GLASGOW CITY REGION EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

Item 1

26th November 2024

Minutes of meeting held on 17th September 2024 by video conference.

Present: Councillor Andrew Anderson (Chair), East Renfrewshire Council; Councillor Jim Clocherty, Inverclyde Council; and Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, South Lanarkshire Council.

Apology: Councillor Michael McBride, North Lanarkshire Council.

Attending: Carol Jack (Clerk); Mark Ratter, East Renfrewshire Council; Douglas Hutchison, Glasgow City Council; Gerald McLaughlin, North Lanarkshire Council; Janie O'Neill, Renfrewshire Council; Lynn Sherry, South Lanarkshire Council; Claire Cusick, West Dunbartonshire Council; and Alison Drever and Sharon Hayward, West Partnership.

Minutes of previous meeting approved.

1 There was submitted and approved the minutes of 25th June 2024.

West Partnership Annual Evaluation Report 2023/24 noted.

2 There was submitted a report by Dr James Bowness, Data and Evaluation Officer, West Partnership (WP) and Renfrewshire Council regarding the main content and key messages included in the WP Annual Evaluation Report 2023/24, advising that

(1) the evaluation report, as detailed in an appendix to the report, highlighted progress over the academic year 2023/24 towards achieving each of the associated target outcomes and expected impacts, as detailed in the WP Improvement Plan;

(2) the report noted that significant growth in engagement with practitioners from across the WP was experienced in the 2023/24 session with activities receiving over 10,000 sign ups, which was up considerably from approximately 4,500 sign ups in 2022/23;

(3) throughout the report, there were very strong examples of how the partnership was improving attainment and achievement for all (excellence) while closing the poverty related attainment gap (equity) and that the WP was shifting the ownership of change and enabling staff to take collective action to deliver on this (empowerment);

(4) the WP continued to compare favourably against national figures across most measures and that that WP school leavers also continued to outperform their peers nationally, as detailed in the report; and

(5) work had also been carried out in the 2023/24 session to make a stronger link between the critical indicators and the 3 E's (equity, excellence and empowerment), as demonstrated in the evaluation report, and some critical indicators had been added in recognition of WP's commitment to closing the poverty related attainment gap as well as the Promise.

After consideration, the committee noted the progress demonstrated in the evaluation report.

West Partnership Draft Improvement Plan 2024/25 approved etc.

3 There was submitted a report by Sharon Hayward, Senior Partnership Officer, West Partnership (WP) regarding the WP Draft Improvement Plan 2024/25 and seeking this committee's endorsement of the draft improvement plan, as detailed in an appendix to the report, advising

(1) that the WP produced an annual plan linked to a 3 year planning cycle which outlined the vision, purpose and key activities of the collaborative for the year ahead;

(2) that over the past session, a comprehensive range of engagements with stakeholders had taken place, complementing the ongoing evaluation activity, giving a clearer set of qualitative and quantitative data to ensure the new improvement plan met the needs of practitioners and officers across the WP and that there was a clear consensus that existing programmes and activity were broadly meeting the needs of those officers and practitioners;

(3) that taking account of all consultation to date, it was proposed that most programmes continued, following review and amendments;

(4) that unlike previous years, no peer review process had been undertaken this session facilitated by Education Scotland but that the 6 Senior Partnership Officers (or equivalent) had met in June 2024 to undergo a peer review discussion, as detailed in the report;

(5) that having agreed the plans to implement the agreed collaborative framework in April 2024, the West Partnership Board and this committee would receive verbal updates at each meeting to report on progress of readying the system to transfer ownership of ongoing collaborative activity and programmes in 2025; and

(6) of the next steps, which included,

(a) members reporting back to their own authorities through appropriate individual local governance arrangements for approval in order to ensure local democratic accountability; and

(b) confirming that, in seeking to ensure that the WP could continue to contribute to the wider work of the Glasgow City Regional Economic

Strategy, a report would be prepared, including the endorsed improvement plan, and presented to the Glasgow City Region Cabinet by the Regional Lead Officer.

