

Complete Agenda



Tuag at Ragoriaeth
Towards Excellence



Meeting

GWE JOINT COMMITTEE

Date and Time

1.30 pm, WEDNESDAY, 27TH JANUARY, 2016

Location

GwE Offices, Bryn Eirias, Abergele Road, Colwyn Bay, LL29 8BF

**** Please note venue ****

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(DISTRIBUTED 21/1/16)

GWE JOINT COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

Voting Members

Councillors

Councillor Kenneth P. Hughes	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Councillor Gareth Thomas	Gwynedd Council
Councillor Wyn Ellis Jones	Conwy County Borough Council
Councillor Eryl Williams	Denbighshire County Council
Councillor Chris Bithell	Flintshire County Council
Councillor Michael Williams	Wrexham County Borough Council

Co-opted Non-voting Members

Rita Price	Wrexham Diocese
Diane Chisholm	Primary Schools Representative
Eithne Hughes	Secondary Schools Representative
Jonathan Morgan	Special Schools Representative
Alison Fisher	Governor Representative

Non-voting Officers

Delyth Molyneux	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Arwyn Thomas	Gwynedd Council
Richard E. Owen	Conwy County Borough Council
Karen Evans	Denbighshire County Council
Ian Budd	Flintshire County Council
John Davies	Wrexham County Borough Council

Officers in Attendance

Iwan G. Evans	Host Authority
Dafydd L. Edwards	Host Authority
Geraint Rees	Welsh Government
Huw Foster Evans	GwE Managing Director
Susan Owen Jones	GwE Business & Finance Manager
Mohammed Mehmet	Denbighshire County Council

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 1 - 4

(copy enclosed)

5. CLUSTER STANDARDISATION AND MODERATION IN KS2 AND 3 5 - 8

(copy enclosed)

6. INVESTIGATING THE PROCEDURES FOR TARGET SETTING, PROGRESS TRACKING & INTERVENTION 9 - 18

(copy enclosed)

7. KEY STAGE 4 LEVEL 2+ PROGRESS TOWARDS 2016 TARGETS 19 - 26

(copy enclosed)

8. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

(oral report)

9. THE WELSH-MEDIUM AND CAPACITY-BUILDING NETWORK 27 - 33

(copy enclosed)

10. REGIONAL BUSINESS PLAN 2015-18: MONITORING REPORT 34 - 41

(copy enclosed)

11. ESTYN REGIONAL CONSORTIUM INSPECTION ARRANGEMENTS (APRIL 2016) 42 - 44

(copy enclosed)

GwE JOINT COMMITTEE 12.11.15

Present: Councillor Eryl Williams (Chair)
Councillor Michael Williams (Vice-chair)

Councillors: Chris Bithell, Kenneth P. Hughes, Wyn Ellis Jones and Gareth Thomas

Co-opted Members with no vote: Diane Chisholm (Primary schools representative), Annwen Morgan (Secondary schools representative) and Jonathan Morgan (Special schools representative).

Officers with no vote: Ian Budd (Lead Director – Chair of Management Board (Flintshire County Council)), John Davies (Wrexham County Borough Council), Karen Evans (Denbighshire County Council), Delyth Molyneux (Isle of Anglesey Council) and Arwyn Thomas (Cyngor Gwynedd).

Also present: Huw Foster Evans (GwE Managing Director), Susan Owen Jones (GwE Business and Finance Manager), Alwyn Jones (GwE Assistant Director (Standards)), Geraint Rees and Claire Rundle (Welsh Government representatives), Iwan Evans (Host Authority Legal Services Manager - Cyngor Gwynedd) and Bethan Adams (Host Authority Members Support Officer - Cyngor Gwynedd).

Apologies: Dafydd Edwards (Host Authority Head of Finance – Cyngor Gwynedd), Alison Fisher (Governors' representative), Rhys Howard Hughes (GwE Assistant Director (Support and Brokerage)) and R. Ellis Owen (Conwy County Borough Council)

1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declaration of personal interest was received by any of the Members present.

2. MINUTES

The Chair signed minutes of this meeting held on 23 September 2015 as a true record.

3. GwE ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15

The GwE Managing Director presented GwE's annual report, which discussed in detail the progress achieved against the priority outcomes of 2014-15.

A Member voiced his concern in relation to the outcomes of 2014-15, drawing particular attention to the results in KS4.

Ian Budd (Lead Director – Chair of Management Board (Flintshire Council)) noted that the situation had been analysed in detail and that a further report would be presented to the Management Board in a meeting in January.

The GwE Managing Director noted that teacher assessment arrangements had been reinforced by means of a national verification process in order to reflect the true achievement of pupils.

RESOLVED to accept and note the content of the report.

4. REPORT ON PUPIL OUTCOMES 2015

The GwE Managing Director presented a report which summarized the situation in terms of indicators of pupil outcomes in 2015. He guided the Members through the report by key stage.

During the ensuing discussion, the following main points were highlighted:

- Target results differed in individual authorities. In response, the GwE Managing Director noted that it was an issue that affected the whole of Wales. He noted that there were pending plans to improve consistency across local authorities and that individual schools would be challenged on their targets on pupil levels;
- No target should be set for a pupil if it is not attainable;
- KS2 outcomes had improved in Gwynedd and Angelsey, and that collaboration should be encouraged to disseminate good practice;
- There was a decline in pupil results when comparing KS3 teacher assessments with the true results in KS4. In response, the GwE Managing Director noted that procedures were in place to assist teachers to generate meaningful assessments;
- The process of moderation of teacher assessments and visiting individual schools made a difference, but questioned the capacity to look at each school and each subject individually. In response, the GwE Managing Director noted that visits to schools would be held to measure improvements against targets implemented within resources. He added that they would maybe look to vary the use of grants such as the Education Improvement Grant to this purpose;
- The need to ensure that competent teachers teach mathematics and the need to consider the lack of mathematicians. In response, John Davies (Wrexham County Borough Council) noted that GwE is advertising for individuals who specialize in mathematics and English to respond to the demand;
- It would be interesting to look at the new GCSE results in mathematics and English. The need to re-train teachers and to attract individuals who were specialists in their subjects was noted. In response, Geraint Rees (Welsh Government) noted that Professor John Furlong was looking at a teacher training programme on behalf of Welsh Government. He added that there was a real national concern about keeping individuals in the teaching profession;
- It would be useful to come to a judgement on KS5 results. In response, GwE's Assistant Director (Standards) noted that it was difficult to compare results since a low number of pupils took the subjects of this Key Stage in Sixth Form, but that schools were visited when there was a problem with a particular subject;
- It was questioned whether it would be possible to establish the outcomes of FSM pupils in order to benchmark how they compare with pupils across Wales.
- It would be interesting to see the profile of KS4 in the results of Estyn inspections. GwE's Assistant Director (Standards) noted that when the inspection results were received, proposals for individual schools across the Region would be considered.

RESOLVED to accept and note the content of the report.

5. 2015 ESTYN RECOMMENDATIONS – UPDATE ON PROGRESS REPORT (JUNE – OCTOBER 2015)

The GwE Managing Director presented a report which gave an updated analysis of the progress in relation to Estyn's recommendations (June 2015). He noted that useful comments were put forth by Arwyn Thomas (Gwynedd Council) regarding the content of the report since its publication. He added that the Joint Committee would receive regular updates on the progress.

RESOLVED to accept and note the content of the report.

6. 2015-18 BUSINESS PLAN

The GwE Managing Director presented the Business Plan, which notes GwE's vision, aims and priorities for action for the next three years. Attention was drawn to detailed work streams that are in place for each priority in 2015/16 and that the details are attached to the Business Plan.

In response to a comment about inconsistency with regard to Challenge Advisers, the GwE Assistant Director (Standards) noted that systems are being strengthened so as to ensure that Challenge Advisers have the appropriate skills.

In response to a comment about recruiting Headteachers to Challenge Adviser posts, the GwE Assistant Director (Standards) noted that some of them were newly retired Headteachers, whilst others were Headteachers in schools who were supporting another school.

Many comments were made about the lack of Headteachers and the need to develop the leaders of the future. In response, the GwE Managing Director noted that the development programmes mainly target middle leaders and Headteachers and it is hoped that a national pack will be available.

Geraint Rees (Welsh Government) noted that the 4 consortia are looking at each other's work and it is hoped that development plans will be in place by the summer on all levels, from teachers to Headteachers. He added that the response of Headteachers in the region to the development plans is positive.

RESOLVED to approve the 2015-18 Business Plan.

7. SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

Ian Budd (Lead Director – Chair of Management Board (Flintshire council)) presented a report discussing in detail the proposed scrutiny arrangements so as to respond to the Wales Audit Office recommendation. It was noted there is collaboration with the relevant local authority scrutiny committees to set up a co-ordinated programme with the intention for each local authority to look at one element of the corporate programme and the business plan and share learning across each authority.

RESOLVED that the GwE Management Board and the GwE Senior Leadership Team work with the relevant local authority scrutiny committees to implement a co-ordinated work programme in relation to school improvement.

