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Bridgend County Borough Council



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**Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief
Executive's Directorate**

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Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Tuesday, 7 March 2023

Dear Councillor,

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

A meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 will be held as a hybrid meeting in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, on **Monday, 13 March 2023 at 11:00**.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008 (including whipping declarations)
3. Annual Local Authority Scrutiny Report Central South Consortium 2021-2022 5 - 80
Invitees:

Councillor Jon-Paul Blundell – Cabinet Member Education

Lindsay Harvey - Corporate Director – Education and Family Support
Nicola Echanis - Head of Education and Family Support
Susan Roberts – Group Manager (School Support)

Clara Seery - Managing Director - Central South Consortium
Louise Blatchford – Deputy Managing Director – Central South Consortium
Darren Jones – Principal Improvement Manager – Central South Consortium

Kathryn John - Headteacher, Brackla Primary School and Chair of Primary Federation
Ravi Pawar – Headteacher, Bryntirion Comprehensive School
4. New Framework for Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability to support the Curriculum for Wales 81 - 90

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Darren Jones – Principal Improvement Manager – Central South Consortium

Kathryn John - Headteacher, Brackla Primary School and Chair of Primary Federation

Ravi Pawar – Headteacher, Bryntirion Comprehensive School

Ryan Davies – Headteacher, Brynteg Comprehensive School

Tracey Wellington – Headteacher, Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen

5. Conclusions/Recommendations

6. Forward Work Programme Update

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7. Urgent Items

To consider any item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Note: This will be a Hybrid meeting and Members and Officers will be attending in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Angel Street Bridgend / Remotely via Microsoft Teams. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon as practicable after the meeting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643147 / 643148.

Yours faithfully

K Watson

Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

Councillors:

RJ Collins

M J Evans

H Griffiths

D T Harrison

Councillors

M Jones

J Llewellyn-Hopkins

E Richards

T Thomas

Councillors

JH Tildesley MBE

A Williams

AJ Williams

E D Winstanley

Registered Representatives

Rev Canon Edward Evans - Church in Wales

L Morris - Secondary School Sector

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

13 MARCH 2023

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

ANNUAL LOCAL AUTHORITY SCRUTINY REPORT CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM 2021-2022

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of the report is:

- to provide an overview of the work of Central South Consortium; and
- to update elected members on the contribution of Central South Consortium, working in partnership with the local authority, to raise standards in schools across Bridgend.

1.2 This report details the work of the consortium for the academic year September 2021-2022 and the financial year April 2021 to March 2022.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective/objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study, and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy, and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human, and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

3.1 Since 2012, Central South Consortium has delivered aspects of school improvement services on behalf of five local authorities: Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Vale of Glamorgan. This covers 381 schools and 32% of school pupils in Wales. It is a growing region with a rapidly changing

demographic, encompassing increasingly diverse communities across the economic sub region. It remains the region with the highest number of children living in poverty, with approximately 25% of pupils eligible for free school meals.

- 3.2 The service delivers challenge and support to schools on behalf of the five local authorities within the Central South Region, governed through a Joint Committee of Cabinet Members from each local authority. The Joint Committee meets regularly and formally approves the annual business plan and budget for the service, holding the service to account in terms of performance and budgetary control.
- 3.3 Scrutiny Committees in each of the five authorities invite Central South Consortium to report and present on the work of Central South Consortium in supporting schools aligned to the Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability Framework (Welsh Government, 2022). An annual report from the consortium relating to progress in the previous academic year and priorities for the year ahead is provided.
- 3.4 The core focus of all school improvement activity is providing support and challenge to schools to ensure learners across the local authority have the right educational experiences to allow them to make progress and be successful in the next phase of learning or employment.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The Annual Bridgend Local Authority Scrutiny Report for the Central South Consortium for 2021-2022 is attached at Appendix 1. The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the work of the Central South Consortium and to update Members with the contribution of the Central South Consortium, working in partnership with the local authority to raising standards in schools across Bridgend. This report details the work of the consortium for the academic year September 2021-2022 and the financial year April 2021 to April 2022.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 There is no effect upon policy framework or procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty, and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services, and functions. This is an information report. Therefore, it is not necessary to conduct an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 The well-being goals and principles prescribed for within the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 connect directly to the approach to supporting schools. The approach to supporting schools is consistent with the five ways of working as

defined within the sustainable development principle and more specifically as follows:

Long term - The approach to school improvement focuses on meeting the needs of children and young people from the age of 0 to 25.

Prevention - The focus of the school improvement is upon early identification of need and ensuring that there is appropriate learning provision in place to meet individual needs.

Integration - The approach to school improvement addresses the need for a coherent delivery of economic, social, environmental, and cultural outcomes.

Collaboration - A fundamental principal of the approach to school improvement focuses on improving collaboration and creating a unified system.

Involvement - Ensuring that children and young people, parents and carers are at the heart of the system and that needs are discussed in a person-centred way.

8. Financial implications

8.1 The cost of Central South Consortium's service to Bridgend County Borough Council was £548,784 for the 2021-2022 financial year and is £557,868 for the 2022-2023 financial year. This is met from the Education and Family Support Directorate revenue budget.

9. Recommendation(s)

9.1 The committee is requested to:

- consider the contents of this report; and
- provide feedback.

Lindsay Harvey
Corporate Director – Education and Family Support
15 February 2023

Contact officer: Sue Roberts (Group Manager, School Support)

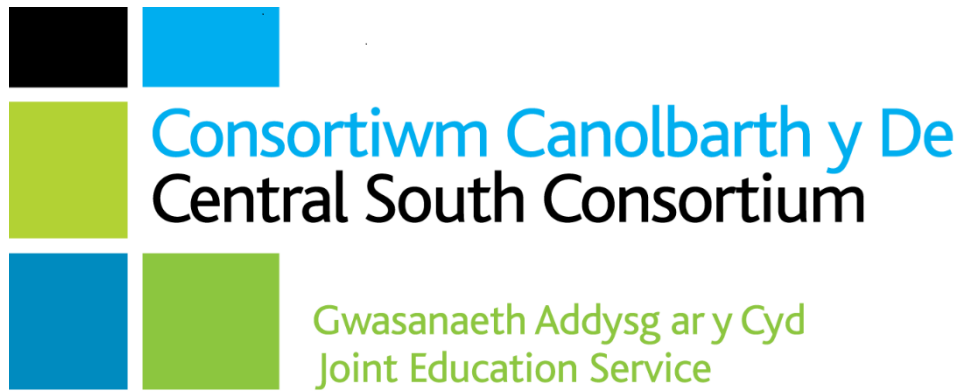
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Background documents:

Appendix 1 Annual Bridgend Local Authority Scrutiny Report for the Central South Consortium for 2021-2022



Annual Bridgend Local Authority Scrutiny Report Central South Consortium 2021-22

(Presentation in Spring Term 2023)

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1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the work of the Central South Consortium (CSC) and to update Members with the contribution of the CSC, working in partnerships with the local authority (LA) to raising standards in schools across Bridgend. This report details the work of the consortium for the academic year September 2021/2022 and the financial year April 2021 to April 2022.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Since 2012, CSC has delivered aspects of school improvement services on behalf of the five local authorities: Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. This covers 385 schools, around 32% of Wales's children. It is a growing region with rapidly changing demographic encompassing increasingly diverse communities across the economic sub region. It remains the region with the highest number of children living in poverty, with around 25% claiming free school meals.

The service delivers challenge and support on behalf of the five local authorities, governed through a Joint Committee of Cabinet Members from each authority. The Joint Committee meets regularly and formally approves the annual business plan and budget for the service, holding the service to account in terms of performance and budgetary control.

The Business plan for 2021/22 ran from 1st April 2021 until 31st March 2022 and had the following areas of priority:

1. Develop a high-quality education profession
2. Develop highly effective leadership to facilitate working collaboratively to raise standards
3. Develop strong and inclusive schools committed to excellent, equity and wellbeing
4. Continue to develop robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self- improving system
5. Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of CSC

The business plan sets out how CSC aims to deliver these priorities through effective school self-evaluation and improvement planning, underpinned by building capacity in schools to support other schools through the continued development of the 'Central South Wales Challenge'¹.

Drive Teams made up from senior leaders from across the consortium ensure that the operational plans for each priority are implemented and that impact is measured. Half-termly reviews, including an impact review with the managing director and LA Directors of Education at the end of each term, ensures that monitoring is robust. Outcomes of this process are reported to Joint Committee and can be found [here](#).

¹ Central South Wales Challenge information can be found [here](#)

An [report](#) on the progress and impact of the Business Plan 2021 - 22 is presented to the CSC Management Board and Joint Committee.

The consortium Business Plan for April 2022 to March 2025 can be found [here](#).

3.0 OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

3.1 National Data Collections and Published Information

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Welsh Government (WG) has cancelled most of the statutory data collections for 2020, 2021 and 2022. The collections suspended include:

- Attendance: Primary 2020, 2021 and 2022 data collections
- Attendance: Secondary 2020, 2021 and 2022 data collections
- National Data Collections (NDC): All 2020 and 2021 data collections, and FP and KS2 for 2022

The Minister for Education also confirmed on 21 June 2021² that WG would not be publishing performance measures related to the 2021 summer examinations series, which covers all school and post-16 performance measures for the 2020-21 academic year. In addition, given the clear implications that there will be ongoing disruptions for qualifications awarded next year, WG have suspended key stage 4 and legacy sixth form performance measures for the 2021-22 academic year also. Therefore, there are no performance measures available for key stage 4 or post-16 for summer 2020 and 2021 results, and these will also not be available for results published for summer 2022.

The Statistical bulletins for GCSE and A Level results will continue to be published for 2021-22 as made available for 2020-21 and 2019-20, but they will not contain key stage 4 or legacy sixth form performance measures and will only include national level data with amended content to previous releases of these bulletins.

Therefore, for 2021-22 there are no publicly available performance measures at school, LA or Regional Consortia level that can be included in this report, as was the situation for the last two years. It is important to note and understand that following Welsh Government's suspension of statutory data collections and publication of outcomes there will be a reduction in analysis available within CSC. However, schools will have their own internal systems for tracking and analysing pupil performance/outcomes. These form a key focus of discussions with school leaders to enable appropriate support and challenge by CSC to secure school improvement and partnership working in 2021/22.

The publication of performance data on My Local School is also suspended, with the publication of the National Categorisation³ also being suspended for 2021-22 due to the processes not being held for the academic years 2020-21 and 2021-22.

² <https://gov.wales/written-statement-school-information-improvement-and-inspection-arrangements-supporting-renewal-and>

³ <https://gov.wales/school-performance-reporting-arrangements-important-update.html> (October 2021 update)

3.2 Estyn Inspections

All Estyn inspections were suspended in March 2020⁴; however, a new pilot framework⁵ was introduced in early Spring Term 2022. The new inspection framework no longer provides judgements for inspection areas as available in previous inspection frameworks. However, information on “Interesting or Innovative Practice Case Studies” is still identified in the new reports, alongside the recording of any statutory and non-statutory follow-up inspection categories.

In Bridgend, between February 2022 and July 2022, only two schools were inspected. In Autumn 2022, four schools in Bridgend were inspected and Corneli Primary School has been asked to produce an “Interesting or Innovative Practice Case Study” on the work in the school in the development of pupils’ understanding of financial awareness, for dissemination on Estyn’s website.

In the Central South Consortium Region there were 30 schools inspected between February 2022 and July 2022. Three schools were placed in Estyn follow-up categories: one in Estyn review, one in significant improvement and one in special measures. Neither of the two schools inspected in Bridgend were placed in an Estyn follow-up category.

Table 1. Number of schools inspected 2021/22

	Primary	Secondary	Middle	Pupil Referral Units
Bridgend	2	0	0	0
The Vale of Glamorgan	5	2	0	0
Rhondda Cynon Taf	8	0	1	0
Merthyr Tydfil	1	0	0	0
Cardiff	8	2	0	1
CSC	24	4	1	1

Estyn resumed their monitoring of schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in a statutory category (special measures or significant improvement) in autumn 2021. There were six schools in CSC in either special measures or significant improvement during this period, and these six schools were all removed from their statutory category.

In addition, a further eight schools across CSC were removed from the follow-up category of “Estyn Review” during academic year 2021/22, which left only one school in “Estyn Review” from inspections that took place prior to March 2020.

⁴ <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/news/estyn-will-not-inspect-maintained-schools-next-academic-year-statement-meilyr-rowlands-hmci>

⁵ <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/news/owen-evans-her-majestys-chief-inspectors-speech-17-february-2022>

Table 2. Progress of schools in a follow up Estyn category in Bridgend

School	Estyn Category	2021-22 changes	Current position (Spring 2023)
Archbishop McGrath Catholic School	Estyn Review	No Change	The school has made sufficient progress and is no longer in Estyn Review. (Nov 2022)

3.3 Supporting School Development Planning with Performance Data Discussions

The Improvement Partners (IP) support schools through appropriate challenge to identify clear, manageable improvement priorities as a consequence of effective self-evaluation. The IP works with school leaders to review first-hand evidence, ensuring that this is rigorous and accurate. In supporting schools in the review of their self-evaluation cycle, IPs work with school leaders to ensure there is coverage of the three overarching areas as referenced in the new framework for school improvement. These are:

- Vision and Leadership
- Curriculum, Learning, and Teaching
- Wellbeing, Equity, and Inclusion

This approach works in conjunction with school systems and will not generate additional work for school leaders. This is in line with the Welsh Government School Improvement Guidance: A Framework for Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability, where it is the intention that these priorities will, in part, replace target setting.

Each school has a unique set of priorities, based on their own context, self-evaluation including the analysis of performance data, needs and improvement journey, ultimately seeking to improve learner outcomes. Therefore, priorities need to ensure a focus on pupil progress. Furthermore, the IP will also support schools in ensuring that improvement priorities are drawn together in a single, strategic school development plan, helping to reduce workload, streamline schools' strategic planning processes and avoid unnecessary duplication and bureaucracy.

In 2022-23, key common focus areas that have been identified by schools include:

- Oracy, reading, and writing
- Numeracy across the curriculum
- Refine the curriculum
- Assessment and progress of learners
- Emotional and mental wellbeing
- Leadership capacity
- Self-evaluation processes and impact on teaching and learning
- ALN reforms
- Attendance and behaviour
- Transition

3.4 Alps Analysis

Alps value added performance analysis measures progress against national, aspirational benchmarks for each individual student. For 2022, the analysis identified the following key points:

A Level

- Across the CSC region there has been a continued increase in the number of students taking at least one A level over the last 5 years, with the overall number of exam entries also increasing. In Bridgend the numbers of pupils taking at least one A level has fluctuated.
- Overall, the value added was lower in 2022 than in 2021 (Centre Determined Grades) but it is higher than in 2018 or 2019 (pre-covid).
- Students taking A levels in 2022, had high prior attainment in 2020 (Centre Assessed Grades) than for previous cohorts.
- National results were also higher in 2022 than in 2018 or 2019.
- Replicating the same grades through exams may be challenging in 2023 as results will be set 'broadly midway between the 2019 and 2022 results'.
- The A level quality indicator score for Bridgend aligned with the scores from 2017/18 and 2018/19.

AS Level

- The number of students taking at least one AS level has increased each year since 2017/18.
- Prior attainment (Centre Determined Grades) was higher for the 2022 cohort than for previous cohorts.
- National results were also higher in 2022 than in 2018 or 2019.
- AS value added, along with results, have increased since 2019. It decreased between 2021 and 2022 but was higher than in either 2018 or 2019.
- The cohort achieved higher AS grades than cohorts in 2018 and 2019 (counting 40% towards A Level) in 2022 AS examinations.
- Replicating the same grades at A Level in 2023 may still be challenging as results will be set '*broadly midway between the 2019 and 2022 results.*'

Level 3 Vocational Qualifications

- More students are still being entered for the 2010 BTECs (no examination units) than the 2016 BTECs, though there is a slow increase in take-up for the 2016 suite.
- Only 5 qualifications had 100+ entries in 2022. Four of these were WJEC applied qualifications.

Key Stage 4

- KS4 Results were higher nationally in 2022 than in 2018 or 2019.
- Value-added soared, along with results, across the CSC region in 2020 and 2021 and is sustained in 2022.
- Value added rose for eFSM students by 2021 and was sustained in 2022.

- Replicating the same grades through examinations may be challenging in 2023 as results will be set '*broadly midway between the 2019 and 2022 results.*'

4.0 SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE

With the significant reform agenda that is in progress across Wales, it is important CSC continues to ensure the support provided by Improvement Partners (IPs) is holistic, efficient, and effective in line with the national principles and guidance from Welsh Government.

4.1 Improvement Partner Deployment

In 2021/2022, Bridgend local authority contributed £548,784 (15.4%) towards the core functions of the consortium. In addition to the core costs of the consortium this has provided funding for IPs (3.6 FTE) and a Principal Improvement Partner (PIP) (1 FTE).

IPs continue to have a relevant educational background and level of experience and provide good quality support and challenge to schools. Many IPs are accredited or are working towards accreditation by Association of Education Advisers (AOEA). They have continued to work well and in partnership with the local authority to provide effective monitoring, challenge, support and intervention where needed. Improvement partners have continued to commission bespoke support and intervention from the wider support teams within the CSC.

National Categorisation was suspended from September 2020 and a new evolving model for IP deployment was consulted on in the summer term 2020 and implemented from September 2020. It was reviewed and refined during 2021 to support implementation of the Welsh Government Guidance, Improvement, Evaluation and Accountability in September 2022⁶.

4.2 Work Programme of Improvement Partners

During the autumn term, IPs worked together with schools to agree appropriate improvement priorities, construct the school development plan (SDP) and broker support. All IPs gathered authentic first-hand evidence to support the school self-evaluation process. IPs joined school meetings and participated in self-evaluation activities as appropriate. The full schedule of activities is contained in the Framework for School Improvement⁷. These are not a 'tick list' but provided a reminder as to key dates when activity should be completed. IPs built an individual work plan with each school to ensure that these activities were built into the school improvement conversations. There were ongoing themes which were a focus of all visits, these included progress of learners, curriculum, learning and teaching, leadership, well-being, equity and inclusion, effectiveness of self-evaluation and improvement planning.

4.3 Framework for School Improvement

Support for schools will take the form of core or enhanced support that is provided in a fair way that is inversely proportional to needs of the school. All schools will receive a basic

⁶ [School improvement guidance: framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](https://www.gov.wales/government/guidance/school-improvement-guidance-framework-for-evaluation-improvement-and-accountability)

⁷ <https://www.cscjes.org.uk/repository/discovery/resource/97df5386-f46a-4287-a766-20eedd70db27/en?sort=recent&strict=0>

minimum allocation of days and further time will be allocated based on the support needs identified.

This minimum is:

- Primary/Nursery - 7 days
- Special/PRU - 10 days
- Secondary – 10 days
- 3-16/19 - 16 days

Enhanced support schools will receive additional time to reflect the development needs and monitoring requirements. All support will be agreed between the school and IP and shared with the LA when the school improvement priorities are agreed. Specified days might not all be from the same IP but might include work of others more specialists in certain areas. The impact of this support will be monitored half termly and will be shared with LAs in the termly review meetings.

The IP supports schools through appropriate challenge to identify clear, manageable improvement priorities as a consequence of effective self-evaluation. The IP works with school leaders to review first-hand evidence and ensures processes are rigorous and accurate. In supporting schools in the review of their self-evaluation cycle, IPs work with leaders to monitor and evaluate progress against school development plan priorities.

