

Report To: Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 31 January 2013

Lead Member / Officer: Lead Member for Education/Head of Education

Report Author: Head of Education

Title: The progress to date with the establishment and running of the RSEIS and the benefits realised to date from its establishment

1. What is the report about?

1.1 The progress to date with the establishment and running of the Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (RSEIS); and the benefits realised to date from its establishment.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 To provide information on and consider the progress achieved to date in the establishment of the new service.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 That the Committee considers the information provided and comments on the progress achieved to date in establishing the new service.

4. Report details.

4.1 On Tuesday 21 February 2012, Councillor E W Williams presented a report to Cabinet, seeking approval for the Full Business Case for a new School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (RSEIS) across the six North Wales Authorities. (Appendix 1)

It was resolved that Cabinet approve the Full Business Case for a new service; the aim of the new service being to: establish a Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (RSEIS) to be accountable to, and undertake the statutory responsibilities of the six local North Wales Authorities in respect of the duties to monitor; challenge; provide support services for curriculum continued professional development and management of schools, and, in addition, provide services that can be commissioned by schools and Local Authorities.

The RSEIS will be central to School Improvement in North Wales. It will be a powerhouse to drive good practice across the region. It will ensure a consistency of challenge and support for schools across the six counties, leading to our children and young people fulfilling their potential.

The Full Business Case (Appendix 2) states that the programme will be delivered in four inter-dependant tiers:-

- Tier 1 will deliver the NW Regional Strategy for raising standards to meet the National School Effectiveness Framework.
- Tier 2 (*the focus of this FBC*) will deliver the new NW RSEIS to support Tier 1.
- Tier 3 will deliver the MIS Structure (Capita ONE) to support Tiers 1 and 2.
- Tier 4 will deliver the 'Support Functions' to support Tiers 1 and 2 (Host Authority).

A timescale for implementation of Tier 2 activity which will deliver the RSEIS was agreed as part of the Full business Case (2012/2013):

- Feb / Mar - FBC to Cabinets / Executive Boards
- Mar - Host Authority for the RSEIS agreed
- Apr - Appointment of the Chief Officer
- Sep - Appointment of the System Leaders and Support Staff
 - Joint Committee established
- Nov - Mar - Team, cultural, induction, skills training for the staff appointed to the RSEIS
- Apr - Staff transfer to the RSEIS, employed by the Host Authority

4.2 Progress against the schedule for implementation:-

- Cabinets / Executive Boards approval for the Full Business Case has been granted.
- Gwynedd has been appointed as the Host Authority for the RSEIS.
- The initial recruitment process for the Chief Officer post was unsuccessful. An interim Chief Officer was appointed in April 2012 as per schedule. The recruitment/appointment process for the permanent post is currently underway and it is anticipated that the process will be completed by mid-February.
- Twenty three out of the identified thirty System Leaders' posts have been filled, including the three Senior System Leader posts. A process is underway to recruit to the remaining posts. All Systems Leaders have attended a national training day and further training opportunities will be provided.
- All School Improvement staff currently working as Link Officers in schools across North Wales have begun working within a common framework to ensure consistency and continuity of approach.

4.3 **On-going activity and next steps:-**

- The Inter Authority Agreement is in the process of being finalised.
- The Service Level Agreement is in the process of being finalised.
- On finalisation of the Inter Authority Agreement, the Joint Committee will be established.
- In April, the Staff transfer to the RSEIS, employed by the Host Authority, will be complete and the Service will be fully operational.

5. **How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

5.1 This contributes to the priority: Improving performance in education and the quality of our school buildings.

6. **What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

6.1 The current total cost of delivering the existing statutory and advisory in-scope school improvement functions across the six North Wales Local Authorities is £5.1m. This equates to an average cost of £51 per pupil. The cost of the RSEIS is £3.5m, equating to an average cost per pupil of £35, (compared to £51 currently).

6.2 After all factors have been considered, a potential all regional saving of £882k (20%) has been identified, which can be re-invested in Education, or released as a cashable saving, depending on the needs of each Local Authority.

7. **What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision?**

7.1 The project:-

- supports the focus of the Community Strategy towards the development of **children and young people**;
- strives to provide **equality of opportunity** for all children to receive the best possible education in schools across North Wales; and
- is focused on providing **sustainable options** for education that meets the needs of children and young people now and in the future.

8. **What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

8.1 Consultations have been carried out with key Stakeholders.

9. **Chief Finance Officer Statement**

N/a

10. **What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

10.1 A full Risk Register has been developed within the project documentation.

Risks have been and will continue to be identified by the Project Team (in association with colleagues across the remit of the project) and the NW ADEW Consortium, and reviewed as a standing item on the agenda for the project element of the regular NW ADEW Consortium meetings.

11. Power to make the Decision

- 11.1 Article 6.3.2 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that scrutiny committees may ensure that actions indicated in action plans are carried out.

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