

Appendix 1 – a) Governor Advice and Support

North Wales Strategic Outline Business Case National Model for Regional Working - Governor Training & Support January 2015

1. The Case for Change

The Welsh Government Guidance document (February 2014) makes the case for change as follows:

“Local authorities retain the statutory responsibility for schools and school improvement. The national model is based on a vision of regional school improvement consortia working on behalf of local authorities to lead, orchestrate and co-ordinate the improvement in the performance of schools and education of young people. The prime mission and purpose of regional consortia is to help those who educate our children and young people. So, in future, their non-negotiable job will be to support schools and local authorities in their efforts to:
improve learner outcomes for all young people;
ensure the delivery of high quality teaching and learning; and support and empower school leaders to better lead their schools.”

Specifically in terms of delivering Governor Training & Support, the document describes the following strategic objectives:

“Regional consortia will commission and quality assure delivery of governor support services and training for governors including the mandatory training programmes required for new governors, training for chairs of governors and, in respect of understanding and applying data effectively for all governors. Consortia will also encourage and facilitate governor networks, enable governors to observe each other’s meetings and deploy able chairs of governors to mentor other governing bodies that are struggling to undertake their role effectively. Consortia will jointly develop, in consultation with local authorities, governors and headteachers a performance data template for headteachers to use to report to governors on a termly or half termly basis a school’s in-year performance on:

- pupil performance and standards;
- pupil attendance;
- pupil exclusions;
- staff sickness absence;
- quality of teaching (as assessed through classroom observations); and progress and attainment data relative to targets.

Consortia will also identify a pool of able candidates that are willing to serve on governing bodies where there is weak governance.”

2. Methodology

- GwE commissioned Gwynedd Council’s Project Management Unit to conduct interviews (face to face and by telephone) with relevant officers within each Education Department during December 2014 with the aim of understanding current arrangements.
- Based on the Welsh Government Guidance document and discussions with Education Department and GwE officers, Gwynedd’s Project Management Unit developed a set of generic Strategic Options (alongside a scoring and ranking matrix) which was used as the basis for choosing a preferred option at a meeting of the Education Directors Strategic Group on 16 January 2015.
- Background papers are contained within **appendix 1**

3. Choosing the Preferred Strategic Option

Option 4 was considered to be undeliverable as some authorities have committed to restructuring their Governor Support roles with a view to generating savings. Additionally, the specialist advisers (Human Resources, Finance etc.) are located within separate Departments within each Local Authority.

It was agreed that general the principles outlined within **Option 3** closely mirrored the Strategic Group's direction of travel and presented a deliverable solution - although significant proposals for improvement to the generic model were considered and agreed.

4. The Preferred Strategic Option

Governor Support

- All staff to remain within their respective Local Authorities per current arrangements where the responsibility for delivering governor support will remain.
- GwE Challenge Advisers will continue to secure appropriate oversight and responsibility for quality assurance and consistency of effective governing bodies across the region
- GwE will commission an external consultant to routinely audit the governor support (including training) service within individual local authorities. The performance data will be used by GwE and the Education departments in order to share best practice and to drive improvements in service.

Mandatory Training

- Mandatory Training will continue to be delivered through the Education Departments alongside non-statutory training (e.g. Child Protection).
- Quality Assurance of the training provision will continue to be undertaken by GwE by way of the Challenge Adviser Team
- However, as budgets continue to reduce, GwE and the Education Departments will continue to identify local and regional priorities alongside the development of cross-hub training solutions (e.g. opening up GwE's Local Authority Member training programme to other governors)

5. Identified Implementation Risks

Risk	Risk Category	Mitigation
Preferred option may fall short of the expected scale of changes (as contained within the guidelines)	Mediun	Initial discussions with Geraint Rees, Welsh Government scheduled for 20 January 2015
Potential for inconsistency within service provision (and therefore performance) across the region – given that Education Departments will remain responsible for the service	Low	GwE Challenge Adviser Team will continue to audit and quality assure governor support services through Annual Visits 1,2,& 3

6. Indication of Identified Additional Costs & Resource for Change Delivery

Activity	Responsibility	Budget
Commissioning external consultant to report annually on each authority's Governor Training & Support function – say 12 days per annum	GwE Management Team & Education Directors Strategic Group	Maximum £10,000 – source of funding to be agreed
Ensuring that differential performance data, best practice and lessons learned from external consultant's findings and recommendations are raised, shared and actioned	GwE Management Team & Education Directors Strategic Group	None – business as usual
Identification and development of regional training opportunities aligned with external consultant's findings and available budgets	GwE Management Team & Education Directors Strategic Group	None – business as usual

7. The Next Steps

The above Preferred Strategic Option will be presented to the next meeting of the Education Directors Strategic Group on 30 January 2015 for further consideration before a detailed business case and implementation plan are developed in consultation with Welsh Government.