If schools are not demonstrating appropriate rates of progress towards achieving their improvement priorities, this information is discussed with the school, governors, LA and CSC and a decision will then be made as to whether the school may need enhanced support. IPs will then provide a detailed evaluation of progress with a judgement on the rate of progress. If the school, governors, LA, and CSC agree that progress is appropriate, a discussion can then take place about moving the school to enhanced support. The same process exists if a school is making sufficient progress to move from enhanced support.

Key improvement objectives are identified, and regular school improvement forums/progress meetings held for all enhanced schools to judge the impact of the support in enabling the school to meet its objectives. A judgement is made on the extent of the progress the schools have made in meeting each objective. This information is provided to Directors in termly progress reports.

Each term CSC prepares a detailed report for Directors and then meets with them to discuss the aspects of the report that they select. The report contains a detailed breakdown of the support provided within the previous term.

5.0 SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

5.1 Schools Receiving Enhanced Support

During 2021 -22 academic year four schools received enhanced support during the year. There were two schools receiving enhanced support at the beginning of the year with a further two schools identified for enhanced support during the course of the year.

The following table analyses the progress judgements made across a wide range of the key priorities in the schools receiving enhanced support. Priorities will often cover a number of aspects of practice. Judgements are made and agreed in partnership with the school, CSC and LA officers. The data is based on all 4 schools receiving enhanced support, covering a total of 17 priorities or recommendations. These have been categorised under four broader headings of Leadership, Standards and Progress, Teaching and Learning and Wellbeing.

Table 3. Summary of Progress Against Recommendations

% FIGURES	Progress Autumn 2021			
Aspects of practice within Priorities	Limited	Satisfactory	Strong	Very Good
OVERALL		77	11	11
Standards and Progress		11		
Teaching and Learning		22		
Wellbeing		22		11
Leadership		22	11	
% FIGURES	Progress Spring 2022			
Aspects of practice within Priorities	Limited	Satisfactory	Strong	Very Good
OVERALL		22	67	11
Standards and Progress			11	
Teaching and Learning		11	11	
Wellbeing			22	11
Leadership		11	22	
% FIGURES	Progress Summer 2022			
Aspects of practice within Priorities	Limited	Satisfactory	Strong	Very Good
OVERALL		18	47	35
Standards and Progress		6	6	
Teaching and Learning			24	6
Wellbeing		6	12	18
Leadership		6	6	12

As a result of the support and challenge, most schools continue to make good progress against a very challenging context. Schools causing concern are well-supported and most schools make strong or better progress against many of the strategic priorities or recommendations

5.2 Intervention Strategy for Schools Causing Concern

The Intervention [Strategy for Schools Causing Concern](#) has been reviewed, agreed with all Directors and shared with schools. This has led to clear processes for intervention being understood and utilised by the local authorities and forms the basis of enhanced support work for all settings in the region.

Within Bridgend there are no schools in receipt of a LA Statutory Warning Notice and no schools have received a pre warning notice.

6.0 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & SUPPORT

Professional learning (PL) is a change process to improve and develop professional knowledge, skills and understanding. PL should focus on changes that impact on learners through a practitioner's own learning, leading to increased understanding, and changes in their behaviours, i.e., policies, provision, and practice.

At CSC, the Curriculum and Professional Learning (C&PL) team provide a comprehensive range of high quality, evidence-informed PL opportunities to all schools in the region to support local, regional, and national improvement priorities. All PL and support is available at no charge to schools for all practitioners and leaders, including governors. Most PL opportunities are developed and facilitated in partnership with schools within the regional self-improving system, the Central South Wales Challenge (CSWC). C&PL officers also work in partnership with local authorities (LAs), other regional consortia and partnerships, Welsh Government (WG) and where appropriate, external consultants in the development and facilitation of PL.

6.1 Central South Wales Challenge

The CSWC is the partnership of all schools and settings across the CSC region working together to develop a self-improving system. The CSWC is evaluated annually to ensure it meets the current and evolving needs of schools and the wider system. A refined structure was developed for 2021-22, considering the ongoing challenges in schools related to COVID.

The CSWC includes of a number of components that support the self-improving school system. Each component plays a key role in ensuring that all schools and settings in the region can access appropriate PL and support. Schools and settings should engage with the components and PL activities that best support their school improvement priorities. The CSWC components are categorised broadly into two areas, namely 'professional learning collaborations' and 'professional learning opportunities'.

Practitioners and school leaders, including governors, can contribute to the CSWC in key roles to support other schools across the region, working in partnership with the CSC school improvement team to provide professional learning and/or bespoke support to schools across the region.

Roles include lead practitioners, system leaders and regional leaders of governance. During 2021-22 the following were from Bridgend schools: 15 Lead Practitioners.

6.2 Professional Learning Collaborations

All schools in the region are allocated collaboration funding to support participation in collaborative working within and beyond their school, particularly focusing on the curriculum reforms. During 2021-22, each school in the region received a £10,000 lump sum + £417 per FTE teacher. In Bridgend schools this totalled £929,392

Collaborations include:

Clusters

There are 9 clusters in Bridgend. In the professional learning and collaboration survey, 100% of Bridgend schools stated that they were engaged with cluster working. All clusters have a named convenor. All clusters submitted a mid-year and end of year evaluation.

An example of effective cluster working in Bridgend shared in an end of year evaluation:

The convenor reports that cluster work is strongly linked to SDP priorities and that they have been effective in developing the vision, aims and curriculum maps which support curriculum planning. Cluster networking has improved throughout the year and professional development has been highly effective in meeting the needs of staff and ensuring impact in classrooms. Feedback reports from class writing tasks and PL from CSC on the 'No More Marking' project has had a good impact on learners' ability to write for a variety of purposes and a whole school approach to 'Cold Writes'. Teaching has focussed on a continuum of skills agreed by the cluster LLC group.

School Improvement Groups (SIGs)

During 2021-22, in the professional learning and collaboration survey, 72% of schools in Bridgend that they were engaged in a SIG, working with schools across the region on the curriculum and/or the wider education reforms. This is an approximate decrease of 12% of schools since 2019-20, based on convenor reporting. Schools cited additional pressures on their time in responding to COVID and curriculum reform for this decrease in SIG engagement. Nearly all SIGs are led by one school leader acting as a convenor for the group. All SIG convenors complete mid-year and end-of year evaluations of their joint work. Four SIG convenors are from Bridgend schools.

Networks

Most (92%) Bridgend schools participated in regional networking activity with a total of 621 practitioners engaged.

There were 24 secondary subject discipline networks active across the CSC region to support the development of the level 2 and level 3 qualifications. During 2021-22, 81 practitioners from 11 Bridgend schools engaged with these networks.

All Bridgend Welsh Medium primary and secondary schools participated in 'Y Ffed.' or 'Gyda'n Gilydd' networks. All Bridgend special schools and PRU's participated in the special schools' / PRU network. Each network received an additional £30k funding each, to plan and facilitate PL where their specific needs were not fully met through the CSC PL offer. There were almost 70 schools across the region engaged in these school-led networks.

[See Appendix A for further details on professional learning collaborations].

6.3 Professional Learning Opportunities

Engagement in Professional Learning events, networks, programmes, assignments, and conferences has increased over the past three years.

Table 4. Engagement in Professional Learning events in the previous 3 years.

Year	No. delegates	% Schools
2019/20	8018	95%
2200/21	9500	100%
2021/22	12,190	100%

During 2021-22, 1841 delegates from all Bridgend schools engaged in CSC PL events, programmes, networks, assignments, and conferences.

In evaluations completed following participation in PL during 2021-22:

- Nearly all practitioners stated that there would be a significant change to practice and that the learning would have an impact on pupils in their settings.
- 97% stated that they were confident in the knowledge of the topic following the PL.
- 92% stated that the PL would change their practice, with 94% planning to use what they have learned.
- 72% stated that the PL was linked to their school improvement priorities.
- 93% stated that the PL would impact on learners in their setting.

[See Appendix B for further details on professional learning opportunities].

6.4 Regional Funded Collaboration Projects

During 2021, almost 40 projects were available to all schools across the region total £340,000 of funding for schools to participate in these projects in support of local, regional and national priorities. Almost 650 practitioners from 80% (306) of schools in the region were engaged in these projects 129 practitioners from 85% (51) of schools in Bridgend participated in these projects.

An example of a Bridgend primary school's participation in the CSC regional funded health and well-being project focused on emotional literacy:

The project supported schools through an enquiry approach to identify and explore a key area in relation to mental health and emotional well-being within the context of their school. The school wanted to explore a whole-school approach that would allow them to support their learners' ability to effectively verbalise their emotions in different situations and respond appropriately. Evidence-based research by Dan Siegel was influential in developing their understanding of the brain science linked to emotions. This led them to

exploring the Emotion Coaching approach, (which was first developed in the USA by psychologist John Gottman).

The school developed training materials about Emotion Coaching for both staff and pupils. Their School Council took an active role in developing their own resources that enabled them to share key messages with their peers. These resources included developing workshop sessions, role-play challenges and scenario cards, as well as videos showing how to employ some of the different techniques of emotion coaching.

As part of the evaluation process, the school reported the following impact within their school, due to changes made as part of the enquiry project:

- Pupils are regulated and ready for learning following regulation activities using a total communication approach.*
- Behaviours have reduced on behaviour watch.*
- Increase in behaviours when regulation sessions haven't taken place i.e. when supply teacher in.*
- Independence growing during regulation time, engaging in activities independently through using choice boards.*
- Pupils with ALN are more engaged and ready to learn after regulation activities suited to them.*
- Decrease in behaviours that challenge once self-regulated.*
- Pupils achieve more if they are regulated and ready to learn.*
- Reduction in fear score on whole school motional data.*

6.5 Professional Learning and Support for Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

In line with Welsh Government guidance, CSC defines a school's curriculum as 'everything a learner experiences in pursuit of the four purposes. It is not simply what we teach, but how we teach and crucially, why we teach it'. Therefore, curriculum professional learning and support includes the what - curriculum design, and the how - pedagogy/teaching, underpinned by the why - our national mission and the four purposes.

6.6 Curriculum for Wales (CFW)

For all primary schools (all year groups), and special schools, the implementation of Cfw commences in September 2022. Mandatory roll-out for secondary schools commences with Year 7 and Year 8 in September 2023. However, secondary schools and PRUs were given the option of rolling out to Year 7 in September 2022.

Secondary schools and PRU's rolling out September 2022:

- Brynteg School
- Coleg Cymunedol y Dderwen
- Cynffig Comprehensive School
- Heronsbridge School
- Maesteg School
- Pencoed Comprehensive School
- Ysgol Bryn Castell
- Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd

There are a wide variety of PL events, programmes, assignments and networks related to all areas of the curriculum, learning and teaching. During 2021-22, 9136 delegates from 99% (383) schools in the region engaged in regional professional learning events, programmes, networks and conferences focused on curriculum, teaching and learning. This includes 1576 delegates from 100% of schools in Bridgend.

Improvement Partners support all schools in school improvement related to curriculum and the wider educational reforms. This includes signposting relevant PL opportunities and brokering bespoke support. During 2021-22, Improvement Partners worked in partnership with schools to self-evaluate their journey to curriculum roll-out in line with national and regional guidance. These informed reports to local authorities and Welsh Government on school preparations for the implementation of Curriculum for Wales. Reporting continues in 2022-23.

Between November 2020 and August 2022, 2379 practitioners and school leaders (including governors) from 87% (335) of schools in the region engaged with the national professional learning programme for Curriculum for Wales. 887 of these were from 97% (58) of schools in Bridgend.

In June 2022, CSC hosted a virtual Curriculum for Wales conference with record numbers of engagement. The day included keynote speakers, a live roundtable discussion and an exhibition area including 'by schools for schools' where schools shared their emerging practice. All materials from the conference have been made available for all schools to access on the CSC website. 612 unique users from 75% of schools in the CSC region accessing the platform during the live and on demand period. At least one practitioner / school leader engaged with the conference from many (78%) of Bridgend schools.

Between December 2021 and February 2022, 72 practitioners from 55 schools across the CSC region participated in a cross-regional curriculum design PL programme. This included 19 practitioners from 17 Bridgend schools.

In June 2022, CSC ran a pilot series of drop-in sessions for practitioners, middle and senior leaders. The sessions provided an opportunity for schools to discuss curriculum implementation questions, queries and concerns. Five full day sessions were made available, in venues across the region, one in each local authority. Five Bridgend schools participated in the pilot sessions. These drop-in sessions continue each half term during 2022-23 as a result of the positive feedback from schools.

18 schools and clusters from across the region shared presentations and videos detailing their processes and approaches towards curriculum roll-out. These videos have been viewed over 4,500 times on the CSC website and have supported many practitioners with school-based examples of what others are trailing and reflecting on in relation to implementation of Curriculum for Wales.

[See Appendix C for further details on Curriculum for Wales].

6.7 Literacy / LLC English

The [professional learning offer](#) for Languages, Literacy and Communication (LLC) is very strong with multiple pathways for schools to engage in PL that meets their needs. This includes programmes on oracy, reading and writing and LLC network meetings. During 2021-22, 1441 delegates from 81% (312) schools in the region engaged in literacy/LLC English PL programmes, events, conferences, assignments and networks. This included 197 delegates from 83% (50) of Bridgend schools.

As a result of engaging with PL focused on literacy/LLC English, nearly all participants considered that their practice had changed in some way. Around half of practitioners reported that the learning from the programmes had resulted in a more fundamental change to practice. An additional proxy indicator was that many practitioners expressed that they had developed their own subject knowledge as a result of engaging with the PL. Many participants reported that their learning from the programme had begun to be used in their settings outside of their own classroom. In a few cases, PL linked to the programme had already taken place in their own settings and as a result, participants were beginning to see changes across their team, setting or cluster.

6.8 Mathematics and Numeracy

During 2021-22, CSC offered a [wide range of PL](#) for mathematics & numeracy for schools to engage to meet their improvement needs in this area. 883 delegates from 55% (211) schools in the region engaged in PL programmes, events, conferences, assignments and networks. This included 136 delegates from 60% (36) of Bridgend schools.

Most (91%) delegates evaluated that engagement with mathematics and numeracy PL enhanced their knowledge and skills and that this would be appropriate for use in their setting. Many (85%) felt that engagement with PL was appropriate to their needs and skill level. Schools engaging in regional mathematics and numeracy networking opportunities stated that they are now more able to appropriately determine curriculum pathways for all learners and provide timely and effective interventions.

6.9 Digital Learning

During 2021-22 a comprehensive range of [PL opportunities](#) was available from CSC to support all schools in developing pupils' knowledge and skills aligned to the Digital Competence Framework (DCF). In addition, PL was provided to support practitioners to develop the [effective use of technology](#) to enhance learning and teaching. 525 delegates from 46% (176) schools in the region engaged in digital learning PL programmes, events, conferences, assignments and networks. This included 83 delegates from 45% (27) of Bridgend schools.

Most participants reported the PL enhanced their knowledge of the subject matter. Many (82%) reported that the PL was appropriate to needs and skill level and that it was relevant to their daily role. Most practitioners evaluated that they had a clearer understanding of the ways digital can support blended learning, direct teaching and digital competence. Many practitioners planned to use what they had learned in their roles and most participants reported that the PL would lead to at least some change in their practice.

6.10 Qualifications and Post-16 Education

Qualifications Networks

Schools are supported to develop provision of current GCSE/level 2 and A-Level/level 3 qualifications through regional networks. Work also commenced to support Qualifications Wales' engagement with schools across the region. This continued to raise awareness of the next steps in the Qualified for life / qualification reform process.

In 2021-22, most of the 24 secondary networks were facilitated by Lead Practitioners from schools across the region and were co-constructed with the CSC curriculum team. Schools were encouraged to collaborate and share effective strategies and practice at subject level. 81 practitioners from 11 Bridgend secondary schools participated in secondary curriculum networks.

Post-16 Education

A sixth-form leaders network provided opportunities for schools to develop effective pastoral and academic support at post-16. Bespoke support was also available for all aspects of post-16 provision, including transition, retention, attainment and progression. Engagement at Post-16 regional network meetings increased significantly from schools across the region throughout 2021-22. A majority of schools regularly attend network meetings, have joined the post-16 online community (56 members) and engaged in the events and projects through the post-16 professional learning offer.

During 2021-22 a range of post-16 funded projects and events supported practitioners in sixth forms across the region to collaborate and consider learner wellbeing strategies, career aspirations and systems to raise attainment at post-16. 3 Bridgend practitioners participated in these projects.

[See Appendix D for further details related to post-16].

6.11 Welsh

CSC provides professional learning and bespoke support to schools in the development of Welsh and supporting the Welsh Government strategy '[Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers](#)'. This includes:

- Welsh language professional learning for the school workforce, linked to the [Language Competency Framework](#)
- Leadership of Welsh development and policy
- Languages Literacy and Communication (LLC): Welsh in Welsh Medium schools
- LLC: Welsh in English Medium schools
- Welsh across the curriculum
- Welsh culture, history, and heritage
- Welsh Language Charter Frameworks

Welsh in Education Officers: During 2021-22, all schools in the region had a designated Welsh in Education Officer that provided schools with support and PL linked to the areas above. Examples of support included: developing subject leader skills, joint book scrutiny, listening to learners, learning walks and providing professional learning in areas such as oracy, reading and writing. Also, Welsh across the curriculum and practitioner Welsh language development. Welsh in Education Officers also provided support for schools on their Welsh Language Charter developments along with undertaking verification visits for various awards.

Welsh language development for practitioners: CSC provides a wide offer of asynchronous (on demand), face to face and blended Welsh language professional learning for practitioners. During 2021-22, in evaluations of this PL, most practitioners stated that their personal language skills had improved, and this had therefore influenced their behaviour and subsequently impacted positively upon the quality of teaching and learning. Bespoke Welsh language professional learning is also available to individual schools and clusters.

Leadership of Welsh Programme: This programme is designed to support senior leaders to develop the Welsh language and culture on a whole school strategic level. In 2021-22 participants evaluations the programme was graded 5/5 for the degree to which the programme extended delegate's skills and knowledge.

Welsh Sabbatical Programmes: CSC provides strong post sabbatical support which includes network meetings, sharing of good practice and resources, leadership of Welsh short course, bespoke 1:1 sessions and support to disseminate their knowledge and skills with other practitioners.

Funded Welsh medium and English medium collaboration project: CSC funds a joint project between Welsh and English medium schools focused on the development of pupil's oracy skills and use of incidental and informal Welsh. All schools in the region can apply to be part of this project.

Networks: CSC facilitated the following regional networks in 2021-22:

- Primary Welsh Language Charter
- Secondary Welsh Language Charter
- Welsh Medium Welsh Leaders
- English Medium Welsh Leaders

Nearly all participants in the network meetings stated that following the sessions they were confident about their knowledge of the topic and that their own capacity to lead had increased. Many participants stated that the network meetings supported them to meet with colleagues and senior leaders to discuss professional learning and to create a whole school action plan to further develop this area.

Support for Welsh in 2022-23

From September 2022, PL and support for Welsh has been aligned with all other areas of curriculum and professional learning. All schools have access to a wide range of high-quality professional learning and bespoke support in three key areas:

- Languages, Literacy & Communication – Welsh
- Welsh Language Development
- Welsh Language Professional Learning

There has been a restructure of the CSC officers supporting schools to align to this.