8. REGIONAL NETWORKS

Ian Budd (Lead Director – Chair of Management Board (Flintshire council)) presented a report on the Regional Networks and discussed in detail the proposed reporting process, namely that:

- every network reports back to the GwE Management Board;
- minutes of meetings are shared with the GwE Management Board;
- Joint Committee is to receive a progress report from one of the networks in the termly meeting

A member noted there is good collaboration between the local authorities with regard to sponsors.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to accept and note the report;**

(ii) to approve the proposed reporting process.

9. GwE STAFFING STRUCTURE – DECISION MAKING

The GwE Managing Director presented a report on changing the procedure for approving changes to the staffing structure. It was noted that at present any new posts must be presented to the Joint Committee for approval in line with Schedule 2 of the current Inter-Authority Agreement (18/02/13). As Joint Committee meetings are only held once every term, it was noted that the procedure could cause a delay in the appointments process.

A recommendation that the Joint Committee delegates the responsibility of making changes to the GwE structure to the GwE Managing Director (in line with Host Authority processes) was reported. It was noted that the structure will be reported on in the Business Plan and in the GwE Annual Report.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to accept and note the report;**
- (ii) delegate the responsibility of making changes to the GwE structure to the GwE Managing Director (in line with Host Authority processes, included as appendix 1).**

The meeting commenced at 9.40 a.m. and concluded at 11.10 a.m.

CHAIRMAN



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

Wednesday 27 January 2016

Report by: Dafydd Rhys

Subject: Cluster Standardisation and Moderation in KS2 and 3

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform the Joint Committee of the regional and national standardisation and moderation arrangements to verify teacher assessment at the end of key stage 2 and 3.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Following a recommendation by Estyn in its annual report to Welsh Government, a consultation was undertaken between December 2014 and March 2015 on the standardisation and moderation of end of key stage 2 and 3 assessments. Amongst the recommendations was to develop the role of the consortia to oversee the process from 2015-16 onwards, ensuring reliability and improving confidence in teacher assessment, and national external verification of the process from 2014-15 onwards.

3.0 Considerations

- 3.1 In addition to responsibility for the process on a regional level, GwE and the other consortia are responsible for the national external verification programme.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the content of the report

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 No financial implications arise from this report

6.0 Equalities impact

6.1 No new equalities impact arise from this report

7.0 Personnel Implications

7.1 No new personnel implications arise from this report

8.0 Consultation undertaken

8.1 Consultation undertaken with GwE Management Board during development of the document

9.0 Appendices

Update on Standardisation and Moderation - end of KS2/3
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2015/1309/article/1/made>

VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer: No observations in relation to propriety

Statutory Finance Officer: Observations will be made, if appropriate, in the meeting

Update on Standardisation and Moderation - end of KS2/3

Following a recommendation by Estyn in its annual report to Welsh Government, a consultation was undertaken between December 2014 and March 2015 on the standardisation and moderation of end of key stage 2 and 3 assessments. Amongst the recommendations was to develop a procedure to ensure consistency between clusters across the region and a role for the consortia to oversee the process from 2015-16 onwards, ensuring reliability and improving confidence in teacher assessment.

During the spring term 2015, GwE Challenge Advisers, Associate Partners and primary and secondary school practitioners collaborated to produce exemplary profiles for Welsh first language, English, mathematics and science. These were distributed to all clusters across the region.

One member from secondary core subject departments and one representative from the primary cluster were invited to attend regional training sessions in March. 98% of clusters were represented in each session. A representative from 57% of the region's secondary schools attended each training session with 98% of secondary schools represented in at least one session. A representation from 24% of the clusters lead on some sessions as part of the training.

In response to Welsh Government consultation, an External Verification Programme was set up to Secure 2014-15 Teacher Assessments. This is a three-year programme initially and all four consortia have responsibility for it. End of KS2/3 teacher assessments in mathematics and science were verified in a 10% sample of schools in Wales. This means that 9 secondary school assessments and 44 primary school assessments have been verified within the GwE region. In addition, GwE Challenge Advisers attended 30 cluster moderation meetings across the region in order to identify good practice, offer support and give feedback on this year's process.

A Statutory Order came into force in Wales on 1 September 2015 – 'Moderation of Assessment Arrangements for the Second and Third Key Stages'. It is now statutory for all Headteachers to ensure school representation in at least one cluster moderation meeting during the spring or summer term.

In September 2015, a report to Welsh Government on findings of external verification was agreed upon by representatives from the 4 consortia. In GwE, the main findings were there was agreement with most level 4 awards and many of the level 5 awards in mathematics and science in the primary sector. In secondary schools, there was agreement with each level 5 award and most of the level 6 awards in science. In mathematics, there was agreement with the majority of level 5 awards and many of the level 6 awards.

At the end of September, representatives from the 4 consortia (Challenge Advisers and members of local authority Welsh advisory groups) produced level 4, 5 and 6 national standardised portfolios and profiles in the four core subjects. It is hoped that this documentation will be available by the end of January. In addition, the four consortia agreed on general national guidelines on the moderation process along with specific subject guidelines, which have already been shared with clusters within GwE. One important amendment is a focus on a complete representation of pupils' work i.e. his/her workbook, rather than a sample of work.

In November, sessions to share information were held across the region for KS2 and KS3 assessment leaders from each cluster. There was representation from 94% of clusters. By requesting the attendance this year of one 'assessment leader' rather than subject representatives, more representation from primary senior management teams was secured and, more significantly, from the secondary sector also.

This year, all clusters will be expected to present the dates of their cluster moderation meetings to GwE and the Verification Programme by 29 January 2016. A Challenge Adviser will attend one moderation meeting in each cluster and report back to the cluster, GwE and the Local Authorities. As part of the external verification programme, a 20% sample of cluster moderation meetings will be verified and a report produced focusing on the process, school participation, attendance of senior management team members and quality of the meeting.

In June 2015, an external verifier will visit a 10% sample of schools with a focus on Welsh first/second language or English this year. The findings of these visits, along with observations from the cluster meetings, will form a national report for Welsh Government.

Impact to date:

Although it is early days, it is fair to say that clusters' and schools' awareness of the need for effective moderation has increased. Following producing exemplary profiles, arranging training sessions and the external verification process, many clusters invested a lot of time in the process in 2014/15, developing comprehensive profiles in all four core subjects. GwE Challenge Advisers were witness to detailed discussions and feedback to many schools on the quality of the work seen in profiles

This year, many clusters have strengthened their procedures and developed their practice since last year, securing an improved role for senior management team members and more time for the process. Some have asked for specific meetings with GwE Challenge Advisers so as to develop and strengthen their processes. Overall, GwE training has focused on practical guidelines for cluster 'assessment leaders' on the content of the 'profiles', effective cluster moderation meetings and keeping brief and purposeful minutes.

There is no doubt that the capacity to develop this process has increased as a result of publication of the exemplary profiles and training sessions in March and November. Using individuals from our schools as external verifiers has reinforced the expertise in some of the clusters. We know of external verifiers who have shared good practice from other regions, arranging sessions back in their clusters on level 5 requirements and effective recording methods.

The national guidelines produced in collaboration by the four regions reinforce the good work that has already taken place. Schools and clusters are looking forward to see the national profiles and portfolios, which will give schools clear guidelines on what is expected on levels 4, 5 and 6. By the end of 2015/16, the attendance of a Challenge Adviser or an external verifier in one moderation meeting in each cluster will strengthen the monitoring process and accountability within the region.

By the end of this year, we believe that participation and the quality of cluster moderation meetings will have increased significantly and that the professional dialogue will lead to more understanding and consistency in expectations with regard to pupils' attainment levels.



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

27 JANUARY 2016

Report by: GwE Managing Director / Assistant Director

Subject: Investigating the procedures for target setting, progress tracking & intervention

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To inform Joint Committee members of the developments in the processes for target setting, progress tracking & intervention.

2.0 Background

2.1 There was significant difference between KS4 targets /final projections and actual results in 2015 in a number of schools across the region

3.0 Considerations

3.1 The report provides detail on the findings of the research & includes recommendations for GwE/LAs & Schools.

3.2 The recommendations for GwE/LA's can be summarised as follows:

- Ensure that all of the region's schools are clear about the purpose of targets and projections and that there is consistency in the way they are set.
 - Ensure that those schools with less developed procedures receive support and guidance.
 - Establish a working group of school leaders and technical experts in order to set up a generic system to track the new indicators, which can be adapted to the needs of individual schools.
 - Acknowledge that some cohorts will not perform as well as previous cohorts due to the nature and innate ability of the pupils, and that this should not necessarily be considered a weakness or a step backwards. This is especially true of smaller schools.
 - Convey to Welsh Government officials that recruitment problems in key subjects (especially so in the short/medium term) have a direct impact on standards in schools.
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4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no 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 GwE Management Board & Advisory Board have been consulted during the development of the document.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Investigating the procedures for target setting, progress tracking & intervention

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer: No observations in relation to propriety

Statutory Finance Officer: Observations will be made, if appropriate, in the meeting

Investigating the procedures for target setting, progress tracking and intervention

Research to find patterns in how a representation of North Wales schools:

- ❖ **Set whole school / subject / individual pupil targets**
- ❖ **Ensure accuracy and consistency of interim assessments**
- ❖ **Track and Monitor pupils' progress**
- ❖ **Arrange successful interventions**
- ❖ **Ensure support and encouragements for FSM pupils**

How do schools set individual pupil targets?

