocation of £27,103,164 for the Education Improvement Grant in 2020/21, this follows confirmation from the Welsh Government that there is an increase for Foundation Phase. The Welsh Government is expected to announce its final budget on 25 February.

It was added that the current terms and conditions note that Challenge Advisers offer support and a challenge to schools to ensure that school development plans are a proper reflection of their journey towards improvement and local priorities.

Additional resources are required as part of the Wrexham Post Inspection Action Plan and the Joint Committee was requested to consider additional resource sources to fund this additional cost.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND ANY RELEVANT DISPENSATIONS APPROVED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

No declarations of personal interest or relevant dispensations were received.

ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION

The Statutory Officers were consulted to seek their views, which have been included in the report.