6.12 Other Curriculum Areas

Professional learning and bespoke support are available from CSC to support schools in all other areas of the curriculum, including:

- Expressive arts
- Humanities
- Health and well-being
- Science and technology
- Relationships and sexuality education
- Religion, values and ethics
- Careers and work-related experiences

6.13 National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry (NSERE)

During 2021-22, the NSERE opportunities in the CSC region were:

- Spirals of Enquiry PL assignment
- National Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP)
- Evidence Informed Profession Project (EIPP)

The **Spirals of Enquiry PL assignment** provides all schools with the opportunity to develop and enhance enquiry skills. The assignment was created in partnership with the Network of Inquiry and Indigenous Education (NOIIE) following their presentation at a WG event. It is published on the CSC website and available to all practitioners to complete asynchronously. 4 schools from Bridgend have engaged with this assignment.

National Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP) supports the development of the new curriculum, Welsh Government is working with regional consortia and higher education institution (HEI) partners to develop a national programme of teacher professional enquiry.

During 2021-22, 23 schools from Bridgend were engaged in NPEP, four as lead enquiry schools and 19 as partner enquiry schools.

All schools that have taken part in the NPEP project report learning and subsequent changes to policy or practice in their settings.

Evaluation from an NPEP schools in Bridgend:

We wanted to hear from our children to determine the impact of the changes we made upon them and their learning. Therefore, we conducted two surveys to give them the opportunity to voice their opinions and for us to gather data. One thing in particular that became apparent from the data was the positive impact our new approach has had on children's mindsets. It would appear the changes we have made have had an impact beyond simply tightening up processes to achieve 'tangible' objectives (e.g. a child securing a skill by editing their work after engaging in dialogue with their teacher). They have had a deeper impact, developing children's attitudes and dispositions. Over 95% of pupils felt that they were developing a growth mindset in school, and over 90% of pupils believed this was enabling them to show the determination needed to overcome problems they faced with their work. The approaches we have used have not only provided learners with opportunities to overcome problems and improve their work, but they have also increased their desire and determination to do so. While the initial purpose of our new policy was to provide wider opportunities for to take steps forward in their learning, a shift in attitudes is perhaps of greater significance. The children can approach a wide range of problems with an improved mindset – it supports their learning beyond a specific skill they are currently working on developing. Nearly 95% of pupils agreed that they were learning the right attitude to carry on learning after they leave the school.

The Evidence Informed Profession Project (EIPP) support the system in using evidence effectively in a school setting, WG funded one school in each LA in Wales to work with a HEI partner focussing to design, trial and develop proposed pilots for models that support an evidence-informed profession in Wales. The Bridgend EIPP school was Coety Primary, focusing on curriculum design.

The work completed on the EIPP demonstrated that there are many enquiry models being used across Wales, but these can put a significant demand on school capacity. This learning has been used to shape the next phase of this work to Embedding Research and Enquiry in Schools (EREIS) which is exploring how models can be sustainable and embed into school improvement processes.

The Pedagogy Research Project supports the system to better understand the way in which research and evidence can support the development of teaching. One lead school per region is working with partner schools and a HEI partner to create a 'pedagogical narrative' which will be shared with the system.

[See Appendix E for further details related to research and enquiry].

6.14 Bespoke Support

Bespoke support is available to all schools in the region to support school improvement priorities that are not fully met by the published regional PL opportunities or through the work of the Improvement Partner (IP). Bespoke support is provided for individual schools, clusters, SIGs, and groups of schools working together of shared improvement priorities.

During 2021-22, CSC provided bespoke support following 155 requests from schools in the region. These included 20 for Bridgend schools, 18 provided by the CSC C&PL team related to curriculum.

16 schools across the region supported other schools in areas of school improvement. In all school-to-school partnership there is evidence of behavioural changes at either practitioner or leadership level.

An example of bespoke support provided to a Bridgend cluster:

CSC supported schools from the cluster on their joint INSET day, to help them consolidate their understanding of the Curriculum for Wales framework and further develop a shared understanding of progression. This resulted in practitioners deepening their understanding of the framework and the identification of concepts and big ideas within the Areas. The schools within the cluster are committed to continuing their work on curriculum planning with as a result of further support from the CSC Area Leads they have agreed their non negotiables as a cluster and are developing a high-quality curriculum for all learners.

6.15 Professional Pathways

The Professional Pathways suite of professional learning and support equips practitioners at all levels, from teaching assistants through to senior leaders and governors across the region with the knowledge, experiences and skills to be effective in their roles.

Teaching Assistant Learning Pathway

CSC provides a range of professional learning and support opportunities for TAs. The pathway includes:

- TA Induction programme
- Practising TA Programme
- The Aspiring HLTA Development Programme, Darpar CALU, is available for all experienced TAs who believe they can demonstrate their attainment against the Professional Standards for Assisting Teaching. On completion of the programme, TAs may apply for assessment to gain their HLTA status. Six TAs from Bridgend completed the Aspiring HLTA programme in Cylch 3 and 4. Of those assessed in Cylch 3 in Summer 2022, two TAs were awarded HLTA status.

Example from a school in Bridgend:

A TA gained their HLTA status in Cylch 2 and stood out as someone with great interpersonal skills. They are now going to attend facilitators training to become a CSC TALP facilitator for Cylch 6/7, Practising and Induction programmes.

Experienced TAs and HLTAs also have the opportunity to become trained assessors, facilitators or coaches, supporting other TAs within their own school and in other schools in the region. There are currently two trained assessors from Bridgend schools.

During 2021-22, three schools in Bridgend were involved in CSC projects related to TAs focussing on ALN, Foundation Phase and TAs in Special Schools.

6.16 Initial Teacher Education

During 2021-22, 172 schools across the region, including 32 schools in Bridgend, supported student teachers in partnership with 4 ITE providers to deliver a range of ITE programmes and routes. Of these schools, seven are Lead Schools across the partnerships, four have employer status with the Open University (with salaried students) and the remainder are placement schools.

During 2021 -2022, 223 ITE graduates engaged with CSC before they formally commenced induction increasing from 150 in the previous year. The total number of students awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in 2022 across Wales was 1131. Of those, 162 graduates were enrolled with Cardiff Metropolitan University.

6.17 Induction – Newly Qualified Teachers

CSC acts as the Appropriate Body (AB) for all newly qualified teachers (NQTs) in the region. NQTs work with induction mentors (IMs), external verifiers (EVs) and the CSC team to undertake induction. CSC, as the AB, leads the necessary verification and administrative processes with regards to induction. During 2021-22, 388 NQTs in the CSC region passed induction, 56 from Bridgend schools.

The professional learning offer for induction includes:

- National NQT and IM events and programmes
- CSC NQT Aspire programme, developed and facilitated by Aspire schools across the region
- Networking opportunities for IMs and EVs
- Coaching and mentoring training for IMs and EVs

National Induction Professional Learning

During 2021-22:

- 100% of all EVs 2021-22 engaged in training, as per the previous year.
- 78% of IMs attended the national briefing, significantly increased from 48% in 2020-21 and 27% in 2019-20. 53% of IMs in Bridgend schools attended.
- 95% of all NQTs attended the national briefing significantly increased from 78% in 2020-21, and 72% in 2019-20. 87% of NQTs in Bridgend schools attended.

Evaluations from NQTs in CSC regarding the national PL were very positive with more than 90% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the usefulness and relevance of the sessions. NQTs had the opportunity to reflect on their practice and engage in professional dialogue with other

NQTs, which supports 'Professional Learning', an area in the Professional Teaching and Leadership Standards.

CSC Induction Professional Learning

CSC offers the regionally developed 'Aspire' 5-day PL programme 'Aspire' to all NQTs in the region, facilitated by trained tutors from 17 Aspire schools.

The following schools in Bridgend are Aspire schools:

- Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen
- Pencoed Primary School

During 2021-22, 317 NQTs across the region engaged in the Aspire programme including 50 NQTs from Bridgend schools (96% of new NQTs in Bridgend).

96% of NQTs agreed strongly that the programme enhanced their knowledge of the subject matter and was appropriate to their needs and skill level. Furthermore, 96% agreed strongly that the content was relevant to their daily work and would recommend this programme to NQTs in the future.

The Aspire programme, together with 'Think Like A Teacher' resources addressed the impact of COVID on the early practitioner's limited classroom experiences and opportunities to learn from experienced practitioners.

6.18 Leadership Development

Developing leadership is a key priority for CSC. The role of school leaders is instrumental in securing the best outcomes for our learners and in developing our leaders of the future, not just in their own schools but across the region.

Middle Leaders Development Programme – aimed at new or aspiring leaders in schools who have areas of responsibility and line manage staff. The promotes highly effective leadership through self-evaluation and reflection, exploring the relationship between leadership, successful schools and the wider community. During 2021-22, 15 participants from ten Bridgend schools were engaged in the programme

Senior Leaders Development Programme – aimed at leaders who have overall responsibility for an aspect of leadership across a school. This includes senior curriculum or pastoral leaders and members of the senior leadership team, such as assistant or deputy headteachers. Participants are allocated an external leadership coach who supports them to reflect and build on the content of the modules. During 2021-22, five participants from four Bridgend schools were engaged in the programme.

100% of participants stated that they had improved as a leaders as a result of their learning from the programme. Nearly all participants stated that their Leadership Experience Task had a positive impact on pupils in their school.

Aspiring Headteacher Development Programme - aimed at school leaders who believe that they demonstrate the National Leadership Standards and for whom headship is a realistic

next step and one in which they are actively seeking. This programme is a professional learning opportunity for aspiring headteachers in preparation for undertaking the assessment required for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). It is a five-module programme delivered over three terms spanning two academic years. Each module addresses a significant component of effective school leadership for example, the role of an effective leader in the Welsh education context, and a strong focus on the components of schools as learning organisations.

The sessions are delivered in conjunction with experienced and successful headteachers from our region's local authorities. Each participant is allocated a leadership coach, a serving headteacher from the region, who not only works with the participant on a one-one basis but also facilitates access to an effective peer network to support them in the NPQH assessment. During 2021-22, five participants from five Bridgend schools were engaged in this programme and all have registered for NPQH assessment in 2023. There was one headteacher from a Bridgend school engaged as a coach.

New & Acting Headteacher Development Programme - aimed at newly appointed or acting headteachers with responsibility for leading a school and are in their first two years of the role. The five modules of the programme are delivered by a blend of cross-regional leads, keynote speakers and experienced headteachers from within the CSC region. During 2021-22, five participants from five Bridgend schools were engaged in the programme. Three Headteachers from Bridgend schools are engaged as leadership coaches on this programme.

Experienced Headteacher Programme – aimed at headteachers with five years or more experience as a headteacher. It consists of a core module that allows participants to reflect on their individual effectiveness as a leader and two additional modules that develop the headteacher as a reflective researcher through engagement in communities of practice. During 2021-22, one headteacher from a Bridgend school engaged in this programme.

System Leader Development Programme - This programme has been developed by CSC to complete the leadership pathway. Developing system leadership is critical to support schools in curriculum and wider education reform and achieve equity and excellence for all. The System Leaders Programme is aimed at experienced headteachers who wish to further develop and support other schools and the wider education system. There is a robust application and interview process for participation in this programme applicants must have:

- A proven track record of excellent leadership whilst developing their school as a learning organisation.
- Training in coaching and mentoring and experience of developing a culture in their own setting.
- Experience of managing significant change in their own setting.
- A minimum of five years' experience as a successful headteacher.

The programme was piloted during 2021-22. A total of 14 headteachers participated in the pilot programme, including one headteacher from a Bridgend school. The programme includes professional learning facilitated by CSC officer and external consultants. Examples of

the professional learning delivered to System Leaders included 'Situational Leadership' and 'Enabling Equity and Excellence'.

Upon successful completion of the PL programme, the System Leaders were made available for deployment across the region to support schools requiring improvement. Improvement Partners work closely with a school's system leader to plan, monitor and evaluate the impact of this leadership support.

System Leaders have also represented CSC, as appropriate, on policy development groups and forums, both regionally and nationally. A formal evaluation capturing the impact system leader pilot programme will be completed before the end of the financial year 2022-23.

6.19 Other PL and Support for School Leaders

CSC also provides support for school leaders, including governors, via regional a wide variety of PL events, conference, assignments, programmes, and networking and collaboration opportunities. This includes the CfW senior and middle leadership modules and a comprehensive programme of coaching and mentoring and bespoke support.

6.20 Coaching and Mentoring

CSC has developed a strategy to embed coaching and mentoring (C&M) across the region, strengthening support for participants on the leadership pathway programmes and supporting leaders at all levels in their roles.

In 2021 – 2022, nine members of staff from Bridgend schools completed the National Coaching and Mentoring Trainer Programme, training them to deliver the national C&M in the region. Nine out of the ten Bridgend clusters now have an identified facilitator. Additionally, 11 practitioners from eight schools in Bridgend engaged in the C&M Programme. Five participants from five Bridgend schools also engaged with the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) level 3, 5 or 7 Coaching and Mentoring qualification.

6.21 National Professional Qualification for Headship

CSC continues to facilitate assessment for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). In line with recommendations from 'Our National Mission' Oct 2020, the delivery of NPQH has been reviewed and refined to enable the 2022 cohort to apply their leadership experience in the context of the pandemic. All candidates are supported by a CSC leadership coach, a serving headteacher within the region. Coaches guide candidates through their leadership standards review and leadership experience task, and act as a valuable sounding board in preparation for their assessment centre interviews.

During 2021-22, the NPQH assessment continued successfully online. All of the five candidates from Bridgend schools met the criteria and were awarded NPQH.

6.22 School Governors

CSC recognises the role and significance of school governance as essential in contributing to strong leadership and effective school improvement. During 2021-22, existing Central South

Consortium (CSC) Governance projects were further consolidated, and a new school support processes developed.

CSC continues to provide a range of professional learning opportunities, support and guidance that is easily accessible to governors in Bridgend schools. The delivery of mandatory PL for governors is delegated by the five local authorities to CSC; this extensive governor training offer continues to evolve. All new governors must also attend the mandatory PL sessions in understanding data and new to governors. New chairs of governors must also attend the New Chair of Governors session.

In addition to the mandatory training, CSC also provides PL sessions for governors in relation to key areas of the national reform agenda, which includes on:

- ALN
- Curriculum for Wales
- Effective Challenge and Support
- Headteacher Performance Management
- Introduction to Coaching Skills
- School as Learning Organisations

Governor professional learning is delivered through a blend of synchronous and asynchronous events held virtually. Following each professional learning event, attendance registers are collated, and course evaluations are completed by delegates. During 2021-2022, 99 professional learning sessions have been accessed by 62 governors from 32 Bridgend schools.

In addition to course evaluations, governors were also asked to complete a survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the PL offered in meeting their needs as a governor. This survey was analysed, and the information was used to identify next steps in refining the CSC PL offer. The majority of responses to the online PL offer were very positive. Areas for development were identified and refinements will be made as a result, e.g. timings of the sessions.

6.23 Regional Leaders of Governance

In 2020, through a robust application and interview process CSC appointed 13 Regional Leaders of Governance (RLGs), two of which represent two local authorities. These are highly effective governors with extensive experience from schools within the region. RLGs provide strategic and operational support for schools where governance is identified as an area for improvement.

The school's Improvement Partner, in collaboration with the headteacher, the school's Governing Body and the local authority, is responsible for identifying and brokering support by an RLG for a school.

All RLGs support the facilitation of training to governing bodies and support the facilitation of an introduction to coaching which is available to all schools.

A governor self-evaluation toolkit has been developed and piloted across the region. This has been shared at Bridgend Primary and Secondary Headteacher meetings in the summer term 2022. Professional learning on the use of the toolkit has also been delivered to all CSC staff and CSC governance groups. RLGs are supporting the rollout of the toolkit to strengthen the school governance. As this is a supportive tool rather than an accountability tool, CSC does not track and hold engagement data on its use. The toolkit is available on the CSC website.

[Please see Appendix F for further information relating to leadership development]

7.0 EQUITY (VULNERABLE LEARNERS)

Central South Consortium's (CSC's) Enabling Equity and Excellence document states that geography, deprivation, or childhood experience should not prevent learners from reaching their potential. Equity requires that we ensure that the system, at school local and national level takes account of and responds to the unique opportunities and challenges that present themselves to individuals and groups of learners and the unique opportunities this provides.

Priority 3 of CSC's business plan is 'to develop strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being.' This links strategically to all areas of CSC work with schools, including developing effective leadership, inclusive classrooms, high-quality curriculum and teaching, and good pupil and staff well-being.

7.1 Enabling Equity and Excellence

CSC's 'Enabling Equity and Excellence' document was published in October 2021 having been co-constructed with teachers, school leaders and LA colleagues from across the CSC region. The document set out an ambitious agenda for achieving equity in schools, offering clear approaches in supporting schools across the CSC region to realise the national mission of achieving 'strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being'. The document aims to promote thought and discussion amongst the whole school community to ask pertinent questions as to how equitable an organisation is and how effective it is in turning policy into practice to ensure excellence for all learners. It focuses specifically on the quality of provision and practices, and the impact these have on the well-being and outcomes of all learners.

CSC recognises that schools will be at different points of their improvement journey to achieving equity and excellence. Therefore, the document supports sustainable school improvement and learning leadership in order that schools make informed choices and decisions around equity and excellence. The document includes links to CSC professional learning opportunities to support improving aspects of provision and practice. It also contains links to practitioner and leadership development programmes as well as defining the roles and responsibilities of school stakeholders to ensure that achieving equity and excellence for all learners is the responsibility of all.

As part of the work in disseminating the document during 2021-22, professional learning sessions have been delivered to headteacher groups, all staff within CSC and school governors to examine how the Enabling Equity and Excellence document can support school improvement activities.

A five-year 'Enabling Equity and Excellence' implementation plan has been produced with the intention of that by the end of 2026-27, all schools will have embedded or be engaged with embedding equity and excellence characteristics as set out in the document. Of the twelve schools from across the CSC region involved in the 'Enabling Equity and Excellence' pilot in 2022-23, two are from Bridgend. These are Coety Primary School and Portfolio PRU. All staff across CSC utilise the enabling equity and excellence document as part of their work in supporting schools and encourage schools to engage with the document.

7.2 Pupil Development Grant

The Pupil Development Grant (PDG) is intended to overcome the additional barriers that prevent learners from disadvantaged backgrounds achieving their full potential. PDG is accessed for pupils eligible up until year 11. PDG is aimed at the following groups of learners:

- Learners who are eligible for free school meals (eFSM) and who are educated in maintained schools.
- Eligible learners who are singly registered in pupil referral units (PRUs) and education other than at school (EOTAS).
- Eligible learners in early years settings where the foundation phase is delivered; and
- Looked After Children, and former looked after children who have been adopted from care or who are subject to a special guardianship or residence order aged 3-15.

All schools receive PDG funding based on number of pupils eligible for free school meals.

One element of the grant is the Early Years PDG (EYPDG). The aim of the EYPDG is to provide additional support to the youngest learners – three- and four-year-olds - from disadvantaged backgrounds so they achieve better outcomes and have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

One element of the grant is PDG Looked After Children (PDG LAC). The PDG LAC grant is intended to disproportionately benefit looked after children (LAC) and formerly looked after contributing to the development of inclusive schools committed to equity and well-being. It is also intended to support formerly looked after children, including those who have been adopted. This funding is allocated to a cluster based on number of LAC.

CSC Improvement Partners (IPs) work in partnership with school leaders to plan and evaluate the impact of the PDG grants. In 2021-22, CSC developed a template using the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development and Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) evaluative criteria to support schools in their self- evaluation of the PDG. This focused on the evaluation of the intended impact on eFSM learners of PDG funded interventions, strategies, initiatives or objectives.

