



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th FEBRUARY 2020

THE COUNCIL'S FUTURE COMMITMENT TO DELIVERING SHARED EDUCATION ADVISORY SERVICES

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION (COUNCILLOR JOY ROSSER)

AUTHOR: Gaynor Davies: 01443 744009

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is for Members to consider the decision of the Central South Consortium Joint Committee to continue to deliver shared educational advisory services in partnership with the other four councils in the region for at least the next three years.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report;
- 2.2 Agree to support the decision of the Central South Consortium Joint Committee to continue to deliver shared educational advisory services in partnership with the other four councils in the region for at least the next three years.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To provide a clear commitment of support for the Central South Consortium from each of the five councils.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Welsh Government is making significant changes to the delivery of education in Wales during a period of unprecedented public sector financial austerity. In the autumn of 2018, the five Education Cabinet Members of Central South Education Consortium Joint Committee decided to undertake an independent review of the Consortium to ensure it was fit for purpose and financially viable for the foreseeable future.

- 4.2 The ISOS Partnership was commissioned to undertake the review. A report from the Lead Chief Executive of the Consortium (in discussion with the other four council chief executives) was presented to the Joint Committee on the 19th of December 2019. A copy of this report is provided in Appendix 1. The ISOS implementation plan and the ISOS summary report is detailed in Appendices A and B respectively.
- 4.3 The Joint Committee approved the recommendations 2.1 to 2.3 as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

5. THE NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 If the five Council Cabinets confirm their continued support for the delivery of the shared educational advisory services, the Directors of Education and the Acting Managing Director of the Consortium will present to the Joint Committee:
- Plans to remodel the current Consortium as advised by ISOS;
 - Three year budget proposals for consideration by the five councils;
 - Opportunities to ensure that the vast majority of grant funding continues to go directly to schools, but that the relevant overheads of delivering WG Curriculum support are appropriately financially supported by the WG grants.

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required with regard to this report.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The report was considered by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on [12th February 2020](#). Members welcomed the opportunity to comment on this report in advance of a decision by Cabinet. Members acknowledged the positive performance of the Central South Consortium, when compared with other education consortia in Wales. It was also noted that continuity in school improvement arrangements was also needed due to the significant current educational reform. Members noted the reference to improving governance arrangements and re-emphasised previous comments of the Committee, that the opportunities for local authority scrutiny functions to challenge the performance of the Consortium should be improved.
- 7.2 There will be significant engagement with school headteachers and governors as part of the remodelling of the Consortium, and in the delivery of future work programmes.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report. At present all costs will be covered from existing budgets.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 If a council wishes to withdraw from the Central South Consortium the legal agreement states:

“Any Party proposing to withdraw from this Agreement must notify each of the other Parties by giving not less than 2 years notice in writing of its intention to withdraw expiring on 31st March in any given year”.

- 9.2 Therefore, the earliest any council could withdraw from the agreement is 31st March 2022.

10 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 10.1 This report seeks to confirm a previous decision of each of the five councils to collaborate and deliver joint educational advisory services. The decision will meet national and local priorities and comply with the five ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future generations Act.

11 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The ISOS report provides robust evidence that the educational performance of the Central South Region has significantly exceeded that of the other three Welsh regions, particularly when you consider the region has the highest levels of deprivation in Wales. Furthermore, the majority of the region’s headteachers are positive about the support, advice and guidance provided by the Joint Service. Like all public services, Central South Consortium is not perfect and has opportunities to improve the way in which it operates.
- 11.2 It is therefore pleasing to note that the Joint Committee of Education Cabinet Members have been proactive and have commissioned the ISOS review to independently evaluate the performance of the Joint Service, identify the areas for improvement and to ensure it is fit for purpose and financially viable for the long term.
- 11.3 In a couple of the regions there has been some uncertainty as to the long term future of their shared educational advisory services. This report seeks to provide a clear commitment from each of the five councils to the long term future of Central South Consortium, and provide schools

and Consortium staff with some certainty in a period of significant flux for the educational sector in Wales.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers:

None

Contact Officer

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th FEBRUARY 2020

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND
INCLUSION (COUNCILLOR JOY ROSSER)**

Item: **THE COUNCIL'S FUTURE COMMITMENT TO DELIVERING
SHARED EDUCATION ADVISORY SERVICES**

Background Papers:

Officer to contact: Gaynor Davies 01443 744009