

APPENDIX A

Strategic review into the development and rationalisation of the curriculum and estate provision of primary, secondary and post 16 education

Collaboration and leadership workstream

End of project (workstream) report



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Approval is required from the project sponsor and the project board

0. Document Control

0.1 Version Control

Version	Status	Date	Author	Amendment Details
0.1	Draft	06/03/2017	RD	First draft
0.2	Draft	11/05/2017	RD	Amended draft
1.0	Approved	15/05/2017	RD	Final

0.2 Purpose of this document.

The purpose of this report is to report on the outcome of the workstream to consider the delivery of a sustainable strategy for collaboration and leadership in Bridgend underpinned by robust models, which would deliver the right education in the right place and with the best outcomes for children.

Specifically the project aimed to:-

- establish and drive forward a strategic approach to leadership and collaboration within schools in the county borough.
- co-design models and finalise options (to be designed with the input from all stakeholders.)
- identify triggers to collaboration.
- identify the pathways to collaboration.
- assess the implications of any proposals and advice the strategic board.
- to ensure that the leadership and collaboration work stream operates within agreed timeframes.

This report will:-

- a. enable the project manager to report on how well the project has performed against the project brief;
- b. document outstanding issues that need transferring to operational ownership prior to closure;
- c. enable the programme board to formally close the project workstream.

PART 1: Project Performance

1. Achievement of Project's Objectives

The following is a summary of the deliverables against achievables within the project:-

- i. Establish and drive forward a strategic approach to leadership and collaboration within schools in the county borough.***

There is good awareness of the opportunities for collaboration across schools. To reinforce the regional agenda, the Central South Consortium issued documents regarding leadership and federation at the end of 2016. These documents contained an information pack and a supporting offer for schools that were potentially looking to federate, asking them for expressions of interest as 'trailblazer' federations.

The general approach has been based on one where schools have been expected to initiate progress towards collaboration. The group did not welcome a more prescriptive approach where the local authority identified the opportunities through strategic master planning. Whilst a roadmap of potential collaborative opportunities was discussed, it was discounted as being too prescriptive,

identifying that schools and governing bodies in particular would not react positively to forward planning. The group agreed that providing the right tools that allow for more collaborative working with a possibility for federation was more important than a prescriptive approach would likely lead to resistance.

ii. Co-design models and finalise options (to be designed with the input from all stakeholders.)

It was acknowledged that there was a significant amount of knowledge and experience within schools/governing bodies in understanding what greater collaboration would mean for school governance.

As this knowledge is non-uniform it was suggested that governor improvement groups, could potentially be used as a mechanism for supporting the agenda of collaboration as much of the uncertainty and also resistance comes from the governing bodies involved, through lack of knowledge of implications or differences in expectation.

The group acknowledged that a softly-softly approach was required, as schools would naturally be wary of such change.

It was further acknowledged that very little of the mandatory governor training would help with a wider understanding of the benefits and risks associated with greater collaboration. Two training events with governors had however taken place to explain how federation in particular would work and to share understanding.

Information was presented to the group detailing the work of other local authorities in taking forward greater collaboration, in particular formal federations. Whilst useful, these models were seen to offer only a number of examples of the approaches that would lead to greater collaboration between schools, rather than offering a definitive list. The group identified that the Bridgend model could look very different and be bespoke to each school to school initiative.

iii. Identify triggers to collaboration.

There were significant discussions in relation to the triggers for collaboration. Information was presented to identify the expected triggers such as poor governance of schools, budgetary issues such as schools being in significant deficit budget year on year. However, the group also discussed more positive

triggers where schools would naturally work together to share resources and expertise, for example, to the benefit of learner outcomes.

iv. Identify the pathways to collaboration.

The focus of the workstream was on the support arrangements that would be in place or would need to be in place to assist schools in making collaborations effective. The group discussed the various roles of the local authority, the Central South Consortium, governing bodies, the Bridgend Governors Association and possible associated governor improvement groups, in developing this agenda.

v. Assess the implications of any proposals and advise the strategic board.

Highlight reports to the Strategic Review Programme board highlighted the progress with the workstream. Advice and guidance on the scope of the workstream beyond that originally identified in the project brief was not required.

vi. To ensure that the leadership and collaboration work stream operates within agreed timeframes

The timescales identified in the original project brief were adhered to. The workstream concluded prior to the deadline identified in the project brief i.e., May 2017.

2. Performance

	Baseline (as at PID)	Current
Scope	Green	Green
Timescale	Green	Green
Cost	Green	Green

3. Outstanding Issues

The group discussed the Central South Consortium papers which had been recently issued to all schools. As the Central South Consortium was now leading on this as a regional piece of work that covered the same scope and objectives of this workstream, it was determined that this workstream would therefore transfer to the Central South Consortium and close as a result.

PART 2: Lessons Learned

The workstream team clearly identified the objectives of the workstream and adequately discussed the implications of the development of these objectives.

It was clear that a rigid approach to master planning the collaboration/federation of schools across Bridgend was not seen as a desirable. It was agreed that the right model for Bridgend schools was a supportive one, where the right tools and the right support infrastructure were made available to allow schools to develop their own agendas around collaboration, with the potential then for formal federations. An overly prescriptive approach was not seen to be a priority and carried significant risks to buy-in from schools/governing bodies. It was acknowledged that moving through the collaborative process to a more formal federation, would take a variable length of time on a case by case basis.

The make-up of the team was well balanced with a good mix of governors, local authority staff, head teachers, diocesan and Central South Consortium leads.

Although the Central South Consortium had already initiated a similar project on a regional basis, this only became clear once the workstream had been in place for some time. In retrospect, a more joined-up approach might have been to transfer the responsibility to develop the workstream to the Central South Consortium at the outset of the programme rather than part way through. Nevertheless, this gave the workstream and its representatives, the opportunity to confirm its position in respect of collaboration and leadership to the benefit of the overall programme.

Recommendations

1. That following closure of the workstream that the objectives are transferred to Central South Consortium and are developed in line with the agenda for collaboration at a consortium level.
2. That when there are proposals for future local authority strategies cross over into the Central South Consortium's agenda, that an evaluation of the impact of that development is assessed at the outset.