Analysis of PDG and EYPDG plans from 2021-22 for Bridgend schools indicates that:

- Most (98%) of the schools in Bridgend have effective EYPDG plans with very few (2%) of the EYPDG plans for schools deemed as developing.
- Many (73%) of the EYPDG plans were implemented and adapted effectively with a minority (27%) schools developing.
- Most (91%) of the schools are effective in planning objectives within their PDG plans with very few (8%) developing.

- A majority (66%) PDG plans were implemented and adapted depending on the needs of the pupils with a minority (34%) of schools developing.

Analysis of the evaluations from Bridgend schools of the impact of planned activities in the short, medium and long term on the eFSM pupils indicates that:

- Around half (49%) had an effective impact with the use of the EYPDG grant with around half of schools (49%) developing. Very few schools (2%) felt it was too early to determine the impact of their work.
- Half (52%) of the schools had an effective impact with the use of the PDG grant with around half (47%) developing and with very few (1%) unable to provide results yet.

Analysis of the evaluations from Bridgend schools as to the extent that plans represent the best possible use of available resources to achieve results of the greatest possible value to participants and the community indicates that:

- In terms of their EYPDG Most (96%) of schools are using resources effectively with very few (4%) developing.
- For PDG Most (91%) of the schools are using resources effectively with very few (9%) developing.

Examples of self-evaluation from schools in Bridgend on the impact that PDG and EYPDG had on improving pupil outcomes:

'Most of the grant is spent on support staff to address literacy and numeracy within the classroom through focused tasks'.

'Wellbeing is supported through whole school use of Thrive with identified pupils receiving additional individual and group support'.

'Family Engagement Officer to monitor and support attendance. Targeted families are supported with a range of activities including literacy, numeracy and wellbeing'.

'Remaining grant spent on enrichment activities and resources. The school has recently introduced an enrichment programme 'BOOST' enabling all pupils to experience and learn new skills. Activities include photography, knitting, orienteering, gardening, cooking, ukele, swimming and basketball to name a few'.

'The school has an effective process for assessing and measuring pupils' progress'.

'The grant has enabled the recruitment of a Family engagement officer as well as a Wellbeing Officer. During enforced school closures they have had an essential role in supporting families and pupils and giving them the advice, support they need.

Additionally, regarding reopening of schools in September, the school introduced a team of dog mentors to support ELSA sessions and transition from school transport into school. The school have also introduced the MOVE programme to support PMLD learners gain

greater independence through their school day. Healthy Confident individuals have been a key objective of the school'.

Analysis of PDG CLA cluster evaluations from 2021-22 indicates that:

- 84% of cluster plans were effective.

Examples of self-evaluation from clusters in Bridgend on the impact of PDG LAC:

'All cluster staff attended initial PERMA training and then key staff were released to work on identifying through children who needed support. In the comprehensive school this was rolled out to all Year 7 and 8 Form Tutors to identify interventions. The use of PERMA across the cluster enabled staff to identify pupils who previously may have gone unnoticed and through support were able to be happier and more successful in school'.

'The cluster also benefitted from a shared approach and training in restorative justice. This was so well received by the staff who did the training that it is being delivered to all staff in September and the plan is to have a consistent approach across all 5 schools. In some schools, systems have already been adapted and new Choices and consequences maps put in place. Restorative chats have already occurred and are having an impact in helping children to reflect on behaviour and identify ways to move forward'.

'Some funding was used to provide extra LSA support for CLA pupils and this coupled with further Thrive training has meant we have been able to expand the team of staff across the cluster who have the skills and knowledge to support our CLA pupils effectively.'

'The grant has been used to establish the use of My Concern in all schools. The 'Helping Hands' programme has been part of a very effective transition, and we have appointed a Safeguarding and Wellbeing Leader whose job is to support parents of children with early signs of social, emotional, health, learning or behavioural issues, and work with parents, school staff and other support agencies to tackle the issues interfering with the child's ability to engage with school and learning and liaise with the school's pastoral leadership team. This person is in post now and having a positive impact on our pupils and their families'.

7.3 Professional Learning and Support

CSC provide a comprehensive offer of professional learning and support to all schools in the region (see Section 6). CSC works in partnership with local authorities, other regions and partnerships, and Welsh Government in the provision of professional learning related to equity and vulnerable learners.

During 2021-22 professional learning opportunities provided to schools in supporting vulnerable learners included:

- Relationship Based Play - Supporting Pupils with Attachment Difficulties
- Children Looked After Friendly Schools Level 2 and Level 3
- Supporting Successful Transition,
- ACE's - Assessment, Adoption and Learning: Adoption UK

These PL events/programmes are ordinarily in-person. However, due to COVID, during 2021-22 all of these were synchronous (live) online events or programmes. 81 practitioners from 30 Bridgend schools engaged. Many more practitioners booked onto the events but did not attend citing the lack of availability of cover in their school due to the pressure of Covid.

Participants evaluated:

- Most (93%) felt confident in their knowledge of the topic after participating the event/programme.
- Nearly all indicated that attendance at the professional learning would impact on their practice.
- Nearly all would recommend the professional learning to others.

Professional Learning Programmes Focused on Reading And Writing

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlight how good literacy skills can provide the building blocks not just for academic success, but for fulfilling careers and rewarding lives. As an extension of the CSC PL LLC programmes 'Reading Reconsidered' and 'Writing Revolution' additional places were made available to schools in the region with high numbers of eFSM pupils. The aim of these programmes is to improve the quality and consistency in the teaching of reading and writing. Five schools in Bridgend participated in 'Writing Revolution' with a further four schools participating in the 'Reading Reconsidered' programme.

Examples of programme evaluation comments from schools:

Reading Reconsidered:

'Really informative learning experience. As a science teacher but whole school leader of literacy, it was really helpful to gather ideas from both secondary and primary on how to provide examples for other departments in order to roll out across the school. Lots of great strategies that can be so simple to incorporate into lessons.'

'It was enjoyable and thought provoking. I liked that there are links with previous PL on the Writing Revolution, Comparative Judgements, Writing Hub etc... There is going to be a need for time to sit as a staff, synthesise what we have learnt and combine with the other PL mentioned. I would be curious to see how to apply strategies in Foundation Phase, as I can see how some would work with KS2.'

Writing Revolution:

'Very informative and enjoyable course. Lots of strategies to improve writing in my school.'

'I am so excited by what I could do with this course.'

'I led a session with our literacy lead governor, a former literacy lecture at a trainee teacher institution, and she was hooked from the information I gave her.'

The implementation of these programmes in schools will be evaluated during 2022-23.

Curriculum for Wales

A suite of artefacts and resources relating to equity and well-being were shared as part of CSC's Curriculum for Wales Virtual Conference in the summer term of 2022. This included appreciative enquiries, podcasts and videos linked to supporting poverty, as well as guidance documents linked to supporting vulnerable learners.

Coaching and Mentoring – National Programme

To support schools in the implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act and the impact of Covid on vulnerable learners, CSC offered additional places for Additional Learning Needs Coordinators (ALNCOs) and Looked After Children (LAC) Cluster Leads on the national coaching and mentoring programme. During 2021-22, 6 ALNCOs and 4 LAC Cluster Leads from Bridgend schools completed the programme.

Raising Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters Project

Challenge Education's 'Raising Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters' (RADY) is an approach to closing the gap in attainment. During 2021-22, CSC funded 8 schools from across the region to be part of this pilot project. From Bridgend, Maesteg Comprehensive School and Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen engaged in the year 1 pilot which focused on equity and how to maximise support for free school meal pupils in their schools.

When evaluating the changes that have resulted from this work, the schools stated that working with RADY had improved their knowledge and understanding of working with eFSM learners. Both schools stated that the learning from this programme is being implemented across the school and that they have improved their practice because of the work within the project.

Example of feedback from staff in a pilot school:

'A RADY Pioneer Group (RPG) has trained all staff to understand the RADY pledge and RADY principles and work with empathy and an equity mindset with students whilst maintaining high expectations. A rigorous data collection protocol is in place so that Y7 RADY students are identified and receive an uplift in target grades which are shared with staff, students and parents. A Golden (RADY) Thread runs through each school priority of the school strategic plan and impact evaluation (SPIE) and leaders drive RADY through their respective areas to ensure RADY is embedded in all school practice. Proportional representation of Y7 RADY students exists to develop skills outside the classroom and wider curriculum to ensure the students are challenged in the classroom and opportunities exist to develop skills outside the classroom. Year 7 learners receive Raising Attainment and Progress (RAP)

meetings, and 'Learner on the Page' documents are produced to review learner strategies are effective and ensure learning is maximised.

In 2022-23 The schools will continue to work on RADY to embed the strategies and monitor and evaluate the impact on eFSM pupils.

7.4 Whole School Approach to Mental Health and Well-Being

The CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups has worked with the Healthy Schools Implementation Leads from the Cardiff and Vale Health and Cwm Taff Morgannwg Health Boards to provide support for school leaders in engaging with Welsh Government's 'Whole school approach to emotional and mental well-being framework'. The framework supports schools in reviewing their own well-being landscape and in developing plans to address areas for development and build on their strengths. This information should then inform school development plan.

4 governors from 4 schools in Bridgend attended sessions on the 'Whole school approach to emotional and mental Well-being' as part of the 'Hot Topics' element of CSC's professional learning offer for governors. This PL was facilitated by CSC's Lead for Equity and Well-being in collaboration with the Implementation Leads from the two respective health boards.

Examples of session evaluations from governors:

'Following Covid the need for well-being training is crucial and it is and so important for both staff and children and parents. A collaborative and multi-agency approach provides great support.'

'The presentation was extremely clear and concisely covered everything that was relevant for us to know, she also answered questions very well. This topic is so very important at the moment that I would recommend this professional learning to anyone involved in education.'

7.5 Inclusion Guidance Document

In September 2021, CSC published 'Inclusion, additional learning needs and additional learning provision - Guidance for mainstream schools on the expectations of the ALN Code' document. This guidance document was co-constructed, led by the Transformational Lead for Additional Learning Needs in collaboration with CSC officers, LA officers and school-based staff. The guidance clearly sets out guidance of best practice for schools in meeting the needs of pupils with additional learning needs. This guidance supports the CSC's 'Enabling Equity and Excellence' document.

7.6 Cross-regional Collaborations

The CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups is an active member of the cross-regional 'Well-being and Partnership' team. The group work in partnership to provide and signpost support for mental health and wellbeing which meets the needs of all individuals throughout the education sector. During 2021-22, PL and support available to CSC schools through this group included confidential coaching and mentoring to senior leaders through the 'Reflective Spaces' initiative and the opportunity for all staff in schools across the region to access Mind's 'Mental Health and How to Support Someone' programme.

7.7 Regional Approach to Attendance, Exclusions, and Well-Being

The CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups continues to work in partnerships with the attendance, exclusion, and well-being leads from each of the local authorities across the CSC region. The groups identify common areas of development and are developing cross-authority appreciative enquiries identifying practice worth sharing and ensuring where possible a regional approach to support across the schools is prioritised. An example of this is the well-being leads group, chaired by the Director of Education for Merthyr Tydfil CBC, where the group are mapping well-being across the region.

7.8 Bespoke Support for Schools And Clusters

The CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups and Lead for PDG CLA provide bespoke support for schools in supporting vulnerable learners. This involves responding to schools' requests and supporting appreciative enquiries to identify practice worth sharing. This will be further developed during 2022-23, particularly in supporting schools to adapt to the new expectations for the PDG grant, helping schools to be poverty aware, and assisting local authority and other key stakeholders in supporting well-being across the region.

8.0 CSC CONTRIBUTION TO SUPPORTING LA PRIORITIES (APRIL 2022 – OCTOBER 2022)

As part of CSC's business planning process, Bridgend provides CSC with their priorities in the Spring Term 2021, and these were built into CSC's business plan for 2022/23. As agreed by CSC's Joint Committee, CSC provide an update on progress supporting Bridgend's priorities on a twice-yearly basis.

[See Appendix G for a detailed evaluation of the progress that has been made as well as an update on how CSC are supporting Bridgend's wider priorities].

9.0 VALUE FOR MONEY

The consortium's funding is made up of two principal sources:

- Core Local Authority funding with individual Local Authority contributions
- Dedicated funding for schools and school improvement activities routed through consortia by Welsh Government. Major Welsh Government grants, such as the Regional Consortia School Improvement grant (RCSIG), are administered by consortia and delegated to schools via Local Authorities. Consortia retain elements of the grants (amounts set in the terms and conditions of each grant) on a regional basis to support local and national school improvement priorities.

9.1 Efficient Use of Core Contributions

In line with the legal agreement between the five local authorities making up Central South Consortium, Local Authorities commission CSC to provide a school improvement service predominantly funding Improvement Partners to work with schools.

In 2021-22, the consortium received £3.564m contributions from the five Local Authorities across the region. The funding was used to support the core function of school improvement. The budget provided to CSC by Bridgend represents 0.4 % of Bridgend's total education budget in 2021/22 and 2.5 % of the budget retained by the LA.

During 2021/22 Bridgend contributed £549k core funding to CSC. This core funding is determined using the Indicator Based Assessment for education (IBA) and agreed by Joint Committee. In 2021/22, Bridgend contributed 15.4 % of CSC's core budget.

For every £1 of core budget received from Local Authorities, 78 pence is spent on front line delivery.

In order to realise our joint ambitions for the region's learners, the core funding provided by Local Authorities is used to provide:

- Principal Improvement Partners (LA)
- Improvement Partners
- Data Quality and Intelligence Unit (DQIU)
- Information Management
- Communications Team
- Governor Support
- Finance Team
- Outdoor Education
- SACRE (Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education)
- Project Management

Summaries of the work provided in the areas listed above to support Bridgend and Bridgend schools, can be found [here](#).

9.2 Local Authority Annex

During the 2021-22 financial year, the Bridgend LA Annex Total Budget of £19,400 was used for the following priorities:

School Support

- Support the strategic development of all key areas related to schools and education in Bridgend schools to assist the Education and Family Support Directorate in reaching its targets and objectives.
- Assist with coordination of strategies to improve school performance and pupil outcomes.
- Support evaluation and improvement processes in order to meet local and national expectations, in accordance with the Directorate Business Plan.
- Support professional meetings of officers and school staff to support interventions and monitoring, when required.

Professional Development

- Deliver a programme of professional development to school-based practitioners on managing Absence Management, Delivering Difficult Conversations and Managing Pressure.

Evaluation of Impact

- The local authority made effective progress in meeting directorate priorities as identified in the local authority self-evaluation report.
- Effective assistance provided for the co-ordination of strategies to improve school performance and pupil outcomes including regular professional development sessions for schools.
- Beneficial support provided for evaluation and improvement processes in order to meet local expectations and national expectations, in accordance with the Directorate Business Plan.
- Professional meetings of officers and school staff co-ordinated and supported to ensure effective monitoring of support interventions and impact.
- A programme of professional development was delivered to school based practitioners in schools across Bridgend on Absence Management, Delivering Difficult Conversations and Managing Pressure.

For the 2022-23 financial year, the Bridgend LA Annex Total Budget of £19,265 is targeted for the following priorities:

LA Priority from SER/PIAP 2022 -2023

Support the implementation of the local authority's post-inspection action plan and its three strategic education priorities (i.e. safety, wellbeing, and literacy).

Outcome Measure

Local authority (LA) makes effective progress in meeting its strategic priorities (as identified in the Education and Family Support Directorate's business plan).

- This is monitored monthly through the Education and Family Support Directorate's robust monitoring and reporting procedures.

LA Priority from SER/PIAP 2022-23:

Support the implementation of the Expressive Arts area of Curriculum for Wales in alignment with the National Music Plan.

Targeted training to school-based staff.

Outcome Measure:

Increased school engagement with Expressive Arts.

- This is monitored through comprehensive school engagement and professional learning records.

9.3 Added Value: Grant Funding

LAs fund the core budget for CSC and this represents less than 4% of the total budget available to CSC. Additional funding is received from Welsh Government via specific grant funding streams. With the launch of the national strategy, 'Education for Wales: Our National Mission', WG streamlined the grant funding processes. There are now only three grants received by consortia: Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG), Pupil Development Grant (PDG), and Siarter Iaith.

[See Appendix H for a breakdown of these grants].

CSC adds value to the school improvement service commissioned by LAs by using elements of the above grants to fund CSC's delivery strategy of the Central South Wales Challenge as well as commission work and support packages for schools across the region. These funds are allocated according to the needs of individual schools, LAs, the region and nationally (as outlined in section 6.0 above) and are provided by the curriculum and professional learning team.

Intervention Budget

An additional intervention budget has been created to provide supplementary support to schools. Improvement Partners are able to coordinate support for schools that are most in need, examples of support may include a Regional Leader for Governance or a System Leader for a specific number of days, supply cover to release staff for professional learning or funding for a lead practitioner.

During 2021/ 2022 a budget of just over £156k was available to support schools across the region. Schools within Bridgend LA received £6.7k of the available budgets representing 4.3% of the total budget available.

The impact of the activities funded by this budget is evaluated by the school and the individual Improvement Partner, and, where appropriate, included within local authority information reports.

Curriculum Reform and Development

CSC supports schools in all areas of curriculum reform with the aim of realising our National Mission of 'strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence equity and wellbeing'. This includes working with the other regional consortia and partnerships, local authorities, external agencies, and schools to develop national and regional events, programmes, support and guidance for practitioners and school, leaders, including governors. The PL opportunities are wide ranging and comprehensive, with Curriculum for Wales embedded throughout. The CSC team provide and broker specialist bespoke support to clusters, groups of schools and individual schools to meet their specific improvement needs.

During the 2021/22 academic year, bespoke support above the regional professional learning programme was provided for 20 schools and 6 clusters. In one example of school support, members of the curriculum team worked with the teaching staff of a small primary school in Bridgend local authority over a week to develop a curriculum framework that would allow the school to implement a bespoke curriculum that met the needs of the school organisation, the learners and was authentic to the local community and context.

Support was provided within 6 clusters refining and developing the strategic focus of schools to deliver a new curriculum and appropriate pedagogy to implement the curriculum. This development work continues as CSC joined the schools from the Porthcawl cluster on a joint INSET day, to help them consolidate their understanding of the Curriculum for Wales framework and further develop a shared understanding of progression within the cluster. The day allowed practitioners to secure a deeper understanding of the framework within each of the AoLEs and identify the concepts and big ideas. Practitioners began their discussions on agreeing non-negotiables within the AoLEs. The schools within the cluster are committed to continuing their work on curriculum planning with the support of Area Leads, to ensure the development of a high-quality curriculum for all learners.

Sharing approaches, and considering improvement to transition, retention, and progression beyond the sixth form is a key priority. CSC support all secondary schools to use Alps data systems to track and monitor student attainment at GCSE and across the sixth form.

9.4 Collaborative Advantage

This can be defined as the additional benefits of working as a region when compared to working at either local authority or individual school level. By working collectively, schools have been able to build capacity within the system by training staff and sharing practice.

The [Central South Wales Challenge](#) (CSWC) is a partnership of all schools in the region working together to develop a self-improving system. This is based on improvement being driven for schools by schools. It provides delivery structures and networks through which most regional professional learning opportunities are offered.

Schools engage with the elements of the model the professional learning that best meets the need of their improvement priorities. This may mean greater and lesser engagement with different aspects of the challenge, or it may mean a more equal engagement in many or all components.

Specific details regarding the engagement of Bridgend schools with the CSWC can be found in section 6.0.

