GLASGOW CITY REGION EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

Item 1
17th September 2024

Minutes of meeting held on 25th June 2024 by video conference.

Present: Councillor Andrew Anderson (Chair), East Renfrewshire Council; Councillor Christina Cannon, Glasgow City Council; Councillor Jim Clocherty, Inverclyde Council; Councillor Michael McBride, North Lanarkshire Council; and Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, South Lanarkshire Council; and Councillor Clare Steel, West Dunbartonshire Council.

Apologies: Councillor Emma Rodden, Renfrewshire Council; Douglas Hutchison, Glasgow City Council; Gerard McLaughlin, North Lanarkshire Council; and David Gregory, Education Scotland.

Attending: Tony O'Neill (Clerk); Greg Bremner, East Dunbartonshire Council; Mark Ratter, East Renfrewshire Council; Ruth Binks, Inverclyde Council; Janie O'Neill, Renfrewshire Council; Laura Mason, West Dunbartonshire Council; Sharon Hayward, Samantha Jane Hewitt, Shona McArthur and Fiona MacKenzie, West Partnership; Alan Taylor, Head Teacher co-opted representative; and Kylie Watson, Education Scotland.

Election of Convener approved.

1 There was submitted a report by the Regional Lead Officer advising of the requirement to elect a Convener for this committee and of the procedure to be followed.

After consideration, Councillor Hamilton, seconded by Councillor Clocherty, moved that the committee appoint Councillor Andrew Anderson as Convener of the Glasgow City Region Education Committee. There being no other nominations, the committee agreed unanimously to appoint Councillor Anderson as Convener.

Thereafter Councillor Anderson took the Chair.

Minutes of previous meeting approved.

2 There was submitted and approved the minutes of 5th March 2024.

Spotlight on Wellbeing for Learning Workstream - Presentation noted.

3 The committee heard a presentation from Fiona MacKenzie, Workstream Lead Officer, West Partnership (WP) regarding an update on the Wellbeing for Learning Workstream, during which she highlighted

(1) the various themes under the workstream for session 2023/24;

(2) the guiding principles of the workstream, which included:

(a) the aspiration to build a networked learning system which remained a shared priority across the WP;

(b) the continued buy-in to maintain a strong collective focus on pedagogy; and

(c) of the support and scope for a flexible approach to enable the participation of teachers, middle and senior leaders to shape and drive the work of the Partnership more directly;

(3) a number of activities measuring impact over the short-term and medium-term;

(4) of a thematic analysis in respect of policy, procedure and practice; and

(5) of statistics in respect of inclusion and family learning follow up impact questions.

After consideration, the committee noted and thanked Fiona for her presentation.

Assessment and moderation – Update noted etc.

4 There was submitted a report by Shona McArthur, Development Officer, West Partnership regarding the progress and impact of the assessment and moderation work undertaken during session 2023/24 and outlining the next steps for that work recognising the regional commitment to ongoing work, advising

(1) that since 2022, there had been a notable increase in engagement in assessment and moderation activity, with a significant increase in Secondary and Additional Support Needs (ASN) sectors and the West Partnership (WP) website had undergone substantial developments with assessment guides and exemplars, a self-evaluation toolkit, and new resources for practitioners;

(2) that the annual WP Moderation Event was an opportunity for practitioners from primary and secondary sectors to moderate planned assessment submitted by colleagues from the 8 local authorities to ensure they met the national standard and that this year's event had been held in-person, was open to probationer teachers for the first time, and practitioners also had the option to moderate in specific literacy or numeracy organisers to collate planning for those organisers across all levels and show progression of planning;

(3) that the ASN sector had held its first regional moderation event in March 2023, and in 2023/24 had a year-long programme to increase confidence in assessment planning, and enhance collaborative practice;

(4) that the WP Secondary BGE Moderation Programme was for principal teachers to come together to moderate within their own curricular area with a focus on HGIOS, with each local authority also having its own Assessment and Moderation programmes of work supported by the WP;

(5) of a detailed evaluation summary regarding the WP Moderation event, the ASN assessment and moderation programme and the Secondary BGE Moderation Programme, as detailed in the report;

(6) that bespoke and personalised programmes of work had been agreed with each local authority Lead to ensure the WP was adding value and responding to local need, with inputs being regularly evaluated to assess impact and added value, as detailed in the report; and

(7) that, given the tapered funding provided by Scottish Government, the development officer role would cease in June 2024 and work was ongoing with the specialist network to identify how to continue with the most impactful aspects of this work, as detailed in the report.

After consideration, the committee

(a) noted the update on assessment and moderation work for 2023/24; and

(b) agreed the next steps for continuing this work, as detailed in the report.

West Online School – Update noted etc.

5 There was submitted a report by Samantha Jane Hewitt, West Online School Principal Teacher regarding how West Online School (West OS) would ensure the highest quality of learning and teaching provision in session 2024/25, advising

(1) that the paper summarised the work of West OS as it had continued to diversify its output, content, themes covered and expand its reach in classrooms;

(2) that from April 2022, 2 development officers had augmented West OS from being purely an online bank of recorded lessons to a resource that had a wider reach and impact during the school day/year, and West OS now had an open access podcast series for young people and practitioners which had now become intrinsic to the daily work of West OS, as detailed in the report;

(3) that since February 2023, West OS development officers had delivered over 70 live and interactive lessons to primary and secondary young people, and Broad General Education (BGE) LIVE was supported by an array of industry experts from various institutions and organisations, such as: Scientists from Merck, Local councillors, Cyber security experts, Police Scotland, AI experts, Mental Health specialists, National Art Galleries, Equalities Officers, TIE and Daydream Believers;

