

Appendix C
Bridgend County Borough Council
Festival of Learning
Benefits Realisation Strategy

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1. Document control

Version	Status	Date	Author	Amendment details
0.1	Draft	19/01/2018	S Roberts	First draft
0.2	Draft	02/02/2018	S Roberts	Following suggestions from working group – related to 'Readiness tool'
0.3	Draft	23/02/2018	S Roberts	Refining/removal of repetition and draft of Benefits Realisation Plan (as Appendix D)
0.4	Draft	25/02/18	L Harvey	Minor amendments and additional narrative

2. Purpose of this document

2.1 The purpose of the benefits realisation strategy is to describe the Festival of Learning's approach to realising benefits. It provides details of a structured continuing process that will be followed to ensure that benefits are sustained and that returns on investment are maximised wherever possible. The strategy will:

- state what the benefits of the programme are;
- identify how benefits of the programme are tracked and measured;
- identify risks associated with the programme that may prevent benefits from being realised;

- identify the critical risk factors that need to be in place to ensure benefits are realised; and
- define where the programme can act to ensure benefits are realised.

3. Background

- 3.1 The event relates directly to the strategic priority in the Corporate Plan to ‘support a successful economy’ and the Directorate Commitments to ‘provide the learning and development opportunities for staff to meet future service needs’ and to ‘develop more effective practice in respect of ensuring children and young people are actively involved in policy development and the decision-making process through developing our participation strategy so that their views, thoughts, wishes and feelings are appropriately represented’.
- 3.2 It will also address the first recommendation noted in the last Estyn inspection of the local authority to improve outcomes for learners by strengthening consistency across all schools; and it fits well with Welsh Government and Central South Consortium’s identification of sharing effective practice as a key element in self-improving school systems, as recognised by all schools across the borough council.
- 3.3 It is expected that the event will:
- facilitate sharing good practice across organisations;
 - promote inclusive learning from basic to further education;
 - facilitate learning for and in the workplace; and
 - enhance quality and excellence in learning.
- 3.4 The anticipated **benefits** are identified below:

- more effective sharing of best practice among schools and other learning providers (eg Bridgend College) with a view to improving standards;
- closer working relationships between schools and local businesses;
- greater promotion of Bridgend as a 'centre of learning'; and
- clearer alignment of educational and employer-led activity Cardiff Capital Region City Deal priorities.

- 3.5 These are the principal benefits for children and young people of the Festival of Learning and they support the outcomes articulated in detail in the Corporate plan. The programme is envisaged as one which will improve the wellbeing culture of schools/learning organisations making them "fit for purpose in the 21st century". It must be set in its wider context of curriculum reform in Wales and configured to bring about more wide-ranging changes in how teachers teach, how learners learn, how schools serve their communities and how services can collaborate in the multi-agency arena (a priority in the Education and Family Support Directorate Plan).
- 3.6 The 'Festival of Learning' event is designed to benefit Bridgend schools directly by offering them the opportunity for greater joint professional collaboration and reflection on current practice through delivering and attending workshops related to pedagogy. The event is being developed in partnership with Bridgend schools to ensure that it is directly relevant to them and meets their particular needs as outlined in their school improvement plans (SIPs), Self-Evaluation Reports (SERs) and in their team Strategy on a Page (SOAP). The 'Festival of Learning' concept has been welcomed by headteachers across the county and schools are keen to support the event.
- 3.7 It is anticipated that all schools will benefit from the 'Festival of Learning', with around 1000 staff from across Bridgend benefit directly from this experience. Similarly, over 120 pupils should benefit by participating in the Learners' Day Showcase event where they will be presenting aspects of their learning from throughout the year and a further 120 pupils will represent their school councils in the Learner Voice Forum to ensure that the views of learners are captured to help inform local and national policies within and beyond the Directorate and Bridgend.
- 3.8 It is anticipated that the event will generate a high level of interest and enthusiasm throughout the county borough and beyond. It is an opportunity to showcase learning in Bridgend. In the spirit of 'success breeding success' we

expect that such a significant uplifting event will have multiple positive spin-offs whereby schools will be motivated to reflect and build on their successes over a sustained period. This is particularly important in challenging times as it will help to maintain and develop motivation, dedication and morale in all schools.

- 3.9 This event provides the opportunity to realise all the advantages of close working relationships between schools, local authority, further education (FE), higher education (HE) and employers which in turn will assist pupils in their progression routes – continuing to improve our outcomes regarding those not in employment, education or training (NEETs) and assisting with levels of engagement.
- 3.10 Sharing good practice is a recommendation in the post-inspection action plan (PIAP) for the local authority and for a number of schools therein and therefore this one-off investment will assist us in meeting this target. While the ‘Festival of Learning’ falls outside the core remit of Central South Consortium (CSC) and will not therefore be funded by it, some activities for the event will be supported by diverting the local authority annex (£20k) whereby challenge advisers who work closely with the schools to support this enterprise. Furthermore, the CSC ‘Readiness Tool’ will help to monitor progress towards the implementation of ‘Curriculum Wales’ in 2020 and this will be greatly supported by the Festival of Learning.
- 3.11 The Festival of Learning is about transforming the way in which children and young people live and learn. It will support the four key purposes of the new curriculum for Wales (as identified in the ‘Successful Futures’ report) to support our children and young people to be:
- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives;
 - enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work;
 - ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world; and
 - healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.
- 3.12 The Festival of Learning will focus on the following priorities, aligned with the new Estyn inspection framework:

- standards;
- wellbeing and attitudes to learning;
- teaching and learning experiences;
- care, support and guidance; and
- leadership and management.