9.5 Additional Examples of Value for Money

In addition to how CSC provides evidence of the efficient use of resources as well as how added value and collaborative advantage are supported, CSC is also able to provide evidence of value for money in several other areas.

Equity

CSC provides a universal service to all schools which includes:

- A named Improvement Partner who monitors and reviews the progress of each individual school against their agreed evidence-based improvement criteria.
- All schools will be identified as needing core or enhance support. Enhanced support offers additional monitoring and review for schools that have specific challenges.
- IPs broker and monitor any additional support ensuring that all schools have the right support to address their needs as well and prevent any potential issues from impacting on learners.
- Support for governors to carry out HT performance management in line with national guidance
- Governors have access to all mandatory training, and this is supported by additional training and support. The role of Governors across CSC has been enhanced with the reestablishment of the Governors Steering Group on our governance structure and the establishment of Regional Leaders of Governance.
- Additional support and training is provided to IPs to ensure they can reach the internationally recognised Association of Education Advisers (AOEA) standards, demonstrating that our staff have the skills, knowledge, and experience to support schools.
- In addition, where further support is required (either identified by CSC, the LA or Estyn, a tiered package of further improvement challenge and monitoring will be provided depending on the level of concern registered. This additional intervention will be focused on schools in most need of support irrespective of in which authority they reside
- IPs coordinate and broker the support going into schools ensuring that it is appropriate to need and that it is addressing a key school/departmental priority.
- School progress is monitored termly in all schools and half termly in schools with additional concerns.

Economy

The national model of regional working was published in 2015 and recommended CSC receive £5.4m to fund the school improvement serviced on behalf of the five Local Authorities . In 2021/22 CSC budget was £3.56m.

CSC have worked to ensure that costs are minimised without reducing the quality of service provided. Over the period of time since the inception of CSC, further efficiency savings have been identified, enabling core contributions to CSC to be reduced without affecting the quality of service provided.

Sustainability

The definition of sustainable is something that can be continued or a practice that can be maintained over time once the resource from CSC (whether financial or leadership) is removed. CSC has developed a sustainable strategy for collaboration in the Central South Wales Challenge (CSWC). An example of this can be seen with the development of the Peer Partnership model. Over time, there has been diminishing financial support and increased leadership of the programme from CSC to schools. By building capacity within the system CSC has been able to provide the structures and processes to enable the strategy to continue without support centrally.

Efficiency

As a region, CSC is able to take advantage of economies of scale and can therefore provide a full and comprehensive professional learning offer across all areas of school improvement. In addition, CSC is provided with Welsh Government grant funding to ensure full coverage of support across all AoLEs within the new curriculum.

The [website](#) developed by CSC ensures schools have access to resources and a comprehensive professional learning offer in one place. This is complemented by the [website](#) specifically for Curriculum for Wales which can be accessed from the main CSC website.

A comprehensive communication strategy is also in place to ensure schools receive timely and appropriate communications aligned to need.

Effectiveness

Within the 2021/22 Annual Business Plan Report, CSC provided evidence to support the achievement of outcomes and the impact of the work. During a recent inspection of a Local Authority, Estyn reported that:

“The local authority has established strong working relationships with principal improvement partners from the regional consortium and there are robust processes for the support and challenge to schools causing concern.”

“...improvement partners provide a sound evaluation of progress based on first-hand evidence of provision and leadership in these schools...”

In addition, during 2021/22 there were 263 priorities within schools in Bridgend LA. By the end of the academic year 252 were deemed to be on track with 11 not on track.

Many of the strategies within the Central South Wales Challenge related to school effectiveness are based upon collaboration and school-to-school working. One of the most frequent research findings across similar collaborative initiatives is that it has led to an increase in leadership capacity, particularly at the middle leadership level. An increase in leadership capacity is a potential proxy for overall gains in pupil achievement.

Leadership roles have been developed in several different strands and at all levels throughout the system and include (although this is not an exhaustive list) SiGs (convenors), Lead Partitioner networks (SMT school members), Peer Partnerships, system leaders etc.

Quality

All CSC school improvement colleagues have a depth of knowledge and expertise which is supplemented with extensive professional learning to ensure the highest quality of support to schools.

In addition, all IPs are working towards an internationally recognised AoEA standard demonstrating that CSC staff have the skills, knowledge, and experience to support schools

To ensure the ongoing quality of this service, a comprehensive professional learning offer is in place to ensure school improvement professionals are well trained (as well as experienced) and able to support schools across the region. This is supported by an extensive quality assurance programme which feeds into the performance development or probation arrangements for individual IPs.

The Bridgend IP Team (primary and secondary IPs) meet regularly in a school setting to share effective practice that has been identified in the school, to enhance the understanding of how different schools in the local authority are approaching educational reform and meeting the needs of their learners. The meetings also provide opportunities to share information and strategies to support the local authority education priorities.

10.0 SHARING OF PRACTICE

SHARING OF PRACTICE

General Context Data

No. of schools in Bridgend LA
(January PLASC 2022 & EOTAS 2022)

60

No. of teachers in Bridgend LA
(January PLASC 2022)

1355

No. of clusters within
Bridgend LA

9

Estyn Inspection Reports

No. of inspections:
Sept 2021 - Sept 2022

2

No. of inspections:
Sept 2019 - Sept 2022

27

No. of Estyn good
practice case studies:
Sept 2021 - Sept 2022

0

No. of Estyn good
practice case studies:
Sept 2019 - Sept 2022

6

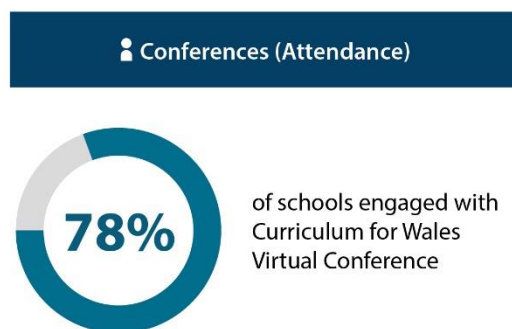
Professional Learning

No. of schools engaged with PL	60
Proportion of schools engaged with PL	100%
No. of practitioners engaged with PL	1841
No. of schools engaged with regional networks	55
Proportion of schools engaged with regional networks	92%
No. of practitioners engaged with regional networks	621
No. of schools supporting others (school-to-school support)	0
No. of Lead Practitioners / Enhanced Lead Practitioners	15

Leadership

No. of participants engaged in MLDP (Middle Leaders Development Programme)	15
No. of participants engaged in SLDP (Senior Leaders Development Programme)	5
No. of participants engaged in Aspiring Headteacher Programme	5
No. of participants engaged in New and Acting Headteacher	5
No. of system leaders available from deployment from within Bridgend LA	4
No. of PISA Schools	8
No. of Governors engaged in Governor training (at least 1 event)	62
Total number of Governors in Bridgend LA	758

Collaborations	
No. of schools engaged in funded collaboration projects	No. of practitioners engaged in funded collaboration projects
51	129



Sharing Practice Sept 2021 - Sept 2022	
No. of Bridgend schools with at least one Snippet of Success	19
No. of times Bridgend schools featured in Snippets of Success - our half termly celebration of news and success stories from schools in CSC	20
No. of blogs produced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Aloud in Class Datblygu medrau darllen ar draws y cwricwlwm 	2
No. of podcasts produced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a rigorous reading curriculum Exploring effective explanation and modelling through technology Reading Science literacy for applied science 	4

Curriculum for Wales PL and Support	
Engagement in Curriculum PL (% of schools)	100%
Engagement in national CfW PL Programme (% of schools)	97%
Bespoke Support for Curriculum (Individual schools)	20
Bespoke Support for Curriculum (No. of clusters)	6
Summer Curriculum for Wales drop in sessions	5
Cross Regional Curriculum Design Programme (No. of schools)	17
Cross Regional Curriculum Design Programme (No. of participants)	19

Coaching & Mentoring

No. of facilitators trained (RDG)	No. of teaching staff trained in coaching & mentoring (Lead Practitioner)	No. of LA staff trained in coaching & mentoring
9	11	7

11.0 CONCLUSIONS

CSC has developed a framework for self-evaluation based upon the guidance provided by Estyn on the Inspection of Local Authorities.

As a result of extensive self-evaluation activity, strengths and areas of development have been identified. From this analysis, a series of focus areas have been identified for inclusion within the planning for 2022/23.

Self-evaluation activity has continued across the organisation to ensure any areas of development identified because of evaluation activity, is incorporated into the planning cycles.

11.1 Support for School Improvement

Strengths include:

- Sharing of school level intelligence and information with LA partners leading to agreed actions for challenge and support
- The agreed purpose of monitoring and reporting schools' progress is focused on empowering schools to improve outcomes for all learners and to develop as learning organisations
- First- hand evidence gathering is aligned with school MER processes
- Supporting school improvement to move out of Estyn categories
- A very few Bridgend schools are in Estyn Follow up categories
- Vulnerable Schools receive a bespoke agile approach supported by additional funding through the resource board as appropriate
- All Bridgend schools receive support for priorities regardless of support category. This is based on a bespoke approach to supporting all school improvement priorities.
- Implementation of the Intervention Strategy for Schools causing concern by CSC colleagues based on the knowledge and intelligence of CSC and local authority staff.
- CSC have a clear regional approach for equity and excellence and collaborate well with schools, local authorities and other stakeholders.
- Quality of Central South Wales Challenge professional learning and networking offer, school to school support, development of regional leads of governance/system leaders, PEER enquiry work, facilitation of cluster-based work
- Effective partnership working to support school improvement and meet local and national educational priorities.

Areas to develop include:

- Providing assurance to Local Authorities regarding the progress of the region's schools in the absence of categorisation and aggregated pupil level assessment information. (LA Performance reports, scrutiny reports)
- Sharing information with elected members and supporting their understanding of the new Welsh Government's School Improvement Guidance: A framework for Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability

- Developing examples of School Improvement Partnership Logs which allow for flexible consistency
- Review how evidence is shared to recommend move to stage 4 of the Intervention strategy
- Identifying short, medium and long term expected impact of any brokered support, who will monitor and how it will be recorded
- Continuing to develop robust evaluation, improvement and accountability arrangements that support a self-improving system
- Identifying roles and responsibilities in the adoption of the statutory framework to the whole school approach to mental health and well-being
- Closer alignment between LA priorities and strategic plan, and CSC Business Plan (improve timelines)

11.2 Professional Learning

Strengths include:

- A wide variety of professional learning opportunities aligned to local, regional and national needs and along all milestones of the professional pathway.
- Equity of access to high-quality professional learning for all practitioners and school leaders, including governors.
- Central South Wales Challenge enabling a self-improving system for professional learning and collaboration for all schools across the region.
- Since November 2020, over 80% of schools in the region have engaged in the professional learning programme for Curriculum for Wales (CfW) and the wider reforms.
- Development of the design thinking model and the CSC website in providing support for all schools in curriculum design and development.
- Regional collaborative projects across all areas of the curriculum. All projects are over-subscribed.
- Engagement with the Welsh language development professional learning is strong, with one third of schools engaged between April and December 2021. In programmes that raise practitioner's Welsh language competence, nearly all report improved skills and many plan to change their practice as a result of the professional learning.
- Evaluations from all leadership programmes demonstrates the positive impact on developing the leadership skills of the participants and the impact on learners through the practical leadership experience tasks undertaken.
- Increasing engagement from schools in the professional learning programme to support vulnerable learners (2020/21 +12%).
- Positive feedback received in relation to the professional learning programme - 99.5% using or planning to use the professional learning in their role in school.
- An increased number of NQTs (81%, +7% over 2 years) and induction mentors (72%, +45% over 2 years) engaged with CSC professional learning opportunities ensuring information, resources and support resulted in consistency in terms of process as evidenced by induction profile evaluation, and improvements in practice as evidence by evaluations.

- Nearly all (93%) of all eligible NQTs passed induction in the region in 2020/21, with 7% being given an extension and 0% failures.

Areas to develop include:

- Further development of professional learning opportunities to support and align to all areas of the Enabling Equity and Excellence document.
- Further refine the Central South Wales Challenge model to meet evolving regional and national needs, e.g. teaching assistant learning pathway (TALP), curriculum reform.
- Further refinement of the brokerage systems and processes for providing bespoke support for schools.
- Further development of the Governor Self-evaluation Toolkit and planning for professional learning and support for governing bodies on its implementation.
- Development of the professional pathway for career development of teaching assistants – cross-regional/national development.

11.3 Leadership and Safeguarding

Strengths include:

- Leaders/managers have established a clear vision involving all stakeholders over time, which encompasses partnership working
- External review of governance taken place and taken forward (also in AGS)
- Professionalism of staff within CSC
- Professional learning programmes – including opportunities to develop coaching and wellbeing
- Association of Education Advisers provides opportunities to engage more broadly in education nationally and internationally.
- Bespoke professional qualifications and opportunities supported.
- Welsh language development opportunities.
- Changes to processes as a result of feedback e.g. local authority priorities incorporated within the CSC Business Plan.
- CSC work in a transparent manner in partnership with their stakeholders.
- Stakeholders have been involved in implementing the processes that are currently in place. CSC listen and amend process based on stakeholder feedback e.g. Performance Development.
- CSC has strengthened relationships with stakeholders to ensure that we respond to areas of concern in a timely manner and prevent escalation.
- Processes are in place to capture recommendations from thematic reports as used in development of our Operational Plans.
- Annual programme of professional learning to support safeguarding culture including Child Protection and PREVENT/radicalisation. All staff undertake this professional learning.
- Safeguarding is embedded into the recruitment process with questions or assessment tasks incorporated into all interviews for staff working directly with schools.

- Regular and timely updates to COVID protocols to ensure the safety of all staff (including school visit protocols and use of office accommodation).

Areas to develop include:

- Ensure that all staff model the CSC vision in their day to day working and that we develop a regional organisation that works across the 5 local authorities effectively.
- Further develop our evaluation processes right across the organisation, to ensure they are effective, manageable and that it leads the work of the organisation moving forward. We also need to consider how we can better engage stakeholders in the self-evaluation process.
- Work with the local authority team to develop greater understanding of governance and operational structures and how we provide information to enable our partner local authorities to hold us to account. Align the CSC reporting cycle to the local authority scrutiny cycle and ensure that our reporting is effective, concise and manageable, and meets the needs of the local authority.
- Working with Joint Committee and other governance structures to develop appropriate quality of evidence regarding accountability.
- Amalgamating the local, regional, and national priorities to produce a cohesive business plan that we can monitor and evaluate.

12.0 NEXT STEPS

As a result of all self-evaluation activity across the organisation the following areas were identified for inclusion within the Business Plan for 2022/23:

12.1 Support for School Improvement

- Continue to refine CSC reporting processes to provide assurance to Local Authorities regarding the progress of the region's schools in the absence of categorisation and aggregated pupil level assessment information.
- Support all schools to have effective evaluation and improvement processes, which address external and internal accountability measures.
- Continue to work with Local Authorities to review the Intervention Strategy for schools causing concern annually to ensure responsibilities for all parties are clear.
- Refine the brokerage system to identify short, medium, and long term expected impact of any brokered support, who will monitor it and how it will be recorded.
- Support schools in developing effective practice around exclusions, school refusal, home tuition and reduced timetables.
- Work with Local Authorities to Identify roles and responsibilities in the adoption of the statutory framework to the whole school approach to mental health and well-being.

12.2 Professional Learning

- Ensure all schools are supported in their preparations for Curriculum for Wales and the wider education reforms through high-quality professional learning, guidance, and resources.
- Further develop and align the professional learning, guidance and resources to support all elements and principles of the CSC Enabling Equity and Excellence document.
- Further develop the effective use of data, evaluation, and intelligence to inform professional learning and support for school improvement.
- Refine the professional learning and support at all levels along the professional pathway.
- Further strengthen partnership working with schools, Local Authorities, other middle tier organisations and Welsh Government to ensure a coherent and high-quality professional learning offer for all schools.

12.3 Leadership & Safeguarding

- Maintain a financially viable service that meets the needs of schools and Local Authorities.
- Ensure the CSC business plan fully incorporates Bridgend’s priorities and brings the 5 local authorities together into one regional service, and that this is reflected in our legal agreement.
- Further develop the self-evaluation processes to include the views of stakeholders.
- Develop a reporting cycle that meets the needs of the Local Authority in a manageable and meaningful way, ensuring that there are clearly articulated audience and purpose for each report and that this is built into staff workplans and the CSC reporting cycle.
- Continue to provide support and professional learning for staff (responding to effective evaluation) across the organisation to ensure we maintain highly effective professional teams that embody the vision of CSC while providing high quality services to schools.
- Continue to develop a culture of safeguarding across CSC.

Appendix A

Professional Learning Collaborations

Regional clusters:

In the professional learning and collaboration survey for 2021-22, nearly all (98%, 356 schools) schools stated that they were engaged in cluster working. 8 schools stated that they were not engaged in cluster working. Of the schools that engaged, 346 (97%) schools stated that the work of the cluster was linked to their school development plan with 342 (96%) stating that the work of the cluster was disseminated across the school. During 2021-22, 53/55 clusters in the region had a named school leader who received £1500 to act as the cluster convenor. As part of their SLA all convenors are required to complete and SLA, a mid-year and end-of year evaluation of their cluster work. All convenors submitted their cluster SLA; 49 of the 53 convenors submitted a mid-year evaluation and 50 submitted and end of year evaluation.

Based on evaluations received, a wide range of collaborative activity took place. Nearly all clusters expressed that COVID has been a staffing barrier and that they needed to focus on learners return to school as a priority. Nearly all clusters had a focus on curriculum design at a micro or macro level, in very few cases they were exploring the pedagogy to support this. This is in line with the system expectations at this time. Within the evaluations, collaborative professional learning has had a positive impact on practitioner expertise with anticipated learner impacts once this work is embedded.

Regional SIGs:

The majority of SIG working focused on curriculum, teaching or well-being. Around half of SIGs reported that they shared the learning from the group, with a minority reporting that it changed behaviours. Participants in SIGs, both leaders and practitioners, view themselves as involved in bringing about changes in their practice. Many SIGs reported effective collaborative structures where time and support was provided to allow teachers to work together on implementing new practices. 80% of SIGs reported that their work impacts on teacher practices and 88% reported that the SIG had the collective capacity to meet priorities of the group.

Regional Networks:

In 2021-22, there were over 50 regional networks available to all schools in the region. Most networks were co-facilitated by lead practitioners and CSC C&PL officers and focused on Areas of Learning and Experience (Areas), qualifications, pedagogy and enquiry.

Materials from the networks were made available asynchronously for those unable to attend the live sessions.

Collaboration funding also supported schools to engage with the National Network Conversations, Talk Pedagogy, and self-facilitated networks to promote sharing practice and learning from and with each other, within and beyond their school.

Regional peer partnerships:

A few schools in the region engaged peer partnerships to enhance their self-evaluation and school improvement priorities in line with the Welsh Government 'School improvement guidance: framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability'. Despite the number of significant strategic and operational challenges presented by COVID-19, schools that established partnerships successfully maintained their evaluative cultures and sustained all levels of collaboration within their networks in adapted ways. New peer partnerships continued to be brokered between schools by IPs.

Appendix B

Professional Learning Opportunities

CSC provided a comprehensive range of high quality, evidence-informed PL opportunities across the professional pathway, from induction to leadership. The CSC PL offer was responsive and PL opportunities were continually considered, planned and published to ensure the PL needs of schools in the region are met. A wide variety of data and intelligence was analysed, and research undertaken to identify and inform the PL offer. All CSC PL continued to be accessed via the CSC website [here](#). The Kirkpatrick model of evaluation was embedded in CSC's professional learning.

