Item 5
7th March 2023

Glasgow City Region Education Committee

Report by: Gerry Lyons, Head of Service, Glasgow City

Contact: Carol McArdle, Workstream Lead Officer

West Online Schools (West OS) Update

Purpose of the Report

To provide an update on West OS as it continues to diversify and evolve.

Recommendations :

The committee is asked to:

- note and discuss the continued development, reach and impact of West OS.

1. Background

1.1 West OS was initially developed as a Covid response but now provides a free, online resource giving young people from across Scotland the opportunity to gain valuable support and help with their learning and revision. Video lessons are available to access through Glow with a login.

1.2 For practitioners, West OS provides high quality online resources to support and enhance learning and teaching.

Podcasts, school transition materials, Masterclasses and careers videos have been created to provide a greater diversity of resources for teachers and young people. These resources are open access as they are hosted on the West Partnership website.

1.3 West OS Live offers real time, interactive study webinars to provide additional support to learners within the Senior Phase. A four week programme ran in November 2022 and another is planned in the lead up to the final SQA exams this year.

2. West OS from April 2022 – January 2023

2.1 Post pandemic young people continued to view West OS as a valuable resource providing an enhancement to their learning. The West OS video content encourages independent learning by enabling learners to work at their own pace while undertaking independent study and exam preparation.

2.2 In this period, senior pupils made up 50% of all video views nationally. Moreover, the highest usage came in late April 2022 as young people prepared for the upcoming examinations. In the week beginning 25th April, just under 2400 videos were used.

2.3 The high quality online resources are available to practitioners to enhance teaching and learning. The scope of usage is varied; the videos can be used to support bi-level teaching, facilitate the flipped learning model and to support interrupted and absent learners. The resources are a welcome addition to a practitioner toolkit, as one teacher noted:

> *"I like that the videos have a calm and clear delivery. The voice over and the content closely matches SQA course assessment specification*

2.4 Whilst the recorded element produced by teachers remains at the heart of West OS, it was necessary to extend the range of resources to ensure West OS continued to add value to the work of schools; to support teachers and young people. This includes a series of videos focusing on educational transitions; a selection of careers videos and brochures which provide advice on navigating primary to secondary transition. These guides have also been translated into the five most spoken languages across the West Partnership.

2.5 The Career Education videos form part of a resource which aims to enhance and support the transition from P7 to S1. This package contains five lessons covering Skill development and career education. They can be delivered in partnership by both primary and secondary practitioners to P7s in preparation for the move to S1. A calendar is also included and this seeks to support schools with this important transition period. This resource is currently being piloted by a small number of schools in The West Partnership.

2.6 West OS has also created a series of short films that aim to empower learners with the information they need before moving to the next stage of their journey, whether it be college, university, an apprenticeship or an undecided destination. The videos highlight to young people that support is available from a wide range of organisations.

2.7 The Podcast series, Westcast, reflects key points in the school year by having episodes which support key moments such as transition, college and university applications and exam preparation. Since its release the podcast page has been viewed over 500 times. The podcast is being used in schools, one practitioner stated:

> *"We've put the link in the Study Skills section on our school website. I thought it was useful for both pupils and teachers, the top 5 tips graphic is really helpful".*

2.8 As West OS continues to expand, the website is also developing as it now hosts a variety of new learning materials. Consequently, usage and traffic on the website has increased significantly and there appears to be a demonstrable like between our promotion of these materials on social media and website traffic:

2.9 **Usage**

Date	**Resource**	**Usage**
November 1- November 30 2022	West OS webpage	3922 – accounting for 30% of all visits to the West Partnership website
As of December 2022	ClickView	1653 different videos were viewed. 18,357 different users logged into this resource via Glow.
As of September 2022	School Transitions webpage	332 (doubling from August 2022)
As of November 18th 2022	West OS Primary Transition brochures, including translated versions	Downloaded over 700 times

2.10 In terms of expanding the reach of West OS, the website is an important resource. When comparing the period of November 2021 to November 2022 the number of West OS page views have increased by 67% overall. For example, the page showing colleagues and young people how to access West OS was viewed 113 times in November 2021 and it was viewed 522 times in November 2022 – more than a four-fold increase.

2.11 West OS Live offers real time, interactive study webinars to provide additional support to learners within the Senior Phase. The webinars are a very popular element within West OS offer. In the period of October 17-Nov 15, The West OS Live page had 3,032 views, this accounts for 22% of all visits to the West Partnership website during this period.

2.12 The sessions are popular with young people as it is a new and innovative way to learn. There were 315 total sign ups across 17 subject areas. Over 88% of participants believed the sessions to be engaging, well-structured and easy to follow.

2.13 The webinars are guided by the SQA course reports, meaning that tricky or complex content is the focus which can help to build confidence. A learner who attended a Maths webinar commented:

> *"We went over nearly everything from the straight line topic in this short amount of time. It has cleared my doubts which I had in some areas. Now I will be able to do lots of past paper questions on this topic without feeling overwhelmed".*

2.14 Furthermore, over 90% of attendees agreed that the session supported learning completed in school and 83% said the webinar clarified something they weren't sure about.

2.15 It is the flexibility of the live offer that appeals to learners as they can add the sessions to their own personal study plan. The small and focused groups also appeal and as one attendee noted:

> *"I really liked the class size, attention given to everyone and the approachability of the teachers. It was 10/10".*

3. Continued Development of West OS

3.1 West OS will continue to be guided by the needs of our stakeholders. Furthermore, it seeks to support practitioners with the use of digital technologies in teaching and learning.

3.2 The West OS video library will continue to expand to provide more high quality online resources.

3.3 Launch a Parent Channel to support parents and carers with the use of West OS and give guidance on how to use it with their child.

3.4 Produce more digital content such as Masterclasses and Podcasts which can be used to enrich learning experiences.

3.5 More live inputs for both the BGE and Senior Phase.

4. Recommendations

4.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note and discuss the continued development, reach and impact of West OS.