After consideration, the committee

(i) agreed

(A) to endorse the WP Draft Improvement Plan 2024/25; and

(B) that the approved improvement plan be presented to the Glasgow City Region Cabinet for noting; and

(ii) noted that each individual authority would report on the improvement plan to their appropriate committee for approval, maintaining local democratic oversight.

Evaluation of 'Improving Our' programmes – Progress noted.

4 There was submitted and noted a report by Alison Drever, Workstream Lead Officer, West Partnership, regarding progress towards readying the 'Improving Our' programmes for the new collaborative framework in 2025, advising

(1) that a number of changes had been made across the 'Improving Our' programmes over the last year, which had focussed on

(a) further improved sustainability across the programmes;

(b) establishing connections and coherence between the programmes and the Pedagogy Partnerships and Spotlights in the Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment workstream;

(c) eliminating and reducing programme costs; and

(d) building the networks and practitioners who drove the programmes;

(2) of an overview of each of the programmes, including participant numbers for 2024/25;

(3) of the main changes that had taken place across the programmes and networks, as detailed in the report, which had been driven by the changes referred to at paragraph (1) above and by the 'Improving Our' programmes evaluation data; and

(4) of the work for 2024/25 and beyond, with preparing the way for the new collaborative framework forming a significant part of the work that needed to be done in the coming session.

Proposals for 2 papers on regional collaboration by Glasgow University – Position noted.

5 There was submitted and noted a report by Professors Chris Chapman and Graham Donaldson, Glasgow University, regarding proposals to create 2 papers relating to regional collaborative working, advising

(1) that as the West Partnership (WP) moved on to its next phase of development, in a climate of ever decreasing resources and raised expectations in terms of local authority support for school improvement, 2 papers had been commissioned for 2024/25;

(2) that the purpose of these papers was two-fold, firstly to document the successes of the WP since its inception and secondly to consider possible ways forward that built on the previous work of the regional collaboration, which was planned to continue;

(3) of the first paper, which would be published in December 2024 and involved a synthesis of various forms of evidence to highlight the successes and impact of WP activity and would be used as a basis for a discussion with Directors and to inform the development of the second paper;

(4) of the second paper, which would be published in spring 2025 (March to June) depending on policy cycles, timing of International Council of Education Advisers meetings etc and would focus on future directions and how best to build on the relationships and activity that had underpinned the work of the WP, including outlining possible options for future work and setting out possible strategic options for the future development of the WP and regional collaboration more widely; and

(5) that the second paper would form the basis of an invited seminar to explore the “Realising the potential for regional collaboration in Scotland”, which would be convened before the summer recess in 2025 with the audience for the paper and seminar being local and national officials and politicians.

Transition to Collaborative Framework 2025 - Verbal update noted.

6 The committee heard a verbal update by Sharon Hayward, Senior Partnership Officer, West Partnership (WP), regarding a Transition to Collaborative Framework 2025, advising

(1) of 3 areas of work which were supporting the Transition to Collaborative Framework 2025 process, to ready the system for the removal of Scottish Government funding in March 2025, which would increase teacher/senior leader agency and promote opportunities for system leadership, namely

    (a) visits to senior officers in all 8 local authorities would highlight a business as usual approach by the WP core team and the need to

"ready the system" for the period when there would be no WP core team and national funding would cease;

(b) using the significant knowledge from within the WP core team a mapping exercise had begun where the new agreed Collaborative Framework for April 2025 and beyond was being populated to take strategic, leadership, operational or reference noted which would, in time, be shared with directors and central teams to assist them in ensuring the right colleagues were in the right roles to minimise risk to deliver and future impacting collaboration; and

(c) that all programmes had been reviewed and modifications made to ensure a clear focus on sustainability planning and legacy and in terms of sustainability, links were being established across programmes and networks where possible and in addition, moving the planning, delivery and evaluation of existing activity and programmes nearer practitioners and leaders at this stage would also provide the best conditions for success; and

(2) that this item would remain as a standing agenda item throughout this session, with verbal updates provided on the readiness of the WP system for the significant changes which April 2025 would bring to facilitated collaboration across the partnership.

Date of next meeting noted.

7 The committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 26th November 2024 at 1100 hours by video conference.