CSC PL opportunities included:

- Assignments – e-learning focused on a specific area
- Events, programmes, networks and conferences – live and/or on-demand, focused on a specific area
- Resources - including guidance documents, toolkits, poster packs, blogs, vlogs, podcasts, etc.

PL opportunities included those related to:

- Curriculum, learning and teaching
- Equity & well-being
- Professional pathways:
 - Teaching Assistants (TALP)
 - Induction
 - Leadership, including Governors
- Qualifications and post-16 education

Appendix C

Curriculum for Wales

The [Curriculum and Assessment \(Wales\) Act 2021](#) became law after receiving Royal Assent in April 2021. The Act states the new curriculum and assessment requirements for all learners aged 3 to 16 in maintained or funded non-maintained nursery education in Wales. It replaces the current curriculum. The [Curriculum for Wales Framework](#) is determined nationally and includes legislative requirements and supporting guidance. It is a clear statement of what is important in a broad and balanced education for learners in Wales. It places duties on school governing bodies and headteachers, local authorities, non-maintained setting providers and Welsh Ministers. At its heart is the aspiration for every child and young person in Wales, as defined by the four purposes of Curriculum for Wales (CfW). The [four purposes](#) are the shared vision, starting point and aspiration for every child and young person in Wales.

To realise this vision, schools must design, adopt and implement a curriculum. Enabling learners to progress in relation to these purposes is intended to inform all decisions in relation to curriculum and assessment design and implementation. Schools should design their curriculum, choosing specific knowledge, skills and experiences, and topics, activities and contexts to meet the needs of their learners, ensuring high expectations and enabling all learners to achieve their potential.

Improvement Partners support all schools in school improvement related to curriculum and the wider educational reforms. This includes signposting relevant PL opportunities and brokering bespoke support. During 2021-22, Improvement Partners worked in partnership with schools to self-evaluate each school's journey to curriculum roll-out in line with national and regional guidance. These informed reports to local authorities and Welsh Government on school preparations for the implementation of Curriculum for Wales. Reporting continues in 2022-23.

A comprehensive national PL programme to support schools in Curriculum for Wales and the wider educational reforms was developed and delivered by the four regional consortia. The following synchronous and asynchronous modules were developed for senior leaders, middle leaders and school governors:

- Leading change
- Establishing a shared vision
- Making time and space for professional learning
- Engaging with the Curriculum for Wales framework
- Curriculum design and development
- Engagement with the wider reform elements
- Engaging with areas of learning
- Thinking about AoLE vision
- Leading pedagogy

The national Curriculum for Wales PL programme has been refined and relaunched in September 2022 with CSC as key partner in its design, delivery and evaluation. This is a stronger focus on schools sharing their emerging practice, and new modules including a module on progression and assessment.

Regional CfW conference data:

The total number of resources that were accessed by delegates across the live and on demand period exceeded 8700, with just over 2000 of those focused specifically on curriculum design. The webinars were viewed either live or on demand over 3600 times.

Evaluation data received by delegates from the conference shows that many (72%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the conference met its purpose of supporting schools in further understanding curriculum design. This is further demonstrated by the feedback that whilst only a few (24%) respondents felt either confident or very confident about curriculum design before accessing the conference, a majority (69%) felt either confident or very confident about curriculum design after accessing the conference. In addition, many (84%) respondents felt that the materials shared at this conference would positively impact on their practice.

In January 2021, CSC established a regional Curriculum for Wales online community available to all practitioners and school leaders, including governors in the region. It provides an interactive platform for practitioners to access resources, materials, PL and guidance related to Curriculum for Wales. Members can also participate in discussions with other members to share ideas and receive peer support. By August 2022, there were over 1300 members.

To support practitioners in curriculum design, CSC developed a specific [website](#) launched in October 2021. The focus of the website uses the design thinking model aligned to the phases of Welsh Government's 'Curriculum for Wales: the journey to curriculum roll-out' guidance to support schools in the process of curriculum design. All regional Curriculum for Wales PL, resources, materials and guidance are also available through this website. Engagement in and feedback related to this website and the design thinking model has been very positive.

All PL resources, materials and guidance developed during the programme are available to all schools in Wales to support the design and development of their curriculum.

There are a wide variety of PL [resources](#), including guidance documents, toolkits, poster packs, videos, blogs, vlogs, podcasts to support schools in curriculum, learning and teaching.

The CSC Curriculum for Wales [newsletter](#) is published monthly containing the latest regional and national information on CfW. During 2021-22 there were more than 6000 views by 398 unique users of the newsletters. The CSC poster packs on understanding the Curriculum for Wales guidance and on Assessment had almost 7000 views.

Appendix D

Post-16 Enquiry Project

CSC facilitated an enquiry project involving a cross-local authority group of 6 secondary schools to focus on approaches to raise aspirations, increase resilience and support learner transition, retention, and progression.

Schools shared the following issues:

- Post covid – an increased number of learners presented issues with reduced confidence, low resilience and as a result had low aspirations.
- Staff witnessed disengagement in learning.
- Learners had reduced motivation in planning their future aspirations/pathways
- Students have lost the craft of being a student
- Social deprivation increased and well-being issues have increased as a result
- Online mentoring during covid was less effective to support learner well-being, confidence and aspirations, therefore new interventions are required to close the covid gap

The enquiry focused on the impact of using the VESPA Academy online platform and activities to support the non-cognitive and performance outcomes of Year 12 students in each school. The schools gained access to the newly developed VESPA Academy online platform and engaged in training to increase their knowledge of the activities and effective use of the platform to support learner progress. There was strong engagement with this project group and a high level of collaboration and commitment to the project.

School leaders reported the following benefits:

- Effective collaboration of post-16 leaders in the region to embed impactful pastoral programme activities.
- Early identification of learners that are more likely to become NEET.
- Increased opportunity to engage with external partners to support bespoke intervention activities.
- The opportunity to use internal data alongside VESPA questionnaire outcomes to support learner progress and aspirations.
- New approaches to coaching and mentoring using VESPA Coaching questions to support learners.

Examples of evaluation comments:

'The project has supported high quality assertive mentoring and quality coaching conversations to benefit both staff and students.'

'During a KS5 learning journey in line with Estyn framework, students reflected positively on pastoral provision and felt that they were well supported and that the school was looking into personalised solutions to issues they were facing.'

'Students have made significant progress in the five areas supported by VESPA activities, and that VESPA is now being trialled within the humanities faculty to highlight effective revision strategies as part of an additional teaching and learning action research project.'

A school in the project with over 200 students engaged stated, 'Every form class improved their VESPA score, therefore the project will strongly influence our My Future programme over the next academic year.'

Other post-16 PL and support included:

- [Welsh Consortia National Post-16 Leadership Development programme](#) a NAEL endorsed and RDG accredited programme. Additional support was given via 1-1 coaching following the programme and a designated Teams space facilitated sharing of resources and good practice between practitioners across Wales.
- A subject resources project to support available regional post-16 professional learning resources.
- A collaborative 'Design Thinking' project with Cardiff Metropolitan University focused on a post-16 priority from their school development plan. The practitioners reported very positively on how the process allowed creative solutions to be reached by considering all stakeholders.

Appendix E

Education Research and Enquiry

In November 2018, the Minister for Education in Wales committed to:

- Develop career-long professional learning embedded in evidence-based research and effective collaboration
- Invest in Wales-specific education research and ensure that it is converted into action for school improvement
- Co-create a national education research strategy that provides a coherent and transparent framework for [education research in Wales](#).

In July 2021, Welsh Government launched the [National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry \(NSERE\)](#). CSC work with Welsh Government (WG) and Higher Education Institution (HEI) partners to ensure that schools in the region can engage with research and enquiry in a way that makes a difference to their school improvement.

National Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP) supports the development of the new curriculum, Welsh Government is working with regional consortia and higher education institution (HEI) partners to develop a national programme of teacher professional enquiry. Schools are supported by a HEI partner to develop a range of enquiry skills by leading enquiries in their own setting, exploring professional learning requirements for the new curriculum.

Based on enquiry experience, schools are grouped into lead and partner schools and the professional learning they receive from their HEI partner is targeted to their level of experience. CSC lead schools' work with Cardiff Metropolitan University; partner schools work with the University of South Wales. Alongside their professional learning, all schools receive academic supervision in developing their enquiries. During their enquiry work, NPEP partner schools are grouped with a lead school to provide coaching support around developing an enquiry in their school. All [NPEP enquiries](#) are published on Hwb to support all schools in their work.

During 2021-2022, the NPEP programme moved into a 'consolidation and evaluation' phase providing opportunities to transition from a project to a national programme, aligned to the National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry⁸. NPEP schools should be developing a whole school approach to enquiry and develop a collaborative approach with existing clusters/networks to disseminate NPEP outputs.

⁸ <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/the-national-strategy-for-educational-research-and-enquiry-nsere/>

Appendix F

Leadership Development

CSC has developed a portfolio of leadership development opportunities based on a national pathway of professional learning. This ensures the development of inspirational leaders that are well prepared and supported to lead their schools through educational reform as set out in our national mission. All leadership programmes have received endorsement from the National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL), demonstrating the high standard of the programmes provided.

CSC professional learning opportunities are aimed at developing leadership at all levels. CSC provides a wide range of programmes, support and guidance to develop leadership skills. With the exception of the System Leaders Programme, all leadership development pathway programmes have been co-constructed by regional consortia officers in partnership with school leaders from across Wales, thus ensuring the content draws on expertise in school leadership and ensures that the content is grounded in current practice.

Access to national leadership programmes is via a nationally agreed application form and candidates are required to undertake a self-review against the national professional standards for leadership. A robust endorsement process is in place to ensure participants access the most relevant programme for their career stage. Applications for the programmes 2021-22 exceeded places and were fully subscribed. All programmes provide participants with the support of a leadership coach; with the exception of the middle leaders' programme, an external coach is provided. These coaches are also able to access the national coaching and mentoring programme to ensure they are effective in this role.

Detailed overviews of the Leadership PL programmes support schools to identify the most appropriate programme for the individual at the relevant point in their career. Improvement Partners (IPs) also work with schools to identify leaders who would benefit from participation in the leadership programmes.

All leadership programmes are evaluated using an online form after each module for participant feedback. This immediate feedback on the session is shared with facilitators and supports in refining the programme delivery. Detailed end of programme evaluations are analysed and inform development and next steps.

Appendix G
Bridgend Priorities 2022-23 CSC Progress Updates

Priorities	Evaluation of Progress
<p>1. Support schools to provide safe and effective learning environments for all learners and staff in schools.</p> <p>CSC and LA officers will have worked with all schools ensuring appropriate bespoke guidance and advice is given (progress/evidence captured in monitoring streams).</p>	<p>CSC staff working within Bridgend Schools support the work of the local authority to provide safe and effective learning environments for all learners and staff in schools.</p> <p>CSC staff work with schools to develop safe, engaging and effective learning environments for beneficial teaching and learning to take place for all learners. Where school actions are identified to improve practice or learning environments, this is recorded in the School Improvement Partnership Log.</p>
<p>2. Support schools to ensure the mental and physical health of all staff and learners is prioritised.</p> <p>CSC and LA officers will have worked with all schools ensuring this is referenced in school improvement and evaluation activity (progress/evidence captured in monitoring streams).</p>	<p>CSC staff work with schools to monitor progress of learners and the quality of well-being provision for learners within schools. CSC staff support schools in their strategic planning, identifying appropriate priorities for the development of mental and physical health of staff and learners, signposting schools to professional learning or brokering support as appropriate.</p> <p>The progress of strategic priorities is regularly monitored to ensure planned benefits for learners and staff are achieved.</p> <p>The monitoring of the provision for well-being and the progress of strategic well-being priorities is recorded in the School Improvement Partnership Log.</p>
Cross Cutting Themes and Priorities	Evaluation of Progress
<p>3. Work with schools and other partners to ensure the effective implementation of curriculum and ALN reform.</p> <p>CSC and LA officers will have worked with all schools to offer guidance and advice</p>	<p>(Curriculum)</p> <p>From September, all primary schools and special schools across Bridgend began the implementation of their adopted curriculum in line with the Curriculum for Wales Framework. 6 Bridgend secondary schools and 2 special schools opted to roll-out Curriculum for Wales (CfW) for Year 7 in Sept 2022, with all other secondary schools continuing the designing and trialling of their curriculum for first teaching in Year 7 and 8 from September 2023. Schools must keep their adopted curriculum and assessment arrangements under review. A</p>

<p>linked to the implementation of ALN Act and Curriculum for Wales (progress/evidence captured in monitoring streams).</p>	<p>school's curriculum should continue to evolve and be refined, reflecting its effectiveness to meet the needs of all learners, and ensuring the legal requirements are met.</p> <p>Summer Term 2022 Curriculum commentaries focussed on the legal requirements of CfW roll-out were produced by Improvement Partners (IPs) for all schools implementing from September 2022.</p> <p>By the 16th of December 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All IPs for those schools first implementing from September 2022 are due to complete CfW surveys based on the 8 contributory factors for successful realisation set out by Welsh Government. • All IPs for those secondary schools first implementing from September 2023 are due to complete CfW surveys based on school readiness. <p>Support for schools in the preparation for all aspects of CfW is embedded in CSC professional learning (PL) and support with the exception of those related to current qualifications and post-16 education. This includes PL for all areas of the curriculum and also the wider educational reforms in Wales. Bespoke LA-wide support is available to all schools and clusters across the region. The work is evaluated termly in LA information reports and as part of each area evaluation reports.</p> <p>The national CfW PL programme was refined and relaunched in September 2022 with CSC as a key partner in its design, delivery and evaluation. This programme has a stronger focus on schools sharing their emerging practice, with new modules created including progression and assessment, and how to lead school evaluation of CfW.</p> <p>The curriculum and professional learning team have provided 'drop-in' sessions for Bridgend schools (Sept 2022 and Dec 2022) to discuss curriculum development and to put in place any support they may require. 4 Bridgend schools attended those drop ins, receiving bespoke support and guidance related to assessment and progression.</p> <p>'Leaders of curriculum' network meetings offered 12th and 14th October for schools to consolidate their understanding of implementation and to share practice with schools from across the region. 8 Bridged schools attended those meetings.</p>
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	<p>A summary of all professional learning (PL) and networking opportunities was shared with all schools October 2022. Live and on-demand PL opportunities will continue to be developed to focus on improvement priorities from schools across the region; and respond to local, regional, and national priorities.</p> <p>Nearly all Bridgend schools (58/60) have engaged in the regional PL offer to date with 564 practitioners participating between April and November 2022. Most Bridgend schools (56/60) have engaged in the regional PL offer for Curriculum, Teaching and Learning with 298 practitioners participating between April and November 2022.</p> <p>Lead Practitioner roles were refined in the summer term and nearly all lead practitioner posts have been filled. 10 lead practitioners that support across the CSC region are from Bridgend schools.</p> <p>27 bespoke support requests have been received by the curriculum team since April 2022 for Bridgend schools. Support is being deployed accordingly to both individual and groups of schools.</p> <p>45 funded collaboration projects have been established. 75 practitioners from Bridgend schools are participating.</p> <p>(ALN Reform)</p> <p>The CSC approach to pedagogy and improving teaching has been shared with all CSC staff and published on the website. The Great Teaching Toolkit (GTT) evidence review, along with how this aligns to the GTT has also been shared. A communication has just been released in the bulletin to invite schools to share effective practice that will be used to develop a series of playlists on elements of the GTT.</p> <p>The bespoke professional learning offer for the support of vulnerable learners is available to all schools. Vulnerable learners are prioritised as part of improvement partner support. Self-evaluation and monitoring, evaluating and reviewing activities in school focus on the needs of all learners but particularly the progress being made by vulnerable learners. The CSC Enabling Equity and Excellence document is a school improvement tool to support the progress of all learners and is used by improvement partners to support the progress of vulnerable learners.</p>
<p>4. Improve outcomes for all children and young people; especially those from vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>The improvement, accountability and evaluation framework is being implemented in all schools across the region.</p> <p>All schools have been visited to discuss their priorities for improvement, bespoke support identified and self-</p>

<p>CSC and LA officers will have worked with all schools looking at how their evaluation and improvement processes are improving outcomes for all learners (progress/evidence captured in monitoring streams).</p>	<p>evaluation and monitoring processes are under discussion. All CSC staff received training to ensure a clear understanding of the documentation framework which enables them to play their part in holding the system to account. Updates have been shared with all Headteachers, stakeholders, LAs, elected members and Governor stakeholder groups. Quality assurance processes have been agreed by all Directors and have been shared with all stakeholders. These are starting to be implemented across the region</p> <p>The accountability framework has been implemented across Bridgend. All schools have identified priorities for improvement and the IP has worked with schools to broker appropriate bespoke support.</p> <p>Pre-Inspection Reports written by the IPs have been quality assured by the PIP.</p>
<p>5. Deliver the priorities in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).</p> <p>Progress made across WESP plan.</p>	<p>A range of professional learning opportunities and workshops are available that align with the Welsh Language Competency Framework.</p> <p>In the period of April-December 2022, 59 practitioners from Bridgend have accessed part 1, 19 part 2 and 13 part 3 of the asynchronous professional learning which is 91 in total. This compares with 182 practitioners for part 1, 114 for part 2 and 58 for part 3 in the same period last year. Dates arranged for face-to-face professional learning. Since December 2022, 8 practitioners from Bridgend have taken part in a new blended Welsh language development professional learning.</p> <p>Most practitioners state that Welsh Language Development professional learning will improve their practice in the classroom and make strong progress in changing their behaviours. Most practitioners state that the professional learning will change their behaviours and improve their practice in the classroom. Some practitioners evaluated “This has been a wonderful two days with so many practical ideas to take back to the classroom...Very relevant course that every teacher and teaching assistant would benefit from...fantastic delivery, very engaging and interactive.”</p> <p>Asynchronous professional learning and playlist published to support schools to strategically plan for Welsh language professional learning and to reflect practitioner competence accurately in the School Workforce Annual Census. This item has received nearly 300 views.</p> <p>Next cohort of the Leadership of Welsh programme will begin in November 2022. Schools have been</p>

