

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL****Report by Chief Education Officer****Educational Services Committee: 5 December 2018**

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**Subject: West Partnership Improvement Plan****1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To inform elected members of the progress with the initial West Partnership improvement plan and its preparation of Phase 2.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** Elected members are asked to:

- a) note the progress made with the initial improvement plan;
- b) note the West Partnership's Phase 2 Plan; and,

**3. Background**

- 3.1** Elected members will be aware of the establishment of six Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs) in the autumn of 2017 and the approval at Council in September 2017 that West Dunbartonshire would participate in the West Partnership, in line with the Scottish Government's review of governance of education.
- 3.2** Members will also be aware that a Regional Education Committee was established (made up of the 8 Conveners for Education from each partner), sitting under the Glasgow City Region Cabinet, both of which have political oversight of the partnership's work, thus ensuring regional and local democratic accountability.
- 3.3.** Subsequently a report to West Dunbartonshire's Education Committee in February 2018 asked elected members to note the initial improvement plan for the Partnership.

**4. Main Issues****4.1** Progress with Initial Plan

The following gives a high level overview of progress in establishing the Partnership and implementing its Improvement Plan from February – June 2018:

**4.2** Leadership

- The West Partnership has sought to embed a clear, cohesive approach to leadership at all levels, including strong engagement with elected members through the establishment of robust governance procedures.
- A number of groups and sub-groups were established to deliver the priority themes, involving over 70 staff from the eight partner authorities.

#### **4.3 Partnership Working**

- Through the development of a strong partnership with the University of Glasgow, the West Partnership has been able to develop a new approach to collaborative working, embedded in the second phase of the regional improvement plan.
- Additionally, the Partnership has continued to work closely with Education Scotland in delivering professional learning opportunities in authorities across the region, agreeing on the delivery of a multi-year programme of events, as well as year one opportunities focussing on quality assurance and evaluative writing.

#### **4.4 Stakeholder Engagement**

- Consulted with over 700 senior school staff at two large-scale Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) Conferences, enabling the sharing of best practice from across the region.
- Established a range of specialised stakeholder groups: Trade Unions; Further Education (FE) Principals; and the National Parent Forum for Scotland (NPFS).

#### **4.5 Engagement with Classroom Level**

- The West Partnership recognises the importance of engaging with staff at all levels through schools and early learning and childcare centres across the region in seeking to deliver for children and young people. Throughout the last year, the West Partnership has engaged with the classroom through the following activities:
  - Over 120 practitioners took part in an event on a Saturday in September to mark the start of Maths Week.
  - Over 220 practitioners from 150 schools and early learning and childcare centres took part in training for assessment and moderation events.
  - Wide ranging consultation exercises, both at events and online, with staff at all levels on the priorities for future professional learning opportunities.
  - Courses for early years practitioners from across the region.

#### **4.6** Phase 2 Plan

Members will be aware that the Initial Plan had three themes:

- Improvement
- Early Learning and Childcare
- Learner Journey

**4.7** When asked, 85% of stakeholders agreed these were the key areas the partnership should continue to address and the Phase 2 Plan (Appendix 1) has emerged from the initial plan and is as a result of the engagement of stakeholder groups.

**4.8** Officers from across the region worked with Glasgow University to agree a shared vision for the Partnership: *Equity, Excellence and Empowerment*. Our overarching aim is to develop a learning system which will enhance and build on the work of each partner, leading to improved learning experiences and outcomes for the children and young people of the West Partnership.

**4.9** *Equity, Excellence and Empowerment* informs and runs through the 8 themes which have been identified as key areas of work over the next three-year period, which reflect the stakeholder feedback and national priorities and are captured on the Plan on a Page (page 9):

- Collaborative learning networks
- Empowerment
- Curricular networks and networks of Additional Support for Learning schools
- Career Long Professional Learning which will build learning networks
- Systems improvement
- Curriculum design
- Leadership and succession planning
- Families and Communities

**4.10** Members will be aware that Early Learning and Childcare was a theme in the initial plan and supported each of the partner authorities to produce and submit their expansion plans to the Scottish Government. As this core purpose was achieved and although Early Learning and Childcare does not feature overtly as a theme in Phase 2, the needs of ELC staff and settings will be met through each of the other themes. The group of officers who participated in this work in Phase 1 are continuing to meet as a network.

**4.11** Specific action and workforce plans are included in Phase 2 and outline work which will be undertaken by each of the steering groups, which are led by Directors / Chief Education Officers from each of the partner authorities.

**4.12** The Phase 2 Plan has been presented to and endorsed by the Regional Education Committee in August 2018 and was presented to the City Region Cabinet when it met in October 2018.

## Evaluating Impact

- 4.13** As indicated in the plan, systems have been put in place to evaluate the impact of the plan. An Evaluation and Reporting Group has been established which has devised baselines and targets which will be used to measure the impact of the work across the region, while recognising that the work of each local authority will contribute to the success of the partnership.
- 4.14** In addition we have bid for funding for a Policy Scotland Research and Knowledge Exchange Officer from Glasgow University to both support and inform the work of steering groups and to help with measuring impact.
- 4.15** External evaluation will also be undertaken by Education Scotland's Regional Adviser to the West Partnership, Alistair Brown, who has already been a valuable source of guidance in devising the Phase 2 plan
- 4.16** External evaluation, initially of the establishment of Regional Improvement Collaboratives and subsequently for impact has been commissioned by the Scottish Government.

## **5. People Implications**

- 5.1** Members will note from the Action and Workforce sections that all workstreams will be supported by officers and in some cases, head teachers, from each local authority, indicating commitment to the partnership and its improvement plan activities.

## **6. Financial and Procurement Implications**

- 6.1** Education Scotland, when it has resources in place, has indicated that it will support workstreams as appropriate.
- 6.2** The Scottish Government indicated in June 2018 that funds will be made available to support each RIC's improvement plan and as such a bid was submitted with the Action and Workforce section in September 2018. It is anticipated that the outcome of the bid will be known by the next committee meeting.

## **7. Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** This report details a further approach to secure improvement and as such aligns with West Dunbartonshire Council's commitment to improve outcomes for children and young people. Failure to secure improvement would damage the Council's reputation and impact on children's life chances.

## **8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

**8.1** An equalities screening has been carried out and there are no issues affecting this report.

## **9. Consultation**

**9.1** Legal Services, Section 95 Officer and Head Teachers have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

## **10. Strategic Assessment**

**10.1** This report aligns with the Council's priority to be

- Efficient and effective frontline services that improve the everyday lives of residents.

### **Laura Mason**

Chief Education Officer

Date: 1 October 2018

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**Appendices:** Appendix 1 - West Partnership Phase 2 Improvement Plan

**Background Papers:** West Dunbartonshire Council's West Partnership Improvement Plan EIA Screening

**Wards Affected:** All