It is the Headteacher or members of the SMT who set individual pupil targets in just under half of the schools visited. Most Headteachers defined the targets as challenging but attainable, with exceptions stating that the targets should be ambitious but not necessarily attainable. In the majority of these cases, some negotiation is allowed for on the basis of staff knowledge and the circumstances of specific pupils. In the majority of schools, previous performance and FFT are taken into account as a basis for target setting, with a minority of schools seeing value in the CATS test as an additional tool to identify factors that can have an impact on progress. Some schools consider FFT D individual targets to be too challenging, but the majority use FFT D as a baseline. Some schools noted there is flexibility to revise the targets as circumstances change as the year wears on. There are very few schools that do not challenge teachers on pupils' individual targets, and those that do not intend to do so in the future. A few schools noted that targets are discussed with pupils and that there is agreement with the pupil on the level of challenge. These schools are high performing schools.

Subject targets

A minority of schools use the total of the individual targets as a subject target. Taking into account that the majority of schools use FFT targets for individual pupils, departmental targets will therefore be extremely challenging and ambitious. This is especially true in cases where a school is reluctant to give a grade D target for fear of discouraging a pupil and so give a grade C target, even though it is highly unlikely that the pupil will achieve the grade. The majority of schools set targets for departments by using the FFT cohort for core subjects and adapting this, bearing in mind the current FSM group benchmarks. In instances where departments are given freedom to generate their targets, the SMT challenges the HoD on this percentage. Only one school allowed the department to determine a target and the department wasn't challenged on this. Many schools noted that the read across element when comparing a target across the range of subjects is an important part of the discussion, and barely any schools noted there was agreement with the department on a departmental target. These schools are also high performing schools.

Whole school targets

How schools determine whole school targets differed greatly. Some schools calculate targets in the main indicators using departmental target totals, which, in turn, arise from individual pupils' targets. This will of course give rise to very high targets. Some Headteachers noted that the targets are for the pupils and should not therefore be attainable. Several schools in the sample use a range of evidence, including the total of individual targets, departmental targets, FFT cohort targets, current FSM group benchmarks and then come to a professional judgement. A few also go a step further in that consideration also given to the likelihood of borderline pupils not

achieving their targets, and then consider carefully the impact of this on the whole school target. Then, there are less scientific methods, such as setting a target that would make the bottom of quartile 1 in the current FSM benchmarks, and others adopt FFT or FFT+ projections as their whole school targets.

Historically, the expectations of the different LAs within the GwE region have varied greatly. A minority of the region's schools were given a target from the LA; this caused frustration in those schools. Also, in most schools visited, Headteachers noted uncertainty regarding what is expected from GwE, and it was asked whether GwE actually requires targets or projections. It is felt there is criticism from GwE of those schools that do not meet their targets; but, again, if schools are to set challenging and ambitious targets it is unlikely that they will regularly meet their targets. Similarly, questions arise about the level of challenge provided in the few schools that exceed targets over a rolling period. Some Headteachers felt that schools are under pressure to set high targets e.g. to be in Quartile 1 and 2, although schools know through their tracking systems that this will not be attainable. Concern was expressed about GwE's expectation that targets should be above the median in the indicators without due consideration given to the nature of the cohort from one year to the next. This, naturally, is more of an issue in schools with small cohorts.

It is clear therefore there are significant differences in the way schools across the region set targets.

Factors to account for a difference between final projections and final results:

Mathematics was the most common reason, and specifically those schools that depended on the Y11 summer results. Some schools emphasised the impact of the results of a small group of borderline C/D pupils' in linear Mathematics on the Mathematics results profile, the TL2 and the CSI (especially with a small cohort). Other schools registered pupils in the summer of Year 10 and November of Year 11, with clear advantages. Most of those schools re-organised sets following the results, ensuring thorough intervention for borderline pupils who failed to achieve in the previous series. All schools noted intent to register current Year 11 pupils to sit Mathematics GCSE in November 2015.

The majority of schools state they have not been proactive enough in reducing the number of pupils who pass TL2+ in Language but not in Mathematics, and vice versa. Some schools have been proactive and reduced the number by means of thorough tracking and encouraging Language and Mathematics departments to discuss individual circumstances. In those schools where there is provision for Welsh First Language, more emphasis is given on passing in the strongest language.

In many schools where there is no provision for Welsh First Language, there is uncertainty with regard to tracking English and there is reference to the national uncertainty with regard to expectations and grade boundaries.

Some schools admitted that their tracking systems had not been incisive enough and, as a result, the appropriate pupils had not received intervention. There are other schools that have targeted too many pupils without the capacity to ensure that the intervention is effective with so many pupils.

It was surprising how many examples of staffing problems were noted, with many schools having to revamp due to staff absences so as to ensure appropriate staff for the more key sets and safeguard the school's percentages in the main indicators. Lack of availability of supply staff in Mathematics and English was noted to be very problematic, which has a direct impact on performance in some schools.

In schools where there was no significant gap, the following features were prominent:

- ❖ Effective tracking and monitoring of pupils on a regular basis throughout KS4

It is clear overall that the baseline has risen with regard to the types of tracking systems that are operational in schools. Even in those schools that have not been able to track thoroughly enough in recent years, there are either plans in place or about to start in order to ensure this. Use of data is also a strength in schools where there is no significant gap. Many schools invested in regular meetings between key staff and the school's focus, including the SMT, was on individual pupils rather than on percentages. Many of the other schools noted intent to do this during this academic year. The focus of most schools intensified as the cohort progressed to Year 11. The best examples of using data were in those schools where all staff were included, with the contribution of individual staff to the bigger picture evident. SMT members' thorough knowledge and understanding of the individual circumstances of key individuals in Year 11 was a common feature in schools performing close to their final projection. This knowledge and understanding was very impressive in schools with a big cohort of pupils. The majority of schools placed more emphasis on borderline C/D and A*/A, with a few schools placing a lot of emphasis on meeting targets whatever the grades. Many schools had plans to move more towards this direction in order to respond to the new indicators in 2018.

- ❖ Registering Maths and Language before the summer of Year 11

For obvious reasons, in those schools that registered Mathematics in the summer of Year 10 and November of Year 11, less of a gap between the result and final projection was an emerging pattern. But this was not always the case, as a few schools had not been proactive to seek to close the gap between the number of pupils who achieved C+ in Language but not in Mathematics, and vice versa. Overall, those schools with a high percentage of pupils sitting the Welsh First Language examination were more confident when predicting the final percentages, whilst some schools experienced difficulties due to the national uncertainty about the English GCSE expectations.

- ❖ Investing early so as to reap the benefits later

A few schools were of the opinion that pupils who had followed a curriculum based on skills development were better equipped to adjust and respond in an examination situation. A minority of schools noted a huge emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning, as the biggest difference can be made in the classroom, rather than being too dependent on additional sessions and various additions. Many of these schools have progressive plans in place to develop the resilience of pupils in the hope that it will give pupils a few extra percentages in examinations, aside from the fact that it will, of course, develop a very important characteristic for beyond their years in school.

Accuracy of assessments in individual subjects that inform schools' tracking systems

Headteachers were confident overall that departments use a full range of appropriate evidence to determine grades. Schools differed in how they did this, with around half the schools determining a likely grade and comparing this to a target, and others comparing current attainment and / or progress against a target. The majority of schools had increased the number of assessment points in KS4, some schools specifically in Year 11. Many schools stated they seek to encourage more ownership of the data amongst middle managers and teaching staff, and steer

departmental and whole school discussions towards pupils rather than figures. Amongst the problems noted were the fact that some teachers use assessments in order to convey a hard message to some pupils and also that some teachers confuse a likely grade and present attainment. It is a constant battle for SMT members in these schools to regularly reinforce the expectations. In those few schools that were concerned about the accuracy of assessments, it is not surprising that there was a significant gap between the final projection and the result.

Other findings about schools' tracking systems:

- Some schools acknowledged that their systems have not identified the appropriate pupils in the past and that they have been too ambitious with pupils who are not borderline C/D.
- Many schools have, or are about to, move from individual grades to using sub-grades so as to better target intervention. Many of the schools have started to plan for tracking the new indicators, but there is frustration and uncertainty as it is not possible to do this entirely through SIMS.
- Many schools are investing in commercial systems such as SISRA / 4MATRIX, which are based on the education system in England, but are useful to compare and ensure accountability of departments' interim assessments. One school is moving towards making more use of SIMS Discover after using 4Matrix for some years.
- Lack of capacity means that intervention needs to be prioritised; as a result, intervention occurs too late in some pupils' career in school.
- Occasionally, pupils who do not achieve TL2+ have not shown any signs of failing to achieve it.