	<p>identified and arrangements in place. The programme is designed to support senior leaders to develop the Welsh language and culture on a whole school strategic level.</p> <p>Tric a Chlic – Welsh oracy professional learning:</p> <p>6 Welsh medium practitioners and 1 English medium practitioner from Bridgend have registered to attend new face to face professional learning focussed on developing Welsh oracy with the synthetic phonics programme ‘Tric a Chlic’.</p> <p>Target for the recruitment of the 2022/23 Welsh in a Year Sabbatical Programme (set by Welsh Government) has been achieved. 1 practitioners from Bridgend out of the 7 across the region has begun the programme.</p> <p>CSC is supporting 3 post-sabbatical practitioners from Bridgend who attended the Welsh in a Year Sabbatical 2021/22. An introduction on the post-sabbatical has been delivered and a recording shared with those unable to attend. Network meetings for 2022/23 have been arranged. Post-sabbatical practitioners will attend the Leadership of Welsh professional learning on 29/11/22. Development Officers are providing bespoke support meetings with all individual practitioners.</p> <p>2 partnerships (4 schools) from Bridgend have been identified for the Welsh/English medium school partnership focussing on collaborating to develop oracy skills of pupils. Partnerships are currently undertaking their joint projects.</p> <p>Arrangements for producing KS4 Llwyfan Llafar oracy resource is progressing and will be published in spring 2023.</p> <p>A new secondary Welsh language immersion resource has been published in December 2022 along with associated professional learning.</p> <p>Working groups are developing resources to support Language Charter developments and are making satisfactory progress.</p>
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	<p>Siarter Iaith Secondary (Welsh medium schools) since April 2022: Bronze - 1</p> <p>Cymraeg Campus Primary (English medium schools): Bronze - 6.</p> <p>Cymraeg Campus Secondary (English medium schools) since April 2022: Bronze -1</p> <p>Special schools since April 2022: Bronze – 1</p> <p>Arrangements for producing KS4 Llwyfan Llafar oracy resource is progressing and the development will commence shortly.</p> <p>A new secondary Welsh language immersion resource is nearing completion and is planned for publication December 2022 along with associated professional learning.</p> <p>Working groups are developing resources to support Language Charter developments and are making satisfactory progress.</p> <p>Vocational Qualifications: The regional service is provided Gyda'n Gilydd with £10,000 funding in 2021/22 and an additional £10,000 in 2022/23 to work alongside WJEC to develop Welsh medium Level 3 vocational qualifications. Qualifications are currently being created for business, tourism, public services and sports.</p> <p>Standardised Welsh Reading Test : Central South Consortium has worked in partnership with Cardiff University's School of Welsh to design, pilot, standardise and publish a new Welsh reading test for Years 1-11 in Welsh medium schools. Nearly all practitioners who attended the associated professional learning state that they have a clear understanding of how to implement the new standardised Welsh reading test.</p> <p>Governor Training – Welsh in Education: Central South Consortium held a Governor Training session focussed on Welsh in Education during the summer term 2022 aimed at supporting governors to challenge and support school leaders. 13 governors attended and most stated that they now have a good knowledge and understanding of Welsh in Education, are equipped to challenge and support school leaders appropriately and report that it will impact on practice/behaviour.</p>
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<p>6. Improve pupil attendance. (LA)</p> <p>Pupil attendance in school will have increased over 3 years.</p>	<p>IPs will discuss school attendance as part of their ongoing work with schools, recording the discussion in the School Improvement Partnership Log and the strategies being used by the school to promote increasing levels of attendance. The Principal Improvement Partner liaises with the local authority group manager responsible for pupil attendance to support partnership working.</p> <p>The Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable groups has been working with LA staff in Bridgend to support further developments to the overall strategy for the LA. All improvement partners will address attendance as part of the PDG evaluation with schools.</p>
<p>7. Reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions. (LA)</p> <p>The number of fixed-term exclusions will decrease over 3 years.</p>	<p>CSC staff will monitor pupil behaviour as part of regular monitoring activity across schools, both within the learning environment and other areas of school. The behaviour of learners and incidences of challenging behaviour are discussed as part of meetings with school senior leaders. Where the school has used fixed term exclusions, this will be noted in the School Improvement Partnership Log and will be monitored as part of the support for school leaders. The Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable groups is working with the LA leads to share commonalities across the region and identify practice worth sharing.</p> <p>All improvement partners will address exclusions with schools as part of the PDG evaluation.</p>
<p>8. Work with key delivery partners, such as Central South Consortium, to ensure all schools are supported and challenged appropriately to achieve good outcomes.</p> <p>Working in partnership, all schools will have received support and challenge from CSC and LA officers empowering them to achieve good outcomes against their improvement priorities (progress/evidence captured in monitoring streams).</p>	<p>The improvement, accountability and evaluation framework is being implemented in all schools across the region.</p> <p>All schools have been visited to discuss their priorities for improvement, bespoke support identified, and self-evaluation and monitoring processes are under discussion.</p> <p>All CSC staff received training to ensure a clear understanding of the documentation framework which enables them to play their part in holding the system to account.</p> <p>Updates have been shared with all Headteachers, stakeholders, LAs, elected members and Governor stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Quality assurance processes have been agreed by all Directors and have been shared with all stakeholders. These are starting to be implemented across the region</p> <p>The accountability framework has been implemented across Bridgend. All schools have identified priorities for improvement and the IP has worked with schools to broker appropriate bespoke support.</p> <p>Pre-Inspection Reports written by the IPs have been quality assured by the PIP.</p>

<p>9. Continue to deliver exciting and sustainable learning environments as part of the local authority's 21st Century School Modernisation Programme. (LA)</p> <p>21st Century School Modernisation Programme is delivered.</p>	<p>CSC school improvement staff work with school leaders to develop appropriate strategic priorities to support schools during their school modernisation programmes, identifying appropriate development activity to ensure new learning environments effectively supports teaching and learning. The development of the new learning environments will be a focus for joint monitoring, with the impact of the environments to support effective teaching and learning recorded in the School Improvement Partnership Log.</p>
<p>10. Work with headteachers and chairs of school governing bodies to ensure all Bridgend schools benefit from effective leadership and governance.</p> <p>Working in partnership, all schools will have received support and challenge from CSC and LA officers empowering them to achieve good outcomes against their improvement priorities (progress/evidence captured in monitoring streams).</p>	<p>(Headteachers / Chairs of Gov re leadership)</p> <p>IPs have started to work closely with school leaders to support the delivery of effective internal self-evaluation processes.</p> <p>IPs are working with Headteachers to ensure clear and effective accountability processes are in place.</p> <p>Regional Leaders of Governance (RLGs)</p> <p>CSC has appointed 13 Regional Leaders of Governance (RLGs), two of which represent two local authorities. These are highly effective governors with extensive experience from schools within the region. RLGs provide strategic and operational support for schools where governance is identified as an area for improvement. There are currently no RLGs appointed from Bridgend schools.</p> <p>All RLGs support the facilitation of training to Bridgend governing bodies and support the facilitation of an introduction to coaching which is available to all schools.</p> <p>A governor self-evaluation toolkit has been developed and piloted across the region. This has been shared at Bridgend Chairs of Governors meetings, Governor AGM meetings and secondary headteachers meetings during the summer term 2022. RLGs are supporting the rollout of the toolkit to strengthen school governance. As this is a supportive tool rather than an accountability tool, CSC does not track and hold engagement data on its use. The toolkit is available on the CSC website.</p> <p>Professional Learning (PL)</p> <p>CSC continues to provide a range of professional learning opportunities, support and guidance that is easily accessible to governors in Bridgend schools. The delivery of mandatory PL for Bridgend governors is delegated by the five local authorities to CSC; this extensive governor training offer continues to evolve. All new governors</p>

	<p>must attend the mandatory PL sessions in ‘Understanding Data’ and ‘New to Governors’. New chairs of governors must also attend the ‘New Chair of Governors’ session.</p> <p>In addition to the mandatory training, CSC also provides PL sessions for governors in relation to key areas of the national reform agenda, which includes on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALN • Curriculum for Wales • Effective Challenge and Support • Headteacher Performance Management • Introduction to Coaching Skills • School as Learning Organisations <p>Governor PL is delivered through a blend of synchronous and asynchronous events held virtually. Following each professional learning event, attendance registers are collated, and course evaluations are completed by delegates.</p> <p>Overall, since April 22 61 governors from Bridgend schools have engaged with the governors’ programme so far this year.</p> <p>In addition to course evaluations, governors were also asked to complete a survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the PL offered in meeting their needs as a governor. This survey was analysed, and the information was used to identify next steps in refining the CSC PL offer. The majority of responses to the online PL offer were very positive. Areas for development were identified and refinements will be made as a result, e.g., timings of the sessions.</p>
Estyn Recommendations	Evaluation of Progress
R1 Raise standards of literacy in primary schools	<p>Opportunities to engage in a range of evidence-based professional learning opportunities have been shared with all schools in the Local Authority.</p> <p>A majority of Bridgend schools (66.7%) have engaged with LLC professional learning opportunities during the period from April to October 2022. Practitioners from primary and secondary schools have engaged at a similar level. 8 schools are currently receiving bespoke support from the CSC LLC English medium team,</p>

	<p>covering leadership; spelling; curriculum design and writing. 4 schools are currently receiving bespoke support from the CSC LLC Welsh medium team with the focus largely oracy and reading. Findings from the Comparative Judgement writing project are informing schools' requests for support with writing, suggesting school leaders are using this data strategically.</p>
<p>R2 Improve outcomes for post-16 learners in sixth forms</p>	<p>Regional networks are facilitated by lead practitioners to support the existing secondary curriculum development including GCSE / Level 2 and A Level / Level 3 qualifications. Schools are encouraged to share effective strategies and good practice at subject level. A sixth-form leaders network provides opportunities for schools to develop provision post-16.</p> <p>Post-16 regional network meetings: Engagement has increased significantly from Bridgend schools following regular meetings and partnership with the Bridgend LA School Support - Lead Officer Strategic Development (Secondary). A majority of schools are now attending network meetings, have joined the post-16 online community and are engaging in professional learning. Sharing approaches, and considering improvement to transition, retention and progression beyond the sixth form is a key priority.</p> <p>Recent network agendas have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG Post-16 consistent performance measures • Interventions/1-1 coaching/impartial advice and guidance at KS4 • Collaboration/curriculum offer • Signposting to work experience/careers providers and platforms • CSC Enabling Equity & Excellence document • Signposting to WG documentation- CTER, NR:EI, Community Schools • Promoting Post-16 career support and opportunities (LMI, Education Business Exchange), Speakers for Schools, Springpod, unifrog's CWRE developments). <p>In addition, CSC contributes to the delivery of the NAEL endorsed and RDG accredited Welsh Consortia Post-16 National Leadership Development programme to support leadership in this area. One Bridgend practitioner is currently participating in the leadership programme and one other attended in 21-22. Interest in participation has been highlighted from other schools for next academic year.</p>

	<p>Funded projects and events support practitioners in sixth forms across the region to collaborate and consider learner wellbeing strategies, career aspirations and systems to raise attainment at post-16.</p> <p>Related CSC post-16 professional learning opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event: “The Ladder” (Andrew Bernard) to support careers provision and learner aspiration. • Event: Effective use of Alps at KS5 – CSC specific session planned for 16/02/23. CSC support all secondary schools to use Alps data systems to track and monitor student attainment across the sixth form. • Event: Teaching Effective Revision at KS5 - Martin Griffin-VESPA • Bloom Well-being project (Mental Health UK) • Access to Post-16 Tutorial resources • 5 Bridgend school practitioners are engaged in VESPA Growth Mindset Enquiry project 22-23. One school is also contributing to the development of Welsh language resources to create a more comprehensive bilingual platform for staff and pupils. • 2 Bridgend School practitioners engaged in Design Thinking project 21-22 <p>CSC/Bridgend LA Partnership: Regular meetings have been established with Bridgend LA Post-16 Lead Officer to develop partnership working to signpost schools to CSC Post-16 professional learning opportunities and events. Collaboration to build external partnerships and speakers for Seren and other enrichment events has also proven a beneficial to local schools and their pupils.</p> <p>Qualification Wales vocational sector group development meetings: 3 practitioners from Bridgend are currently contributing to and are the voice of schools with regards to Level 3 vocational qualification development.</p> <p>Bespoke support is available to all practitioners involved in Sixth Form provision in Bridgend. There is regular support available for all aspects of post-16 provision, including transition, retention, attainment and progression.</p>
<p>R3 Increase the pace of improvement in schools causing concern</p>	<p>CSC staff work closely with schools causing concern to identify appropriate focus for support and levels of support, and this is integrated into the appropriate school plan. The progress and impact of the strategic priorities, and the pace of improvement is regularly monitored and reported through the School Improvement Partnership Log and detailed Progress Reports.</p>

	<p>In 2021/22 there were 4 schools in enhanced monitoring for at least part of the year. As a result of the support and challenge, many schools continue to make good progress against a very challenging context. Schools causing concern are well-supported and many schools make strong or better progress against many of the strategic priorities or recommendations</p> <p>During this academic year 2022/23, Estyn have visited 4 out of the 7 schools in enhanced monitoring. One school has been placed in Estyn Review, and another school that was in Estyn Review deemed to have made sufficient progress.</p>
<p>R4 Strengthen the role of the Welsh Education Strategic Forum to ensure timely progress in delivering the priorities identified in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan</p>	<p>CSC is a key partner in Bridgend's Welsh in Education Strategic Forum.</p>

Appendix H

Breakdown of CSC Grants 2021/22

	Total Grant	Retained to Fund National Priorities	Delegated to Schools / Local Authorities
	2021-22	2021-22	2021-22
	£	£	£
Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (including match funding)	58,855,077	5,908,785	52,946,292
Centrally Retained Salaries	3,572,916	3,572,916	0
Business Plan Activity	2,335,869	2,335,869	0
Central South Wales Challenge Model	2,500,000	0	2,500,000
Welsh Government Priority Areas (eg CfW, Funding for Examination Years)	7,215,495	0	7,215,495
Professional Learning	3,817,332	0	3,817,332
<i>EIG Element</i>			
Delegated to Schools/PRUs	35,015,280	0	35,015,280
Foundation Phase	3,918,033		3,918,033
Foundation Phase – Non Maintained Settings	314,600	0	314,600
Grant Administration	67,207	0	67,207
Allocation of resources to react to specific local need	98,345	0	98,345
Pupil Development Grant	37,581,970	318,056	37,263,914
Main	28,984,600	0	28,984,600
Early Years	5,913,300	0	5,913,300
Children Looked After	2,028,600	122,896	1,905,704
Education Other Than At School	277,150	0	277,150
PDG Consortia Led	278,320	95,160	183,160
Pupil Development Grant Adviser Funding	100,000	100,000	0
Siarter Iaith	77,800	77,800	0
Total	96,514,847	6,304,641	90,210,206

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

13 MARCH 2023

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT NEW FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION, IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO SUPPORT THE CURRICULUM FOR WALES

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on:

- the 'School Improvement Guidance: Framework for Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability' (Welsh Government, 2021); and
- the implications for the local authority and regional processes and systems.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** - taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** - ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

3.1 The local authority continues to work in partnership with Central South Consortium to provide school improvement services for all schools across Bridgend County Borough.

3.2 The core focus of all school improvement activity is to provide support and challenge to schools to ensure learners across the local authority have the right educational experiences to allow them to make progress and be successful in the next phase of learning or employment.

- 3.3 As part of wider educational reforms Wales is undertaking, the National School Categorisation System (NSCS) was under review prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. In July 2020, Welsh Government announced that the NSCS was to be suspended.
- 3.4 In response to the suspension of the NSCS, in September 2020, Central South Consortium, in partnership with the local authority, developed a new model of support for schools which was closely linked to the emerging new guidance from the Welsh Government: 'School improvement guidance - framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability'.
- 3.5 Within Central South Consortium's new model of support for schools, there is a clear focus on working alongside schools to agree school priorities for improvement with more time allocated for all schools. Under the new model, the local authority still retains the statutory power to intervene in schools causing concern, where schools are not providing a good enough standard of education for their pupils.
- 3.6 The pandemic has caused significant disruption to schools and their learners. Schools have made important steps forward over this time in many areas of school provision to better meet the needs of learners due to the circumstances faced by our communities. Examples include:
- the wellbeing provision for learners and staff;
 - the use of digital technology to support learning and communication; and
 - the assessment of basic skills to ensure teaching is focused on skill gaps for learners.
- 3.7 Schools have received additional funding from Welsh Government in the form of the Recruit Recover, Raise Standards (RRRS) Grant and Accelerating Learning Programme (ALP) Grant over this time to support these developments with additional staff being used to provide increased support for identified learners.
- 3.8 Schools will continue to utilise the range of self-evaluation evidence to focus on areas for development as they continue to recover from the pandemic, with aspects of provision or certain year groups being a focus for development due to the impact of the pandemic.
- 3.9 The emerging guidance emphasises that the purpose of assessment is to support individual learner progress and that assessment information should not be used for accountability purposes. As a result, local authorities and regional consortia must not collate and aggregate school level data or create specific local arrangements to gather individual pupil level information. The guidance also emphasises that external examinations data should not be taken out of context and used for accountability purposes. It is important to note that both information from schools' assessment arrangements and analysis of external examinations data should continue to inform school self-evaluation arrangements and lead improvement in teaching and learning.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The draft national guidance became non-statutory from September 2022 and provides a point of reference for schools, pupil referral units, local authorities, diocesan authorities, regional consortia and Estyn, which outlines Welsh Government's expectations of them in contributing to school improvement, in the context of their wider legal duties. Welsh Government plan to update the guidance, building on learning in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, and to issue it as statutory guidance to come into force in September 2024.
- 4.2 The purpose of school improvement is to help schools give learners the best possible learning experiences and outcomes, whatever their background, to achieve high standards and aspirations for all. Under Curriculum for Wales, a fundamental part of this will be to ensure schools support every learner to make progress.
- 4.3 The guidance supports that objective by setting out a framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability that will deliver sustainable school improvement and drive behaviours and practices that are required by the new curriculum and assessment arrangements. It is crucial that all aspects of the school improvement system are aligned with and support the new curriculum and its underlying principles.
- 4.4 The guidance states that schools have the central role in driving improvements and that governing bodies are the accountable bodies for their schools. In this role, they take responsibility for strategic leadership of the school, for its effective governance and ultimately for driving improvements in their schools for the benefit of learners. For most schools, governing bodies should be free to oversee the evaluation and improvement process, supported by advice, resources and services from the local authority and regional consortia. However, where schools are causing concern, the local authority is expected to take swift and effective action, advised and supported by regional consortia.
- 4.5 Within the framework, there is a clear distinction between evaluation and improvement activities; accountability; and transparency. Much of the energy and focus on the system should be on delivering school improvement, guided by effective self-evaluation, improvement planning and support in all schools. Underpinning the arrangements will be a broad range of high-quality information about schools and their locality, and other parts of the system, which will need to be used in a timely, intelligent and supportive way.
- 4.6 The guidance makes clear that accountability should not drive school improvement activity (although it can contribute to it) and it should ensure that problems are identified and addressed. The guidance defines two strands within the accountability system:
- the role of effective democratic accountability and governance arrangements at all levels of the school system; and
 - the role of Estyn in delivering regular, consistent, comprehensive and accurate inspections of schools, local authorities and regional consortia.

- 4.7 Under the new framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability, schools will be inspected more regularly by Estyn and inspections will provide fair and rigorous evaluations of learner progress, the quality of leadership, teaching and learning in schools, realisation of the new curriculum and the wellbeing of practitioners and learners.
- 4.8 All parts of the schools' system will need to see self-evaluation as a mechanism for improving individual schools and the wider schools' system, and ultimately supporting learner progress, rather than as a compliance exercise within the accountability system. To further enhance their improvement planning, schools are encouraged to engage peers in the self-evaluation process to gain external perspective on improvement priorities.
- 4.9 Learner progress is central to Curriculum for Wales, so progression needs to have similar importance within evaluation and improvement activities and accountability processes. The guidance suggests that schools use the following two questions as a starting point for their improvement activities:
- Are learners progressing towards the four purposes and in the ways described in the 'Principles of Progression'?
 - Is the pace of learners' progress in line with the expectations of teachers and the curriculum?
- 4.10 Schools' answers to these two questions will need to be informed by a wide range of information and evidence and, in turn, will determine the focus of subsequent self-evaluation and improvement work. Given the centrality of progression to the success and aims of Curriculum for Wales, governing bodies and Estyn – the key elements of the school accountability system – will have a legitimate interest in evidence schools hold about the progress made by their learners.
- 4.11 In using information, schools, the local authority and Central South Consortium should:
- Reduce reliance on narrow measures of learner attainment to draw conclusions on school performance.