3.13 There will be a specific focus on wellbeing and attitudes to learning at the event.

4. Overarching programme benefits

4.1 The benefits of the Festival of Learning is to set the tone and climate for learning in Bridgend, which means we want to:

- focus on wellbeing as a fundamental platform for working and learning in Bridgend;
- facilitate a collaborative culture for joint practice developments between schools aiding continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers to enhance outcomes for learners;
- enhance multi-agency working between schools and other agencies/organisations including local businesses and further and higher education institutions;
- ensure schools are ready to implement the curriculum changes ahead and to improve teaching and learning experiences for learners;
- get to know the wishes, thoughts and feelings of learners in Bridgend to help inform local (and national) policy priorities; and

- celebrate the learning that is taking place in Bridgend and foster a greater sense of pride.

4.2 Other factors which it is important to consider within the Festival of Learning are:

- there is an assumption that the wellbeing of headteachers and senior leaders impacts on the wellbeing of all staff and pupils and so it is important to take care of them in order to bring school improvement; and
- the use of the Central South Consortium 'Readiness Tool' established to measure schools' readiness for implementing curriculum reform. A baseline measure has been collected (February 2018) and progress measures will be taken twice a year until 2026 to monitor 'Creating the Climate' (2017-2019); 'Enabling and Engaging the Organisation' (2019-2021) and, 'Implementing and Sustaining Change' (2021-2026).

5. Measurable benefits

Improved educational outcomes

- 5.1 Educational research suggests that the most effective and efficient ways of enhancing teaching and learning in schools to improve educational outcomes through joint practice development (Hargreaves, 2010, 2011) and collaborative working (see <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/collaborative-learning/>).
- 5.2 These are key features of the event where schools and pupils will be working in teams. Improving educational experiences for children is likely to be implemented relatively quickly but improving educational outcomes will happen over a longer period of time as the joint practice working embeds further and gathers momentum.
- 5.3 Measures of these benefits, though also influenced by other factors, will include:
- faster progress along the spectrum of the CSC 'Readiness Tool' from the baseline data collected in February 2018 in relation to 'Pedagogy', 'Innovating Learning Experiences', 'Assessment and Progress', and 'Standards: Skills, Knowledge and Understanding' when compared to other local authorities in CSC; and

- inspection report judgements on the quality of the curriculum.

5.4 Longer-term targets will be set to increase the proportion of children reaching the expected levels and higher than expected levels of attainment' at a faster rate than in previous years.

Increased focus on wellbeing in schools

5.5 The symposium event focuses specifically on the wellbeing of headteachers and senior leaders in schools on the understanding that this impacts on the wellbeing of all staff and pupils and therefore on outcomes for learners. Pre- and post-event surveys for headteachers will be developed to measure changes in perception.

5.6 The Learners' Day will focus on 'what makes children happy in school' and on what will make them 'happier' and the feedback received from this will inform decisions about what more is needed to further improve wellbeing and pupil resilience in schools. This is an area of specific interest by other service areas within and beyond the local authority.

5.7 It is important to note that children's wellbeing is related to educational experiences and relationships as well as to external factors.

5.8 Measures of these benefits will include:

- faster progress along the spectrum of the CSC 'Readiness Tool' from the baseline data collected in February 2018 specifically in relation to 'Relationships and Wellbeing' compared to other local authorities in CSC;
- inspection report judgements on the quality of accommodation and the curriculum;
- pre and post-event surveys for headteachers;
- use of relevant indicators related to the 'Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015; and

- improved attendance.

Improved community involvement with schools

5.9 The showcase event for the Learners' Day will engage with all elected members and with local businesses to help improve community involvement. At the Learner Voice Forum, pupils will consider what will make them 'happier' in their schools and communities and this will inform decision making about what more is required. This is an area of specific interest by other service areas within and beyond the local authority.

5.10 Measures of these benefits will include:

- faster progress along the spectrum of the CSC 'Readiness Tool' from the baseline data collected in February 2018 specifically in relation to 'Relationships and Wellbeing' compared to other local authorities in CSC;
- increased participation in community activities;
- number and range of activities and facilities available to the community in each school;
- increased pupil participation in consultation work;
- inspection report judgements on the quality of partnership working; and
- use of indicators related to the 'Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

6. Risks

6.1 In this context, there are potential detrimental effects of the Festival of Learning which will require careful monitoring and management. These include:

- Funding - if the bid for 'one-off growth funds is unsuccessful, the Festival of Learning programme and potential benefits will be greatly reduced. Schools will not be able to free up teachers to participate in the workshop activities by providing supply cover and transport costs.
- The CSC LA Annex funding will pay for a limited number of opportunities but the full extent of the whole event will not be realised.
- Potential for some staff to feel alienated and unappreciated if they are not able to participate in the event. This is a matter for headteachers to manage carefully to ensure that their decisions about who can/cannot be involved are open and transparent and to ensure that the work of all teachers is given due recognition so that all staff are aware of their vital contribution.

References

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