Strategies that make a difference:

- All those schools with high results agree that the culture fostered is the key to high standards and a truly pupil-centred approach.
- Create a culture of high expectations – an expectation to succeed, high expectations from staff and a good knowledge and understanding of pupils.
- Increase staffing so as to give more attention to target groups in Mathematics and Language. Many schools use a member of the SMT as the additional member.
- Invest time for a timetabled weekly meeting between heads of departments / extended management team - a successful method of consistently driving the agenda forward across the school.
- Use staffing resources creatively to seek to ensure the best outcomes, including re-grouping Mathematics sets after the November results. Pupils who have achieved the target then concentrate on the L2 Personal Finance course (accredited course).
- Tailor lessons specifically for the areas that create difficulties for pupils – especially during the period leading up to the examinations
- Increase the number of Mathematics lessons on the timetable
- Headteacher insists on a list of target groups in every subject
- A number of schools have increased the capacity of the management team by co-opting additional members on a temporary basis - increasing capacity for monitoring and working with pupils.
- House system successful in some schools – fewer Year 11 pupils for the Head of House to concentrate on.

- 'Intervention Team' – varies considerably from school to school - learning coaches / senior class assistants. The effectiveness of support roles depends entirely on getting the right people to have an influence on pupils.
- Many schools have seen the value of increasing the time of the Head of Year / Progress Manager
- Using Year 11 BAC lessons (after February accreditation) – planned the timetable to ensure that target group teachers in Mathematics and Language are available during these periods.
- Controlled Assessment days in English – preparation in the morning and writing in the afternoon. Some schools set different (and higher) targets for controlled assessments in English.
- Extra sessions after school
- Revision Skills sessions - some schools pay external companies, but internal sessions led by influential staff and Year 12/13 pupils have proved successful.
- An additional weekly Mathematics lesson after school from January Year 11 onwards
- Release Heads of Mathematics and Language from registration duties – interview borderline pupils daily
- Staff a mock Mathematics examination with Mathematics teachers who have knowledge and understanding of the pupils - are able to boost them to battle on and to persevere - part of the school's strategy to develop pupils' resilience - not allowed to leave until they have attempted every question!
- In some schools, there is comprehensive provision (up to 4 evenings a week) in a range of subjects and free transport to take pupils home.
- Revision workshops during school holidays
- Sunday workshops before a Monday examination
- Use external companies – motivation workshops and so forth - a different and independent voice. Some schools invest significant money and see value and impact, even though it is difficult to quantify this.
- Some school moving away from providing more sessions during school holidays - placing more focus on the effectiveness of lessons during term time
- School climate and culture varies greatly - in some schools, staff are proactive and arrange sessions with no pay. In others, the school has arranged a programme and staff are paid. Some schools' sessions are optional, and key pupils choose not to be present.
- Some schools target specific pupils for extra sessions - rather than providing for all pupils.
- Using registration periods for Literacy and Number work and Language / Mathematics
- Some schools develop mindfulness principles to control stress
- Target group pupils carry a mentoring book with them to all lessons - teachers record so as to enrich discussion with the mentor. Other schools use 'Enter Comments' within SIMS to share messages between subject teachers and the mentor.

Provision and Support for FSM pupils

- ❖ Most school provide resources e.g. free educational visits, free revision guidelines, free educational resources from the school shop and so forth
- ❖ Many schools state they have now raised awareness of who the FSM pupils are, and that subject teachers, heads of subjects and heads of year are expected to mentor and support FSM pupils.
- ❖ Many schools state that each FSM pupil has access to a mentor. A minority of schools have appointed an FSM Champion. Others use learning coaches to support them and regularly meet with pupils.

- ❖ Many schools intentionally include FSM pupils when monitoring books in the expectation that subject teachers will give them specific attention if they know that their books will be monitored. Also, FSM pupil participation and support for FSM pupils is a focus during lesson observations.
- ❖ One school priorities phoning the homes of Year 11 FSM pupils on the first day of absence.
- ❖ Ensure that experienced staff teach C/D sets and sets with FSM pupils.

Recommendations for GwE/LAs:

- Ensure that all of the region's schools are clear about the purpose of targets and projections and that there is consistency in the way they are set.
- Ensure that those schools with less developed procedures receive support and guidance.
- Establish a working group of school leaders and technical experts in order to set up a generic system to track the new indicators, which can be adapted to the needs of individual schools.
- Acknowledge that some cohorts will not perform as well as previous cohorts due to the nature and innate ability of the pupils, and that this should not necessarily be considered a weakness or a step backwards. This is especially true of smaller schools.
- Convey to Welsh Government officials that recruitment problems in key subjects (especially so in the short/medium term) have a direct impact on standards in schools.

Recommendations for schools:

- Ensure that a range of robust and accurate evidence forms the basis for school targets and projections.
- Include pupils, parents and teachers in the discussion on setting targets for individual pupils; in so doing, they have ownership.
- Ensure the accountability of the school's middle managers through questioning and challenging when targets are not challenging enough or when interventions do not have an appropriate impact on underperformance.
- Prepare for any changes to tracking and intervention procedures in the wake of the new indicators from 2018 onwards (first cohort - Year 10 September 2016).
- Continue to develop the effective use of data

Schools visited:

Ysgol Eirias

Ysgol Castell Alun

Ysgol Brynhyfryd

Ysgol St Blessed Edwards

Ysgol Aberconwy

Ysgol y Creuddyn

Hawarden High School

Ysgol David Hughes

Elfed High School

Flint High School

Ysgol Botwnnog

Ysgol yr Alun

Ysgol y Moelwyn

Ysgol Brynrefail

Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones

Ysgol Ardudwy



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

27 JANUARY 2016

Report by: GwE Assistant Director

Subject: Key Stage 4 Level 2+ Progress towards 2016 targets

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update Joint Committee members on progress towards 2016 targets (Key Stage 4 Level 2+)

2.0 Background: Context and rationale

2.1 The performance of secondary schools across the region in the key indicator of Level 2 threshold including Mathematics and English or Welsh First Language [L2+] showed only a slight improvement in 2015. This was significantly less than the improvement seen on a national level [+2.5%]. Some individual schools have seen significant improvements. However, there has been significant underperformance in individual schools which had strong historical performance. The majority of schools across the region have seen oscillation in performance over a three year period. This is a cause for concern and especially so in schools with large cohorts. In many of the schools there has been a significant difference between targets, final estimates and actual performance.

2.2 In this current academic year, there will be a systematic centralised collection of progress data. Assessment, recording and reporting systems will be probed and tested in terms of the accuracy of the assessment and reporting processes. It is vital that this data is checked for accuracy so that GwE and the local authorities are confident in the veracity and validity of the information which is received. It is the role of the Challenge Advisers and the Senior Challenge Advisers to check that all schools have robust tracking systems in place. A specific additional Challenge Adviser visit has been arranged for the Spring Term to challenge Key Stage 4 targets and 2016 projections. The work within and between the two key departments of Maths and English is crucial as is the role of Senior Leaders in challenging the assessment and reporting process of each department. GwE has appointed Subject Challenge Advisers on secondment to challenge and support Maths and English Departments with this important area.

The flowchart in Appendix 1 summarises the strategy that has been implemented to improve the regional L2+. This report provides an update on the current progress of the region's secondary schools towards their 2016 target for the L2+.

3.0 L2+ Progress Update

Target: set by the school based on specific performance measures (such as FFT estimates, CAT test scores, national test results, TA data, progress information, local and national benchmarks).

Projection: the projected outcome at the end of the KS4 based on current assessment and tracking data.

Autumn Term: 2016 Aggregated School Targets and Projections									
Authority	L2+			Maths			English		
	Target	Projection	Diff.	Target	Projection	Diff.	Target	Projection	Diff.
Anglesey	67.8%	62.7%	-5.0%	73.6%	69.0%	-4.7%	73.6%	68.6%	-5.0%
Gwynedd	70.3%	67.6%	-2.7%	73.4%	70.4%	-3.0%	77.4%	76.1%	-1.3%
Conwy	65.1%	61.0%	-4.1%	72.8%	68.1%	-4.7%	74.3%	72.5%	-1.8%
Denbighshire	65.5%	61.9%	-3.6%	73.8%	66.1%	-7.7%	74.0%	69.5%	-4.5%
Flintshire	68.1%	66.4%	-1.7%	73.2%	72.4%	-0.8%	74.5%	72.9%	-1.6%
Wrexham	62.4%	59.4%	-3.0%	69.2%	66.1%	-3.1%	70.6%	67.4%	-3.2%
GWE	66.5%	63.4%	-3.1%	72.6%	68.8%	-3.8%	74.1%	71.5%	-2.6%

The next centralised collection of progress data will be at the end of February and subsequently at the end of April 2016.

Anglesey

According to December projections, Anglesey is -5.0% below target [-4.7% in the case of Maths; -5.0% in English and -4.4% in Welsh]. This would result in a TL2+ performance for summer 2016 of 62.7% - a figure that would be +6.1% above 2015 performance. Very challenging targets have been set by two schools in particular (Ysgol A 80.0% and Ysgol B 73.0% - +19.0% and +14.6% higher than those set by the schools in 2015), but they have been challenged on the propriety of these targets. However, both Head teachers have clearly stated their wish to increase challenge levels in the school and see these aspirational targets as a means of assisting them to do so.

Ysgol C's initial targets were also challenged, and in this case the school has revised and set a much more realistically attainable target [69.8%]. The targets for Ysgol D and Ysgol E are realistic and attainable, but it was questioned whether there was an appropriate level of challenge for Ysgol D. In December 2015 the progress against target was reported by the 5 schools, and the projections are very close in the case of Ysgol A, especially so considering the level of challenge set. The school has reported on several occasions that this particular year is a prosperous one, and they have very detailed tracking procedures and processes in place which are led by the Head teacher. On this basis, it must be accepted that the prediction received is close to the mark. However, we will be in a better situation to report on the situation following the additional monitoring visit that will be held in February.

