West Online School – Update noted etc.

4 There was submitted a report by Samantha Jane Hewitt, West Online School Principal Teacher, providing an update on the work of West Online School (West OS) within this first term of tapered funding and reduced staffing, advising

(1) that from March 2024, 1 Principal Teacher had continued to create and deliver lesson content with industry experts to schools across the West Partnership and beyond;

(2) that new topics and themes had been introduced in line with national and local priorities and that West OS hosted a padlet for each theme/lesson and directed teachers towards prior reading, knowledge and resources needed before and after the lesson;

(3) of an update regarding BGE Live lessons, which continued to gain traction with practitioners signing up for a range of topics and themes, as detailed in the report, and that BGE Live interest continued to increase with over 250 signups for some of the themes;

(4) that feedback from both practitioners and young people continued to drive improvement and practice changes and that the volume of BGE Live lessons delivered had also increased and expanded the offer of lessons available through each week and term;

(5) of the next steps, which highlighted that looking to 2025, Common Sense Education, Keeping Scotland Beautiful and Skills Development Scotland would also be collaborating with West OS to deliver new content for young people and that a new West OS Reference Group had been established and had discussed the work of West OS and ideas for lesson content, themes and learning and teaching approaches and had also clarified short and longer term aims for WEST OS, as detailed in the report; and

(6) that currently, the Principal Teacher oversaw the strategic planning, marketing, scoping, evaluation, resource creation and generation and delivery of the BGE Live lessons to over 100 classes of young people each week and that without this funded role, BGE Live would be unable to continue after March 2025.

After consideration, the committee noted

(a) the progress of the West OS to date;

(b) the significant reach of the West OS across the partnership; and

(c) that each local authority paid £1,000 towards the total £46,000 licence fee for Clickview which would be in place until October 2025, however this would need to be looked at again nearer the end of the contract;

(d) Mark Ratter and Sharon Hayward were currently looking at this matter which required universal buy in from all authorities and that they would be discussing this with Education Scotland; and

(e) comments made on the role of West OS going forward to March 2025 and beyond.