



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

22 NOVEMBER 2017

Report by: GwE Managing Director

Subject: Estyn Visit

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To update Joint Committee members on feedback following the Estyn Visit during the week commencing 16 October 2017.

2.0 Considerations

2.1 The Estyn Regional Inspection took place during the two weeks commencing 18 April 2016.

2.2 Estyn published a report on their findings which included the following 6 recommendations:

- **R1:** Ensure that the school improvement service uses data, target setting and tracking procedures more effectively to challenge and support schools in order to improve performance of all learners across schools and local authorities, particularly at key stage 4
- **R2:** Improve the quality of evaluation in the delivery of school improvement services.
- **R3:** Improve the rigour of the arrangements for identifying and managing risk.
- **R4:** Ensure that business and operational plans contain clear success criteria and that progress against these is monitored effectively.
- **R5:** Clarify the strategic role of the regional networks and their accountability to the Joint Committee.
- **R6:** Develop an appropriate framework to assess value for money; ensure that the business plan is accompanied by a medium-term financial plan and that work-streams are fully costed.

2.3 A post-inspection plan was developed and incorporated into the Regional Business Plan

2.4 In October 2017, Estyn visited GwE to review the progress made against recommendations noted in the inspection.

2.5 When evaluating the progress made against each recommendation, the following were taken into account:

- Has the consortium understood the reasons for the recommendation?
- Has the consortium taken reasonable steps to address the recommendation successfully, taking into account its starting point, the period of time that has elapsed between inspection and follow-up and the complexity of the matters to be addressed?
- Has the consortium received appropriate support from its partner local authorities to address the recommendations?
- Has the consortium ensured that changes arising from its progress in addressing each recommendation have been sufficiently incorporated into its working practices to ensure sustained improvement?

2.6 In coming to a judgement on progress against recommendations, the monitoring team took into account the trends in performance in the last five years as a context for evaluating the impact of its work in schools. However, it is important to note that outcomes may not be solely attributed to the work of the regional consortium as other partners in the system also have important roles.

2.7 The monitoring team considered a range of evidence, including business planning, evaluations, challenge adviser reports, target setting procedures, risk assessments and the views of headteachers.

2.8 Estyn will not conduct any follow-up visits to GwE. Any remaining areas for improvement will be monitored informally by an Estyn regional link inspector and the relevant local authority link inspectors, and these will be taken into account during future inspections of local government education services.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 Equalities Impact

5.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

6.0 Personnel Implications

6.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

7.0 Consultation Undertaken

7.1 None undertaken

8.0 Appendices

8.1 A report on the Estyn revisit to GwE: Progress against the recommendations.

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

A response to the Estyn recommendations is noted in the Business Plan Quarter 2 Monitoring Report which is before the Committee. Therefore, I have no comments from a proprietary perspective.

Statutory Finance Officer:

A comprehensive and beneficial discussion took place with Estyn inspectors and the Welsh Audit Office with regard to GwE's financial arrangements, risks and plans. Further comments, if appropriate, will be presented verbally at the joint committee meeting on the 22nd November.