The difference between projection and target is higher in the remaining schools. In the case of Ysgol D there is concern regarding English performance [-6.7% below target]; Maths [-7.0% below target] and Welsh [-12.3% below target] and the TL2+ is -7.7% lower. Maintaining standards in English and Maths has been targeted here. There is cause for concern regarding target-setting and tracking procedures in Ysgol C since they reported in December that the TL2+ projection was -6.0% below the revised target of 69.0% [after setting an original target of 80.0%+]. English is -13.2% below the target set by them, and is receiving support by the Challenge Adviser. There is also cause for concern regarding the precision and suitability of the predictions received from one school since they reported that everyone was on target.

We will be further operating with these two schools. In the case of Ysgol E, it was reported in December that English and Maths were -8.0% below target. The projections for FSM learners are notably lower than the target in each case except Ysgol B where the projection once again suggests performance on target. However, it must be remembered that this cohort of learners is relatively small in number and that consequently the +/- in terms of percentage is exaggerated. Discussions on performance and individual learner interventions have taken place with the schools.

Maths A-C:* each school has introduced learners early for the Maths GCSE. The introduction pattern varies considerably in each school but currently, from the county cohort, 51.5% have attained C+. The highest success % thus far is in Ysgol A with 60.4% of the cohort having passed. For the LA to attain last year's figure [64.4%], it must be ensured that an additional 80 learners succeed, and to reach the 70.0%+ threshold an additional 33 learners must succeed.

Gwynedd

According to December predictions, Gwynedd is -2.7% below target [-3.0% in the case of Maths; -1.3% in English and -4.4% in Welsh]. This would result in a performance for summer 2016 of 67.6% - a figure that would be +4.5% higher than 2015 performance. 11 of the 14 schools have set TL2+ targets above 70.0% in response to the challenge and expectations of the Head of Education. 2 of the schools which have set targets of +65% are larger schools, and the level of challenge is appropriate [Ysgol A 65.5% and Ysgol B 67.0%]. The target set by the other school [Ysgol C] is 69.7%. According to December 2015 predictions, performance across almost all schools is close to target [difference is between -2.0%>5.0% in most (-9.0% in Ysgol D) but the figure corresponds to only 3-7 learners in the schools in question]. In 4 schools, the prediction corresponds exactly to the target [Ysgol E, Ysgol F, Ysgol G, Ysgol A]. The same is to be seen for the individual core subjects in these schools. This again raises the question of the reliability and precision of the assessments that were used to form the projections. As in the case of Anglesey, the projections for FSM learners is considerably below target in several schools, but it must be remembered that this cohort accounts for a very small number of learners in many Gwynedd schools, and that as a result the +/- in terms of percentage is exaggerated. Discussions on performance and individual learner interventions have taken place with the schools. On the level of core subjects, the biggest gaps between performance and targets are as follows: -7.0% English and Welsh Ysgol H; -10.9% Maths and Welsh Ysgol D. Therefore, the accuracy of the data in many schools in Gwynedd will need to be challenged.

Maths A-C:* all schools with the exception of two (Ysgol F and Ysgol I) have introduced learners early for the Maths GCSE. The introduction pattern varies considerably in each school but currently, from a county cohort of 1,248, 50.4% have attained C+. 2 schools have a success % of over 60.0% thus far [Ysgol E 61.4%; Ysgol J 65.4%]. For the LA to attain last year's figure [66.5%] it must be ensured that an additional 200 learners succeed, and to reach the 70.0% threshold another 70 learners must succeed. Specific operation is now taking place to identify the exact learners in the different schools.

Conwy

Three Conwy secondary schools have set targets for the TL2+ in the first quarter while the remaining four have set targets in the second quarter. All seven Conwy schools have set targets considerably higher than last year's results.

The first progress against target figure provided by schools was collected in December 2015. Four schools have predicted that their outcomes will be at least 5% less than their original target (Ysgol A -6%, Ysgol B -5.3%, Ysgol C -5.5% and Ysgol D -9.1%) while three schools are on track to obtain or succeed their original target. The December prediction has shown as a fall of 4.1% against the combined school's target of 65.1%. However it is still 2% above the official Conwy LA target set for 2015/16.

More concerning is the progress against the Local Authority's FSM target with four schools (Ysgol A – 20%, Ysgol B -10%, Ysgol D -8% and Ysgol C -10%) predicting to be significantly below their original target. These predictions leave the LA prediction 1.4% below the LA target of 39% and 7.6% below the original combined target set by schools during the autumn term.

There has been continued discussion with all schools over targets set and progress towards achieving these. These have taken place in Head teacher strategic forum meetings, core subject heads of department meeting and within individual schools with Challenge Advisors.

A detailed analysis of recalled papers from Conwy and Denbighshire schools took place in December looking at how English, Welsh first language and Maths papers were answered. Three separate papers were published giving a detailed question by question analysis and recommendations on how to strengthen teaching and exam preparation. Three schools also provided individual learner information for Maths so that a detailed breakdown of school's strengths and weaknesses for each paper. Five of the seven school's Head teachers and SLT (Ysgol E, Ysgol D, Ysgol C, Ysgol F and Ysgol A) visited Earle's Academy in Halesowen with a view to see good practice in improving the TL2+, tracking and intervention and improving FSM outcomes. This link will be further established.

Three schools have received sustained targeting and support due to poor results last year (Ysgol E, Ysgol A and Ysgol D). GwE KS4 subject advisors are working with these three schools giving intensive support and arranging intervention for Year 11 pupils. Two schools (Ysgol E and Ysgol A) are receiving intensive English support while two schools (Ysgol E and Ysgol D) will receive intensive Maths support. This support will include moderating pupils standards against their predicted targets so as to ensure targets are aligned to probable outcomes.

All schools are currently planning intensive intervention activities for Year 11 pupils. Challenge Advisors are collecting information of what is happening externally in all schools and this information will be shared so that good practice can be disseminated. The seven schools are also looking at pooling resources to target borderline individuals during the spring term and Easter holidays. This will be part funded by GwE, LA and the schools.

Denbighshire

Six secondary schools have set targets for the TL2+ in the first quarter while the remaining two have set targets in the second quarter. All eight Denbighshire schools have set targets considerably higher than last year's results.

The first progress against target figure provided by schools was collected in December 2015. Four schools have predicted that their outcomes will be at least 5% less than their original target (Ysgol A - 6.8%, Ysgol B -10.3%, Ysgol C -14.1% and Ysgol D -8.9%) while the remaining four schools are on track to obtain or succeed their original target. The December prediction has shown as a fall of 3.6% against the combined school's target of 65.5%. However it is still 0.9% above the official Denbighshire LA target set for 2015/16.

More concerning is the progress against the Local Authority's FSM target with three schools (Ysgol A - 19.9%, Ysgol B -21.3% and Ysgol C -8.7%) predicting to be significantly below their original target. These predictions leave the LA prediction 0.2% below the LA target of 41% and 6% below the original combined target set by schools during the autumn term.

There has been continued discussion with all schools over targets set and progress towards achieving these. These have taken place in Head teacher strategic forum meetings, core subject heads of department meeting and within individual schools with Challenge Advisors.

A detailed analysis of recalled papers from Conwy and Denbighshire schools took place in December looking at how English, Welsh first language and Maths papers were answered. Three separate papers were published giving a detailed question by question analysis and recommendations on how to strengthen teaching and exam preparation. Three schools also provided individual learner information for Maths so that a detailed breakdown of school's strengths and weaknesses for each paper.

Three schools have received sustained targeting and support due to poor results last year (Ysgol E, Ysgol F and Ysgol C). GwE KS4 subject advisors are working with these three schools giving intensive support and arranging intervention for Year 11 pupils. Two schools (Ysgol E and Ysgol F) are receiving intensive English support while three schools (Ysgol C, Ysgol E and Ysgol A) will receive intensive Maths support. This support will include moderating pupils standards against their predicted targets so as to ensure targets are aligned to probable outcomes.

All schools are currently planning intensive intervention activities for Year 11 pupils. Challenge Advisors are collecting information of what is happening externally in all schools and this information will be shared so that good practice can be disseminated. The seven schools are also looking at pooling resources to target borderline individuals during the spring term and Easter holidays. This will be part funded by GwE, LA and the schools.

Flintshire

Eleven of the twelve schools have set targets for the L2+ above their FSM benchmark median. The remaining school (Ysgol A) has set a target just below the median, but that would still represent a significant improvement on last year's performance. Two schools set a target that was slightly lower than last year's results, but in both cases this was because last year's results were at high level for the school and this year's cohort are not quite as strong (Ysgol B and Ysgol C). Therefore, in the case of all schools, the targets that have been set are realistically aspirational.

The aggregate target for the LA from all schools is 68.1%, which would represent a significantly higher performance than the L2+ figure for 2015, which was 60.0%. In December a projection against the target was reported by all schools and this aggregated to 66.4% for the LA.