The analysis of data and information is important but should not be valued more highly than other sources of evidence for self-evaluation (for example, listening to learners; work scrutiny and learning walks).
 - Be aware that qualification and summative assessment/attainment data will not be sufficient to make a judgement on learner progress.

They will therefore need to draw on wider sources of information and evidence. These are likely to include: information from teachers who will be assessing learner progress; information relating to learner progress in respect of the Principles of Progression; data on attendance, behaviour and welfare, observations of learning and teaching; discussions with learners and teachers.

- The local authority and Central South Consortium support schools to develop appropriately ambitious evaluation and improvement processes with clear targets based on robust benchmark measures (available to schools) related to pupil progress.

Improvement partners work with schools to use these measures to evaluate performance and identify ambitious targets for improvement.

4.12 The outcome of a school's self-evaluation provides more meaningful transparency about areas of strength and priorities for improvement, which will be reflected in their school development plan, than un-contextualised attainment data. To help increase confidence in, and commitment to, the school and its development plan, schools should publish the summary copy on its website. This summary should include a:

- high-level summary of the school's self-evaluation;
- high-level priorities for the current year;
- progress against those for the previous year; and
- external support the school will access to help it achieve its improvement priorities.

4.13 When setting their school improvement priorities, schools should have regard to how their school evaluation and improvement processes align with:

- the three strategic priorities for education in Bridgend (that is, safety (includes safeguarding and health and safety), wellbeing and literacy);
- the local authority's four recommendations in Bridgend's local government education services post-inspection action plan (PIAP) ; and
- our overarching business priorities within the Central South Consortium business plan.

4.14 From September 2022, the 'national priorities' defined in the School Development Plans Regulations have been updated to be consistent with Curriculum for Wales, similarly emphasising the importance of progression. The new 'national priorities', which schools must have regard to when setting their improvement priorities, will be:

- improving pupils' progression by ensuring their learning is supported by a range of knowledge, skills and experience; and
- reducing the impact of poverty on learners' progression and attainment.

4.15 Schools' own improvement priorities and development plans are published in summary form for the benefit of learners, parents, and other stakeholders. This supports a culture in which schools are open about the support they need and where middle tier partners work with schools in a supportive, non-judgemental way.

- 4.16 With the school's self-evaluation and development plan as the starting point, the local authority and Central South Consortium will need to agree with each school the additional support it needs to improve and to build its own capacity. The agreed support schools will receive is incorporated in their development plans, including published summaries, providing an incentive for schools to ask for the help they need and enhancing transparency.
- 4.17 The wide range of information being used at school level to evaluate improvements and identify future priorities, supports regional consortia and local authorities to identify schools' support needs, as well as helping them to identify their own improvement priorities to improve service delivery.
- 4.18 Additionally, to support governing bodies in fulfilling their accountability function, Central South Consortium will provide a short, termly report for governing bodies that will:
- provide wider feedback on the school's self-evaluation processes, improvement priorities and progress towards the improvement priorities;
 - highlight any of the school's strengths which it feels could, or already are, being used to support other schools;
 - draw attention to the governing body of any particular issues they need to be aware of and monitor in the school, as its accountable body; and
 - identify the professional learning support that has been brokered to develop improvement priorities and engagement in the wider professional learning offer.
- 4.19 Within the local authority, there are a range of mechanisms to monitor schools' performance and levels of support. These include:

Performance and Financial Monitoring Board

- 4.20 A Performance and Financial Monitoring Board, comprised of senior managers from the Education and Family Support Directorate, Central South Consortium's Principal Improvement Partner and officers from Human Resources (HR) and Finance, meets monthly to review the performance of all schools. This allows the local authority to identify early any cause for concern that needs to be addressed. It reports and makes recommendations for action directly to the School Improvement Group.

School Improvement Group

- 4.21 The School Improvement Group is comprised of the Leader of Bridgend County Borough Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration, the Chair of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1, the Chief Executive, senior managers from the Education and Family Support Directorate, Central South Consortium's Principal Improvement Partner and officers from HR and Finance. The School Improvement Group meets every half term to review any schools causing concern and to make decisions

based on recommendations from the Performance and Financial Monitoring Board. The School Improvement Group plays an integral role in school improvement and provides a high level of scrutiny.

Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1

4.22 Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 is comprised of elected members and supported by Democratic Services and is designed to hold executive officers and Cabinet members to account over decisions that are made. The Committee makes reports and recommendations which advise the Cabinet and the Council on its policies, budget, and service delivery. The Committee supports the work of the Council as a whole in the improvement of public services.

Business Plan Progress Tracker

4.23 In 2020, the Education and Family Support Directorate introduced a Business Plan Progress Tracker to support its ongoing self-evaluation and business planning processes.

4.24 The Business Plan Progress Tracker illustrates progress against each of the inspection report's four recommendations and identified areas for improvement. This helps to identify the areas of good practice and areas for development/improvement and feeds directly into the directorate's business planning cycle.

4.25 Improvement partners work with school leaders to set appropriate targets, monitor the progress of school priorities through a range of self-evaluation activities and broker increased support if necessary. This early intervention is an integral part of the self-evaluation process. Progress against the schools' strategic priorities will be reported to the Performance and Financial Monitoring Board in its all-school review meetings. If it is felt that insufficient progress is being made, the Performance and Financial Monitoring Board will make recommendations to refocus a school's plan and/or increase levels of support. The local authority may resort to using statutory powers if it felt that limited progress continues to be made.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report.

6.2 As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions.

6.3 This is an information report therefore, it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts because of this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment provides a comprehensive summary of the outcomes expected from the implementation of the service.

Long-term Supports the improvement of progress and outcomes for children and young people.

Prevention Development of evaluation, improvement and accountability processes and systems to help schools have the right levels of challenge and support to secure the best outcomes for all children and young people.

Integration Ensuring the evaluation, improvement and accountability processes and systems being developed are in line with the new guidance and complement the democratic and accountability processes within the local authority.

Collaboration The local authority works closely with schools, Estyn and with the Central South Consortium to assist with the evaluation, improvement and accountability expectations and to deliver school improvement services. The local authority inspection report from Estyn informs the work conducted within the directorate and with Central South Consortium to deliver the support for education improvement services.

Involvement This area of work involves all stakeholders in local government education services.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this information report.

9. Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1:

- notes the content of this report in respect of the changes to the monitoring and evaluation of schools; and
- provides any feedback as necessary.

Lindsay Harvey
Corporate Director – Education and Family Support
10 February 2023

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Background documents:

- School improvement guidance: framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability
- Education in Wales: Our National Mission
- Welsh Government interim school performance measures (May 2018)
- 'Interim Key Stage 4 School Performance Arrangements: Measures and Analyses' (June 2019)

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

13 MARCH 2023

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER - LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Present the Committee with the Forward Work Programme (**Appendix A**) for consideration and approval;
- b) Request any specific information the Committee identifies to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Request the Committee to identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.3;
- d) Present the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet (**Appendix B**) to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at the previous meetings;
- e) Advise that the Committee's updated Forward Work Programme and Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC).

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently

as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council's Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.
- 3.2 The Council's Constitution also provides for each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard to the Council's Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework, for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to have oversight.

Best Practice / Guidance

- 3.3 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's (CfGS) Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the Forward Work Programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be coordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.
- 3.4 Forward Work Programmes need to be manageable to maximise the effective use of the limited time and resources of Scrutiny Committees. It is not possible to include every topic proposed. Successful scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members need to be selective, while also being able to demonstrate clear arguments for including or excluding topics.
- 3.5 The CfGS guide to effective work programming 'A Cunning Plan?' makes the following reference to the importance of good work programming:

'Effective work programming is the bedrock of an effective scrutiny function. Done well it can help lay the foundations for targeted, incisive and timely work on issues of local importance, where scrutiny can add value. Done badly, scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal.'

Forward Work Programme

- 3.6 Following the approval of the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meeting dates at the Annual Meeting of Council on 18 May 2022, the scheduling of standing statutory reports to Scrutiny Committees upon: the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Performance, the Corporate Plan, Budget Monitoring, etc. were mapped to the appropriate timed COSC meeting dates into a draft Forward Work Programme.
- 3.7 The draft Forward Work Programme for each Scrutiny Committee has been prepared using a number of different sources, including:
 - Corporate Risk Assessment;
 - Directorate Business Plans;

- Previous Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme report topics / Minutes;
- Committee / Member proposed topics;
- Policy Framework;
- Cabinet Work Programme;
- Discussions with Corporate Directors;
- Performance Team regarding the timing of performance information.

3.8 There are items where there is a statutory duty for Policy Framework documents to be considered by Scrutiny, e.g. the MTFS including draft budget proposals scheduled for consideration in January 2023, following which the COSC will coordinate the conclusions and recommendations from each of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees in a report on the overall strategic overview of Cabinet's draft Budget proposals to the meeting of Cabinet in February 2023.

3.9 An effective FWP identifies the issues that the Committee wishes to focus on during the year and provides a clear plan. However, at each meeting the Committee will have an opportunity to review this as the Forward Work Programme Update will be a standing item on the Agenda, detailing which items are scheduled for future meetings and be requested to clarify any information to be included in reports and the list of invitees. The FWP will remain flexible and will be reported to each COSC meeting with feedback from each SOSC FWP and any updated information gathered from FWP meetings with Scrutiny Chairs and Corporate Directors.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 The Committee approved its Forward Work Programme at its previous meeting.

4.2 The Committee's Forward Work Programme will also be reported to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, for coordination and oversight of the overall FWP.

Identification of Further Items

4.3 The Committee is reminded of the Criteria Form which Members can use to propose further items for the FWP which the Committee can then consider for prioritisation at a future meeting. The Criteria Form emphasises the need to consider issues such as impact, risk, performance, budget and community perception when identifying topics for investigation and to maximise the impact scrutiny can have on a topic and the outcomes for people. Criteria which can help the Committee come to a decision on whether to include a referred topic, are set out below:

Recommended Criteria for Selecting Scrutiny Topics:

PUBLIC INTEREST: The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny;

ABILITY TO CHANGE: Priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence, and add value to;

PERFORMANCE: Priority should be given to the areas in which the Council is not performing well;

EXTENT: Priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or large parts of the County Borough; or a large number of the Authority's service users or its population;

REPLICATION: Work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.

Reasons to Reject Scrutiny Topics:

- The issue is already being addressed / being examined elsewhere and change is imminent.
- The topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and can be referred there).
- Scrutiny involvement would have limited / no impact upon outcomes.
- The topic may be sub-judice or prejudicial.
- The topic is too broad to make a review realistic and needs refining / scoping.
- New legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected within the next year.
- The topic area is currently subject to inspection or has recently undergone substantial change / reconfiguration.

Corporate Parenting

- 4.4 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a Local Authority towards looked after children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'corporate parent', therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for the children and young people looked after by Bridgend.
- 4.5 In this role, it is suggested that Members consider how each item they consider affects children in care and care leavers, and in what way can the Committee assist in these areas.
- 4.6 Scrutiny Champions can greatly support the Committee in this by advising them of the ongoing work of the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.
- 4.7 The Forward Work Programme for this Committee is attached as **Appendix A**.
- 4.8 The Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations at the previous meeting is attached as **Appendix B**.
- 5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**
- 5.1 The work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Council's Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long-term - The approval of this report will assist in the planning of Scrutiny business in both the short-term and in the long-term on its policies, budget and service delivery.
- Prevention - The early preparation of the Forward Work Programme allows for the advance planning of Scrutiny business where Members are provided an opportunity to influence and improve decisions before they are made by Cabinet.
- Integration - The report supports all the wellbeing objectives.
- Collaboration - Consultation on the content of the Forward Work Programme has taken place with the Corporate Management Board, Heads of Service and Elected Members.
- Involvement - Advanced publication of the Forward Work Programme ensures that stakeholders can view topics that will be discussed in Committee meetings and are provided with the opportunity to engage.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 The Committee is recommended to:
- a) Consider and approve the Forward Work Programme attached as **Appendix A**;
 - b) Identify any specific information the Committee wishes to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
 - c) Identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.3 of this report;

- d) Note the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at the previous meetings, attached as **Appendix B**;
- e) Note that the Forward Work Programme, Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet and any updates from the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of COSC.

Kelly Watson

Chief Officer – Legal & Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

2 March 2023

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Background documents: None.

**Forward Work Programme
Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1:**

APPENDIX A

<u>Date of Meeting:</u>	<u>Report Topics:</u>
Monday 4 July 9.30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination report; - Nomination to the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel report; - Draft Outline Forward Work Programme
Monday 12 September 2.30pm	Meeting postponed for national period of mourning
Monday 10 October 11am	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding
Thursday 1 December 11am	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)
Thursday 19 January 11am	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26 and Inflationary Pressures
Monday 13 March 11am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New Framework for Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability to Support the Curriculum for Wales - Annual Local Authority Scrutiny Report - Central South Consortium 2021-22
To be scheduled as part of 2023/24 AFWP	Upgrading of older school facilities that are not being replaced under School Modernisation.
Information report to be provided	English Language Schools' catchment areas / capacity.
Information report to be provided	Early Help Service Pressures

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Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1

RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING ACTION SHEET

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
4 July 2022	Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination	Councillor Tim Thomas was nominated to represent Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 as an invitee to meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.	Scrutiny / Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy	ACTIONED – Membership of Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee updated and formally reported to Cabinet 19 July 2022.
4 July 2022	Nomination to the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel	Councillor Richard Collins was nominated to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.	Scrutiny	ACTIONED – Membership of Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel updated and initial Briefing session arrangements underway.
4 July 2022	Forward Work Programme Update	With regard to the Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding report scheduled for the meeting on 12 September, the Committee wished to look at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil wellbeing from an attendance perspective and support in schools from Education Welfare Officers; 	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support	ACTIONED - Feedback provided to Corporate Director – Education and Family Support to include focussed aspects in the scope of this report.

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the Free school meal programme is being rolled out in schools across the county borough. • What support schools are getting particularly for care experienced children and are there effective lines of communication between schools and social services support. • In relation to increased referrals to Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), the way in which referrals from schools to IAA are dealt with and the support in the team (and requested representatives from IAA / CAMHS in relation to pupil attendance /safeguarding), for the September report. 		
4 July 2022	Forward Work Programme Update	<p>The Committee recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing be revisited within a suitable time frame to monitor progress and support. • Sight of the Corporate Management Dashboard for the Education Directorate on a quarterly basis at the appropriate time. • The Committee requested that Pupil Wellbeing be included and monitored 	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support	ACTIONED – response and information reports (EFS Mental Health Support and Performance Monitoring Update) circulated 29 November 2022.

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
		as part of the Directorate Performance Dashboard in future.		
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee Recommended that the Local Authority considers whether it can make safeguarding training mandatory for School Governors.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support / Group Manager Vulnerable Groups Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee Recommended that the Local Authority conduct a review of school pickup times by contracted transport providers and the impact on the safeguarding and well-being of pupils and staff.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support / Group Manager, Business Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee Recommended that the consistency of schools’ links visits by Police Liaison Officers be escalated to ensure contact and input with all schools.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support / Group Manager Vulnerable Groups Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee Recommended that concern is expressed regarding communication delay when headteachers made safeguarding referrals and were waiting to receive information that they needed to receive quickly.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing / Deputy Head of Children’s Social Care	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 23 November 2022.
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee Recommended that the positives of wellbeing support in schools be shared across the county borough as best practice.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee Recommended that the Corporate Director - Education and Family Support be requested to raise at the next Regional Partnership Board meeting the need for consistent community communication from the Health Board and a consistent message to schools for communicating with parents regarding Covid, to clarify the rules for whether pupils should attend.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions,	The Committee Recommended that the human resource challenges are addressed	Scrutiny / Corporate	

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
	Health and Safeguarding	to enable provision of breakfasts in all schools, to meet the national legislative obligations set out by Welsh Government.	Director – Education and Family Support / Group Manager, Business Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee Recommended that concern is expressed regarding grants for school uniforms being monetary rather than voucher where the money is not being spent on uniforms, due to the cost-of-living pressures and children were attending school in old clothing or not in uniform.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee requested a response on what wellbeing support was available for pupils taking examinations. and what support and information pupils could access regarding the War in Ukraine.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support / Group Manager Inclusion and School Improvement	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee requested what support and information pupils could access regarding the War in Ukraine.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
			Family Support / Group Manager Inclusion and School Improvement	
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee requested the consistent themes / concerns regarding exclusions and pupil non-attendance in secondary schools in more granular detail and the support mechanism in place to support the families.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support / Group Manager Vulnerable Groups Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee requested information regarding individual Schools’ waiting lists for counselling.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support / Group Manager - Family Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee requested exclusions data represented by percentage of pupil population per school / area.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support / Group Manager	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
			Vulnerable Groups Support	
10 Oct 2022	Pupil Attendance, Exclusions, Health and Safeguarding	The Committee requested data regarding the extent of behaviour linked to undiagnosed mental health and ADHD, to include the waiting times for ADHD diagnosis and CAMHS.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director – Education and Family Support / Group Manager Inclusion and School Improvement	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 16 November 2022.
1 Dec 2022	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	That the Cabinet Member for Education raise with the Welsh Government Minister for Education whether there should be a change in legislation to allow for schools not in the Bridgend County Borough to be included in Bridgend catchment areas to ensure parents have availability close to their homes to transition their children from primary to secondary education.	Corporate Director – Education and Family Support / Cabinet Member for Education	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 27 Feb 2023.
1 Dec 2022	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	A written response from the Cabinet Member for Education setting out how Members can feed into the Welsh in Education Forum to include detail on attending meetings and providing input.	Corporate Director – Education and Family Support / Cabinet Member for Education	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 27 Feb 2023.

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
1 Dec 2022	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	A written response regarding the subgroups for the five-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) including an action plan and delivery timetable to enable the Committee to monitor in the future.	Scrutiny / Group Manager Learner Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 27 Feb 2023.
1 Dec 2022	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	The Governance and Action plan; visibility of projects mapped out to show routes of governance and how various projects will be monitored.	Director – Education and Family Support / Group Manager Learner Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 27 Feb 2023.
1 Dec 2022	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	An update, when appropriate, on the provision of Welsh Medium education in the South East of the County with input from the Corporate Director for Education and Family Support and written feedback from the Cabinet Member for Education following his meeting with the Welsh Government Minister for Education.	Director – Education and Family Support / Cabinet Member of Education	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 27 Feb 2023.
1 Dec 2022	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	Further information on the financial implications of the implementation of the WESP to include detail on what has been done thus far to source additional funding and from where and how future funding would be obtained to maintain the WESP Co-Ordinator position.	Director – Education and Family Support / Group Manager Learner Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 27 Feb 2023.
1 Dec 2022	Welsh in Education	Data on how many learners travel into County Borough from outside the catchment areas to attend the Welsh	Director – Education and Family Support /	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 27 Feb 2023.

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
	Strategic Plan (WESP)	Medium Schools and more information on the support available to parents who would like their child(ren) to receive a Welsh Medium education or would like them to have the opportunity to develop the Welsh language in English Medium Schools.	Group Manager Learner Support	
1 Dec 2022	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	An update on the timescale for the refurbishment of Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd and its place in priority compared to all schools being considered for maintenance required.	Director – Education and Family Support	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 27 Feb 2023.
19 Jan 2023	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-24 to 2026-27	The Committee made recommendations, comments and requests.	Scrutiny / Chair of COSC	ACTIONED - Recommendations formally reported to COSC and onward to Cabinet 7 February 2023 for consideration and response to be provided to COSC.

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