



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

22 SEPTEMBER 2016

Report by: GwE Lead Director / Chair of the Management Board

Subject: Regional Networks

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To update members on discussions at Management Board regarding the role of the Regional Networks.

2.0 Background

2.1 Following the publication of the National Model for Regional Working by Welsh Government (February 2014) a business case detailing the additional elements that are included in the National Model that GwE's core staffing does not currently undertake was presented and agreed by the Joint Committee (15 July 2015).

These elements included:

- a) Governor Advice and Support
- b) Foundation Phase
- c) 14 – 19 Learning Pathways Offer
- d) Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Welsh in Education Grant
- e) Regional co-ordination of ICT Strategy
- f) Specialist HR Support

2.2 It was agreed that the Local Authorities remain responsible for the planning & delivery of these elements, with the existing Regional Networks continuing to work collaboratively in leading on a regional basis.

2.3 £463,004 (11.3% of the GwE Core Budget of £4.097m) is retained by Local Authorities to deliver elements a), e) and f) above via the Regional Networks.

The remaining elements b), c), and d) above together with a variety of other school improvement functions are funded through the non-delegated element of the Education Improvement Grant, a total of £3.953m.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 The Management Board had identified the need for clarity regarding the strategic role of the regional networks and their accountability to the Joint Committee prior to the Estyn inspection. Estyn recognised that these issues had been identified prior to their visit, however recommendation 5 within their report focused specifically on this, i.e. Clarify the strategic role of the regional networks and their accountability to the Joint Committee.

3.2 The Management Board held a workshop to discuss the role of the networks on the 15th of July 2016. The role of the networks was discussed along with options with regard to the most efficient & effective model to progress & deliver against the regional business plan.

3.3 Further discussion will take place at the next Management Board meeting to develop an action plan in order to agree & implement the new regional network structure.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to:

4.1.1 Note the content of the report

4.1.2 Agree that the Management Board progress as described in 3.3.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no new financial implications arising from this report.

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 Network Workshop was attended by all members of the GwE Management Board.

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

In moving forward to develop an action plan, there should be appropriate legal input in relation to establishing the accountability process to the Joint Committee. No further observations in relation to propriety.

Statutory Finance Officer:

No observations in relation to financial propriety.