For 8 out of the 12 schools the projections appear to represent a realistic picture after one term of Year 11, although two schools (Ysgol D and Ysgol E) gave projections that appeared a little low at 70% against targets of 75%. However, after the Mathematics results in January, both schools now report that they are on target. Two schools have set targets and have projections that are very aspirational on the basis that to maintain last year's level of performance with current more challenging cohorts would represent a very good performance (Ysgol F and Ysgol C).

Therefore, on the basis of the most up to date information from all schools, the projection of performance for the LA of 66.4% appears realistic. However, for the LA to have greater confidence in being able to reach the target would take more secure information, such as good results on the English module papers that were taken in January with results due in March.

The FSM target at L2+ was 52.2%. However the projection in December was 46.0% which seems much more in line with expected outcomes as last year's LA figure was only 35%.

One of the schools (Ysgol G) is part of Schools Challenge Cymru and therefore receiving support through a designated Challenge Adviser working as part of the national programme. The remaining eleven schools are each supported by one of GwE's own Challenge Advisers. Four of these schools (Ysgol H, Ysgol A, Ysgol I, Ysgol C) are receiving support that includes an allocated Challenge Adviser and access to

additional specialist support, for example in English and mathematics. In the cases of the first three of these schools, this support also includes a more intensive level of input from their Challenge Adviser that reflects concerns about a lack of progress with GCSE results last summer.

The remaining schools have a track record of good performance and are being supported to share their good practice in small groups of partner schools within the LA and three neighbouring LAs, as well as having access to specialist support as appropriate. Two of these schools are also providing more intensive support to partner schools in a neighbouring LA (Ysgol D and Ysgol B).

All schools are currently planning intensive intervention activities for Year 11 pupils, sometimes in line with previous practice, and in some schools as a result of advice provided by GwE advisers. No school in the LA is currently in any form of statutory post-inspection follow-up by Estyn.

Wrexham

All nine schools have set targets for the L2+ above their FSM benchmark median, with four in the top quartile. In all cases the targets have been set above last year's results and in all cases are regarded as realistically aspirational.

The aggregate target for the LA from all schools is 62.4%, which would represent a significantly higher performance than the L2+ figure for 2015 which was 51.5%. In December a projection against the target was reported by all schools and aggregated to 59.4%, slightly below the target.

For 7 out of the 9 schools, the projections indicate being on track to achieve the target and represent an encouraging picture after one term of Year 11. Two schools gave projections that were a little more than 5% below the target. However, after the Mathematics results in January both reports that a revised projection means they are now on target (Ysgol A and Ysgol B).

Therefore, on the basis of the information from all schools, the current projection of performance for the LA of 62.4% appears to be achievable, even though this is significantly higher than last summer. This is because all schools are reporting an encouraging set of mathematics results in January, and one school (Ysgol A) is already on track to record a rise in their L2+ performance of at least 20%. However, for the LA to have greater confidence in being able to reach the target would take more secure information, such as good results on the English module papers that were taken in January with results due in March.

The FSM target for L2+ from schools was 40.9%, which appears highly aspirational. The projection in December was 32.5%, which seems more in line with expected outcomes as last year's LA figure was just under 20%.

Three of the schools (Ysgol C, Ysgol B and Ysgol D) are part of Schools Challenge Cymru and therefore receiving support through a designated Challenge Adviser working as part of the national programme. The remaining six schools are each supported by one of GwE's own Challenge Advisers. Four of these schools (Ysgol E, Ysgol F, Ysgol G, Ysgol A) are receiving support that includes an allocated Challenge Adviser and access to additional specialist support, for example in English and mathematics. In the cases of the last of these schools this support also includes a more intensive level of input from their Challenge Adviser that reflects concerns about a lack of progress with GCSE results last summer.

The remaining schools (Ysgol H and Ysgol I) have a track record of good performance and are being supported to share their good practice in small groups of partner schools within the LA and three neighbouring LAs, as well as having access to specialist support as appropriate. In the case of the first school there is also the challenge of addressing a dip in performance in 2015, but for the second school

a promising set of mathematics results indicates the potential for a record GCSE performance this summer.

All schools are currently planning intensive intervention activities for Year 11 pupils, sometimes in line with previous practice, and in some schools as a result of advice provided by GwE advisers.

After a successful re-inspection at one school (Ysgol B) late in the autumn term, this means that no secondary school in the LA is now in a statutory Estyn follow-up category.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no 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 Members of the GwE Management Board have been consulted during the development of the document.

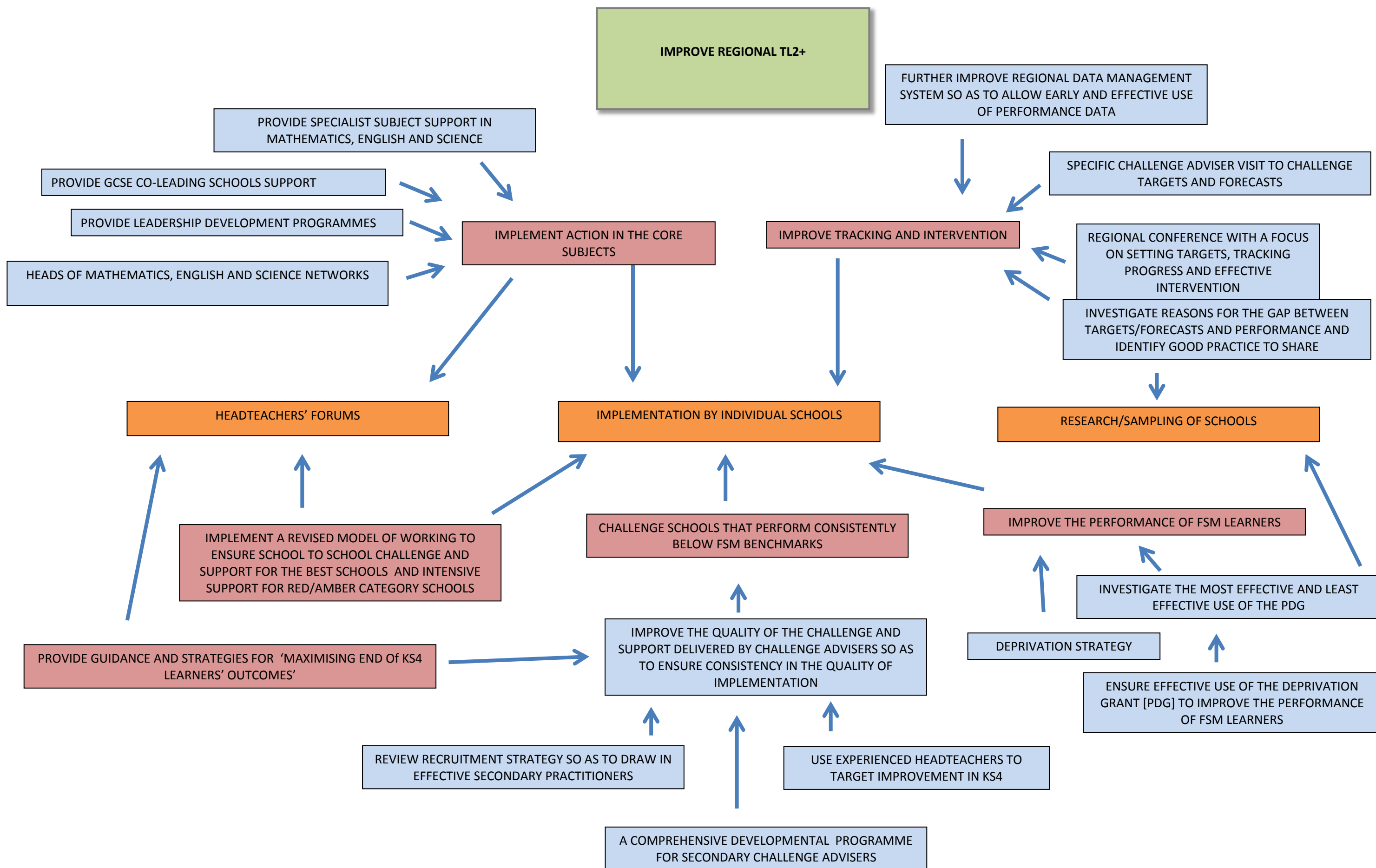
9.0 Appendices

9.1 Summary of strategies implemented to improve the regional L2+

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer: No observations in relation to propriety

Statutory Finance Officer: Observations will be made, as appropriate, in the meeting





REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

27 January 2016

Report by: Arwyn Thomas – Gwynedd Head of Education

Subject: The Welsh-Medium and Capacity-Building Network

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 Update GwE Joint Committee on the activity and outcomes of the above Network.

2.0 Background

2.1 Background to the Network

The Network was established with the aim of ensuring better access to Welsh medium education for learners across the region who wish to develop, improve or maintain their bilingual skills. The Network informs the agenda in order to ensure that the region responds to the requirements and principles of:

- the Welsh-medium Education Strategy
- Authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plans
- Authorities' Language Strategies and Plans

Issues are discussed as set out in the Terms of Reference or as required by ADEW GC, GwE, the Welsh Government and ESTYN, and advice is taken as appropriate.