(4) of the success of the BGE LIVE lessons, as detailed in the report;

(5) that new and highly successful lesson themes for West OS had revolved around real life issues and Learning for Sustainability, including exploring Race equality-Antiracism, LGBT Inclusive education, STEM and Solarpunk Island and that due to the nature of those themes and resources needed, a teacher webinar had been offered to practitioners, with delivery partners, in order to support and guide when approaching the lessons and to engage in professional discussion;

(6) of the success of a number of new West Partnership learning series, including My Diverse Scotland, Inclusive Education and Solarpunk Island, all as detailed in the report;

(7) that whilst the online bank of recorded lessons, or video vault, was still utilised by some learners and practitioners across the partnership, it was clearly evident that it had waned in popularity and was used more as an exam revision tool and following discussions with practitioners and young people it had been suggested that the resource bank had reached its limit and that the LIVE lesson element of West OS was making a much greater impact on learning and teaching;

(8) that West OS would build upon the building of key partnerships in order to ensure lessons were engaging, relevant and had expert input and that for session 2024/25, West OS would continue to draw attention to the abundance of resources, masterclasses and podcasts, however no new content would be added to ClickView other than BGE LIVE recordings and resources;

(9) that a new reference group would be established to discuss and develop content for BGE LIVE, working closely with the West OS Principal Teacher and continue to drive forward the hard work and impact of West OS and would also seek to bring about a longevity to West OS work and progression; and

(10) that a new evaluation strategy would also help to ensure that continuous improvement was achieved so that the highest quality learning and teaching provision continued by keeping learners at the centre of all new work and themes covered.

After consideration, the committee noted the

(a) progress of West Online School to date;

(b) reach of West Online School across the partnership; and

(c) developments to West Online School going forward within the year of tapered funding.

Planning to 2024/25 and beyond – Position noted etc.

6 There was submitted a report by Sharon Hayward, Senior Partnership Officer, West Partnership (WP) regarding the self-evaluation activity underpinning the proposed WP improvement plan for 2024/25 and beyond, advising

(1) that the parliamentary announcement on 7th November 2023 of the Scottish Government's plans to taper funding to the Regional Improvement Collaboratives in 2024/25 and to stop funding thereafter had initiated an internal review of the structure and work of the WP;

(2) that 3 assumptions underpinned the review process, namely

(a) that the aspiration to build a networked learning system remained a shared priority across the WP, thereby adding value to the work of individual Local Authorities;

(b) that there was continued buy-in to maintain a strong collective focus on pedagogy; and

(c) that there was support and scope for a flexible approach, to enable the participation of teachers, middle and senior leaders to shape and drive the work of the WP more directly;

(3) that by building on these assumptions, all the current activity had been reviewed and options explored as to how the existing workstream activity (including programmes, enquiry activity and networks) could be reshaped to prepare the WP system for the forthcoming funding withdrawal;

(4) that WP officers had considered each programme, collaborative enquiry activity, professional learning activity and network to establish which had the most significant impact and reach and where WP activity was different from other local and national offers, and that given the considerable strengths and impact of the WP work, directors were committed to continuing key aspects of the work;

(5) that a suggested WP Collaborative Framework, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, had been developed to show how the system might maintain some of the most impactful activity of the WP and develop new work collaboratively, and the framework, when established and embedded, would be practitioner-driven and impact directly on children and young people and would rely on increased ownership of the WP activity by central officers and practitioners, as the key resource;

(6) of the 4 strategic themes that had been identified as a structure to organise current and future activity, with each one being led by a Strategic Group, sponsored by a Director of Education (as detailed below), and supported by Operational Groups who would take forward the activity, evaluation and reporting on impact;

(a) RIC Lead – Mark Ratter, East Renfrewshire Council;

(b) Early Level – Laura Mason, West Dunbartonshire Council;

(c) Emerging Issues – Janie O'Neill, Renfrewshire Council/Carol McKenzie, South Lanarkshire Council;

(d) Leadership of Learning – Greg Bremner, East Dunbartonshire Council/Gerard McLaughlin, North Lanarkshire Council; and

(e) Inclusion – Ruth Binks, Inverclyde Council/Douglas Hutchison, Glasgow City Council;

(7) that a Headteacher Reference Group would meet with the RIC Lead Officer twice per year to assist in guiding the improvement priorities and a representative from this group would also serve on the Overview Group, as detailed in the report;

(8) that a new evaluation framework model, when agreed, would need to build on the existing framework and ensure a robust evidence base continued to shape and direct the work;

(9) that the WP Core Team would work to deliver on all agreed Improvement Plan priorities for 2024/25, with significantly reduced staffing and funding, and in addition, would seek to ready the system across the partnership for the transition to the new framework, with reduced activity and resource, however, the impact of collaboration across the partnership over the period of the Regional Improvement Collaborative was such that Directors were exploring a range of scenarios to allow the retention of a key 'Collaboration Officer' to lead on that work beyond the 2024/25 session.

After consideration, the committee

(a) noted

(i) the self-evaluation process undertaken across the partnership in light of the Scottish Government tapered funding for 2024/25; and

(ii) the emerging themes for the 2024/25 improvement plan; and

(b) agreed the proposed collaborative framework for 2024/25 and beyond following the withdrawal of Scottish Government funding.

Dates of future meetings noted.

7 The committee noted the following future meeting dates:-

Tuesday, 17th September 2024 at 1100 hours;

Tuesday, 26th November 2024 at 1100 hours; and
Tuesday, 4th March 2025 at 1100 hours.