

# 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**

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**Background documents:**

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