2.2 Network Budget

Education Improvement Grant (Welsh in Education element) = £2,468,930

3.0 Progress Report

3.1 Against the Work Plan

3.1.1 Extending the Language Charter across all counties in North Wales

Following positive reports on the success of the Charter in Gwynedd, the Welsh Government requested that Gwynedd's expertise and good practice be used to extend the project to other areas in Wales.

Gwynedd Council is providing a service on behalf of the Welsh Government to deliver 4 main elements, namely, raising awareness, holding a training conference, information sharing and hosting the online questionnaire, and the accreditation process.

Awareness was raised in the GwE Management Board business meeting in October 2015 and the strategic discussion was delegated to the Welsh-Medium and Capacity-Building Network.

Work has already started to provide support to other counties in establishing firm foundations for the implementation of the Language Charter, providing guidance and good practice on all practical aspects of the Charter.

Discussions took place in the Network during the Autumn Term regarding ensuring support within local authorities, to include ensuring that co-ordinators are appointed to implement the Charter in every county and further meetings have also been held to provide more concentrated support ahead of implementation within their counties .

A conference to officially launch the Language Charter will be held on 22 January 2016 when essential information will be shared as well as the support and ready made resources which are available. Therefore it is vital that all schools attend the conference as this information will be critical to support implementation and ensure the success of the plan.

3.1.2 Advisory Teachers on the Welsh Language / Language Centres

Meetings are held on a termly basis to share the good practice which exists across the region.

How authorities support children and young people in enabling them to blend into a bilingual society and participate fully in bilingual education experiences, providing incomers with a firm foundation in the Welsh language, is discussed in these meetings

3.1.3 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Estyn undertook a thematic survey (on behalf of the Welsh Government) focusing on the implementation of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans within local authorities. A cross-section of local authorities across Wales was visited during the autumn term in 2015. Gwynedd and Flint were chosen from the North Wales Region.

The review focused specifically on the following:

- The impact of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans in respect of improving local authority planning for Welsh medium education, up to making timely decisions regarding the development of new provision in accordance with the anticipated demand or local or national policy directives.
- The impact of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans on instigating and supporting actions to raise standards in respect of Welsh, Welsh as a second language and teaching other subjects through the medium of Welsh.
- To what degree the statutory responsibility of local authorities to produce Welsh in Education Strategic Plans allows collaboration with regional school improvement services and support from them.

During the visit, the 7 key outcomes of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans were discussed and evidence gathered, interviewing specific stakeholders and officers within the authorities.

Positive (informal) feedback was received and the regional collaboration was identified as a forte, and, specifically in the context of the network itself, the Language Centre meetings, extending the Language Charter across North Wales and training across authorities were recognized as good and/or excellent practice.

3.2 Against the Budget

N/A

4 Matters for consideration

4.1 None.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 None.

6.0 Financial implications

6.1 None.

7.0 Equality impacts

7.1 None.

8.0 Implications for personnel

8.1 None.

9.0 Consultation undertaken

9.1 N/A

10.0 Annexes

10.1.1 Extending the Language Charter across all counties in North Wales - Implementation Plan

STATUTORY OFFICERS' VIEWS

Monitoring Officer: No observations in relation to propriety

Statutory Finance Officer: I understand that Welsh Government is providing a specific grant to cover the costs of expanding the language charter across north Wales

Extending the Language Charter across all counties in North Wales - Year 1

Target / Action	Outcome	Role / Responsibility	Timescale	Cost
<p><u>Raise awareness among the counties of Conwy, Denbigh, Flint and Wrexham</u></p> <p>Raise awareness in the GwE Management Board business meeting and delegate the strategic discussion to the Welsh-Medium and Capacity-Building Network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss extending the Charter to ensure support within local authorities, to include ensuring that co-ordinators are appointed to implement the Charter in every county. <p>Hold a meeting of the Welsh-Medium and Capacity-Building Network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold a further meeting/workshop for all county co-ordinators to provide more concentrated support prior to implementation in their counties. 	<p>Authorities committed to the Charter and supportive of it.</p> <p>Co-ordinators identified.</p> <p>The Network have taken ownership of the work and terms of reference have been established. Support in place to secure the implementation of the Charter.</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council Project Manager in collaboration with the Welsh Government*</p> <p>Gwynedd Council Project Manager.</p> <p>(where collaboration between Gwynedd Council and the Welsh Government is noted - further explanation is provided in the supplementary notes).</p>	<p>July to September</p> <p>July to September</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council Officers and County Co-ordinators' time</p> <p>Location Refreshments Resources</p>
<p><u>Training work</u></p> <p>Hold a conference for heads across the 4 counties in order to provide guidance, support and good practice in respect of implementing the Charter.</p>	<p>Authorities clear about the requirements regarding the implementation of the Charter.</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council Project Manager in collaboration with the Welsh Government.</p> <p>Gwynedd Council Project Manager and Gwynedd</p>	<p>October</p> <p>August/Septe</p>	<p>50 heads from the 4 counties + Gwynedd and Môn. Location</p>

Draw up the content of the conference - using a model similar to the conference held in Gwynedd with modifications to reflect the fact that not only one county is involved.		Council Language Charter Co-ordinator, in collaboration with the Welsh Government.	mber	Refreshments Key Note Speakers: Materials Gwynedd Council Officers' Time
<u>Evaluation</u> Share good practice/examples of the process used to evaluate the Charter in Gwynedd in the conference.	Everyone aware of the evaluation process.	Gwynedd Council	October	Materials Gwynedd Council Officers' Time
<u>Establish a baseline</u> Provide guidance in the conference regarding establishing a baseline and introduction of the online questionnaire. Host the system on behalf of the 4 counties and provide support when necessary.	Baseline established in accordance with individual county requirements. System created and operational.	Gwynedd Council - Language Charter Co-ordinator. Gwynedd Council - IT unit.	October After autumn half term + continuous	Gwynedd Council Officers' Time Gwynedd Council IT Unit

<p><u>Accreditation process</u></p> <p>Gwynedd Language Co-ordinators to be responsible for the accreditation process across North Wales - guidance/training to be undertaken.</p>	<p>Operational consistency in respect of the accreditation process.</p> <p>% of the 50 schools successful in the bronze reward accreditation process.</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council Manager in collaboration with the Welsh Government.</p> <p>Gwynedd Council (Welsh Government partners could assist with the task of identifying individuals).</p>	<p>July/ August</p> <p>November/ December</p>	<p>Gwynedd Language Co-ordinators and Officers' time.</p>
<p><u>The Charter</u></p> <p>Undertake any modifications to the content of the document itself to reflect the linguistic make-up of various areas.</p>	<p>Charter completed.</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council and Network to lead discussions on this matter.</p>	<p>August/September</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council Officers' Time</p>
<p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Provide the content of Gwynedd resources to the Welsh Government - so that the Welsh Government is able to modify it for compatibility with our brand guidelines and as national resources.</p>	<p>Ensure consistency, ownership and quality of resources.</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council - Gwynedd Language Charter Co-ordinator.</p>	<p>July</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council Officers' Time</p>
<p><u>Monitoring</u></p> <p>Provide regular updates and meet with Welsh Government officials on a quarterly basis to discuss developments.</p>	<p>Ensure efficient operation of the Charter across North Wales.</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council/Welsh Government</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council Officers' Time</p>



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

27 JANUARY 2016

Report by: GwE Managing Director

Subject: Regional Business Plan 2015-18 – Monitoring Report

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To update Joint Committee members on progress in delivering the Business Plan 2015-18.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Regional Business Plan 2015-18 was approved during the Joint Committee meeting on 12 November 2015.

2.2 This is the first monitoring report being presented to the Joint Committee.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 The Monitoring Report provides a RAG rating (based on the following colour indicators) with regard to progress to date along with details of any headlines / mitigation required.

R	Progress overall is behind schedule	A	Progress is within acceptable variance	G	Progress is on track
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3.2 The RAG rating gives a clear indication on progress & illustrates the priorities / actions requiring urgent attention & posing the greatest risk of not being fulfilled.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no 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 None undertaken.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Regional Business Plan 2015-18 – Joint Committee Monitoring Dashboard (January 2016)

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer: Any observations will be presented at the meeting

Statutory Finance Officer: Nothing to add from a financial propriety perspective

PRIORITY 1.1: To raise standards of teaching and learning for all learners across the region, consistently in the primary sector

Milestones 2015-16	Progress to date (RAG rating)	Headlines / Mitigation
All schools have strategic documentation which focusses on raising standards		GwE have provided guidance to schools regarding the new Welsh Government statutory expectations for School Development Plans
Areas of underperformance identified and resources allocated to target schools.		GwE schools have agreed support category & more robust regional & national moderation in place.
All schools part of robust teacher assessment moderation procedures		GwE working in collaboration with 3 other consortia to develop more robust moderation procedures on a national level for 2015-16.

PRIORITY 1.2: To raise standards of teaching and learning for all learners across the region, consistently in the secondary sector

Milestones 2015-16	Progress to date (RAG rating)	Headlines / Mitigation
Curriculum design and assessment models are fit for purpose.		<p>All schools have participated in new GCSE workshops provided by Co-leading Schools.</p> <p>Lead practitioners appointed for Science, English & Maths.</p> <p>Further evaluation following initial result sets.</p>
Schools have access to appropriate support networks for core subjects operational – including Lead Schools, Co-Leading Schools		<p>WG yet to confirm funding for support post March 2016.</p> <p>CLS appointed for literacy, numeracy, new GCSEs & active. Networks established on a hub basis in core subjects.</p>

PRIORITY 2: To improve the quality of leadership and its impact

Milestones 2015-16	Progress to date (RAG rating)	Headlines / Mitigation
First, second and third cohort of middle leaders		Cohort 1 & 2 completed. Recommendations following the formal evaluation by external consultant incorporated into cohort 3. Cohort 3 in progress.
First cohort of Physical Literacy Middle Leaders, participated in the relevant development programme		Very positive feedback. The balance between physical literacy & leadership aspects was successful. Future of the programme depends upon the future funding available. This remains very uncertain.
First cohort of experienced Headteacher's participated in the relevant development programme (20 in total)		19 participated. Very positive outcomes. Formal evaluation to be completed by end of February 2016. Initial findings have been incorporated into the design of cohort 2 – date for cohort 2 is May 2016.
Specific Co Leading Schools (CLS) identified and active in developing leadership across the region		CLS appointed for literacy, numeracy, new GCSEs, MFL & LAC & active.
GwE to continue to actively engage with WG and Consortia to develop an effective National Leadership Development Programme		Following the success of the Middle Leadership Development Programme & the Leadership Development Programme for Experienced Headteachers & the dissemination of the good practice with all consortia; there has been significant interest from other regions. 9 individuals from the ERW region are now participating in the Middle Leadership cohort 3 & interest also exists for cohort 4. This is part of the co-operation with Welsh Government, National Leadership Development Board & the 4 consortia in developing a National Leadership Development Programme reflecting the milestones noted in the career development pathway.
All Challenge Advisers participated in the relevant bespoke development programme		All Challenge Advisers participated in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific 3 day bespoke coaching skills programme.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bespoke developmental programme based on specific needs, e.g. the skillset required to challenge & support red & amber schools (ongoing). <p>Future CPD will be based on performance management meetings & specific needs of the region.</p>
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PRIORITY 3: Developing a self-improving school system

Milestones 2015-16	Progress to date (RAG rating)	Headlines / Mitigation
An established model of working across the region that builds the capacity within our schools to move to a sustainable self-improving school system within the next two years		<p>GwE Challenge & Support Programme Green / Strong Yellow Schools operational (pilot year). Positive response to the principle regarding establishing a self-improving school system. Varied response to date – specific stakeholder groups established to work collaboratively with GwE in order to evaluate & modify as appropriate. Revised model operational from September 2016.</p> <p>GwE Challenge & Support Programme Yellow Schools operational (pilot year). Initial challenge adviser visits completed & shared developmental priorities identified.</p> <p>As a result of the new model of working, capacity has been released to provide more intensive support to amber & red schools</p> <p>School to school collaboration developing effectively across the region.</p>
GwE has greater capacity to provide more intensive support for amber and red schools		<p>Greater capacity achieved. Specific bespoke packages for amber and red schools progressing effectively.</p>
A significant growing involvement of school leaders in designing and coordinating strategies to promote a		<p>Stakeholder groups established. Assistant Director involved in specific collaboration with all consortia regarding</p>

self-improving system		<p>creating a self-improving school system definition & guidance.</p> <p>Future work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise the definition & guidance in order to raise awareness & understanding of the key aspects & requirements of developing a self-improving school system across the region. • Work collaboratively with key stakeholders to move agenda forward.
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PRIORITY 4: To improve internal procedures in order to ensure an effective and consistent support and challenge service across the region

Milestones 2015-16	Progress to date (RAG rating)	Headlines / Mitigation
Performance and accountability framework operational		Performance and accountability have been further strengthened, however further development is to be done.
AD [Standards] monitors the framework to build on best practice and ensure continued development of the model		Ongoing process.
Enhanced level of challenge and accountability for Challenge Advisers from Senior Challenge Advisers		New monitoring process operational & ongoing.
AD [Standards] engages with national cross-regional work to ensure that GwE teams perform in line with the expectations of the national model		Initial meeting has taken place & further joint consortia meetings planned for February & March 2016.
Progress against commissioned work is quality assured by Senior Challenge Advisers and monitored by the AD [Standards]		New monitoring arrangements operational & ongoing on an individual basis.

Robust procedures for regional moderation of categorisation in place.		Regional & national verification process completed.
Robust Performance Management procedures fully operational across respective hubs		New performance management procedures adopted and are being implemented.
Relevant CA training programme delivered and impact evaluated		
Seconded SLT Members from within schools up-skilled and effectively deployed and utilised as CA's		
New working model of peer review operational and evaluated		Model operational and in the process of being evaluated.

PRIORITY 5: Ensure the effective governance, leadership and management of GwE

Milestones 2015-16	Progress to date (RAG rating)	Headlines / Mitigation
The GwE Management Board and Senior Leadership Team work with the relevant local authority scrutiny committees to operate a co-ordinated work programme in relation to school improvement		Report presented to the Joint Committee & meeting taken place with the Scrutiny Chairs & Officers to discuss & agree the work programme.
Review the Inter Authority Agreement in relation to the National Model		Draft in progress.
Advisory Board developing its critical friend role		



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

27 JANUARY 2016

Report by: GwE Managing Director

Subject: Estyn Regional Consortium Inspection arrangements (April 2016)

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To inform Joint Committee members of the Estyn Regional Consortium Inspection arrangements.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Welsh Government asked Estyn to report on the progress being made nationally by consortia in improving schools. Estyn's report was published in June 2015. While it does refer to individual consortia where relevant, the report was a primarily a report on national progress. The Auditor General for Wales asked Wales Audit Office to report on progress on the consortia too, and a separate report was published at the time. Estyn and Wales Audit Office worked closely together in producing their reports.

2.2 The Welsh Government has asked Estyn to follow-up their report by inspecting and reporting on each consortium individually. All four consortia will be inspected during the period February 2016 to July 2016.

2.3 The National Model for Regional Working sets out the government's expectations about the role and responsibilities of consortia and the relationship they have with local authorities. All statutory responsibilities for education remain with local authorities. Estyn's approach to inspecting consortia is based on the relevant aspects of the Common Inspection Framework.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 The GwE on-site inspection will take place during 18-29 April 2016.

3.2 Week 1 will be used to gather evidence from across the region about its work at school level. Inspectors will meet headteachers, governors and local authority service managers. Inspectors will

also meet with a range of staff involved in school-to-school support, both as providers and beneficiaries. Inspectors will meet challenge advisers and other consortium staff who provide direct services to schools (e.g. literacy advisers, Foundation Phase advisers). Inspectors will review a range of evidence about schools, such as reports about schools by challenge advisers (including pre-inspection reports and progress reports for schools in follow-up). Due to the geographical reach of the consortia, inspectors may use more than one base for interviews during this week. At the end of week 1, inspectors will begin to evaluate the quality of services provided by the consortium and develop hypotheses to work from in week 2.

3.3 Week 2 will be used to focus on the leadership and management of the consortium. Inspectors will use the consortium's self-evaluation along with early evaluations of services from week 1 as a starting point for discussions with senior leaders. Inspectors will meet the consortium managing director, other senior staff of the consortium, joint committee or company board members, advisory board members, local authority chief education officers, local authority chief executive officers, council cabinet members, chairs of scrutiny committees and any other significant partners. For week 2, inspectors will be based in, or close to, the central office for the consortium.

3.4 Estyn will not make overall judgements on current performance & prospects for improvement due to the evolving nature of consortia.

3.5 There will not be judgements for key questions, only for six relevant quality indicators: 1.1 (Standards); 2.1 (Support for school improvement); 3.1 (Leadership); 3.2 (Improving Quality); 3.3 (Partnership Working); 3.4 (Resource Management).

3.6 Follow-up inspections (after approximately 12 months) will take place to review the progress being made against the recommendations.

3.7 Prior to the inspection, Estyn will seek the views of significant stakeholders through the use of an electronic perception survey. This perception survey will collect the views of headteachers & chairs of governing bodies about their consortium & Estyn will compare the findings across the consortia and use the findings to inform lines of enquiry. The survey is open until 5pm Friday 29 January 2016 & can be accessed via the Estyn website: <http://www.estyn.gov.wales/education-services-survey>

3.8 The self-evaluation report against the following quality indicators is being prepared & will be presented at the next meeting of the Joint Committee (24/02/16): 1.1 (Standards); 2.1 (Support for school improvement); 3.1 (Leadership); 3.2 (Improving Quality); 3.3 (Partnership Working); 3.4 (Resource Management).

3.9 The Nominee training took place on 8 December 2015 & was attended by the two GwE Assistant Directors.

3.10 It is during the second week (w/c 25/04/16) that inspectors will wish to hold discussions with Joint Committee members.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no 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 GwE Management Board & Advisory Board are aware of the latest developments & are being consulted with regard to the preparations & development of the self-evaluation report.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Estyn: Improving Schools through Regional Education Consortia – June 2015

<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/improving-schools-through-regional-education-consortia-june-2015>

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer: No observations in relation to propriety

Statutory Finance Officer: Observations will be made, if appropriate, in the meeting