Scottish Government Review of Regional Improvement Collaboratives – Verbal update noted.

5 The committee noted a verbal update by Mark Ratter, Regional Lead Officer regarding the Scottish Government (SG) Review of Regional Improvement Collaboratives, highlighting

(1) that the review had been announced by the Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills on 29th June 2023, as a rapid review of the impact that Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs) had had on supporting pupils and practitioners;

(2) that it had been commissioned as part of the current education reforms, to inform future decisions on RIC support and further consideration of the future relationships between our new national bodies and local government in the area of educational improvement;

(3) the 4 main elements to the review, which would include:

(a) a desktop review, undertaken by SG Learning Analysis officials, pulling together key findings from previous RIC Reviews and published materials;

(b) evidence from each RIC based on an evaluative statement against 4 improvement themes set by the SG, along with supporting evidence to demonstrate the impact of RIC activities;

(c) a review of evidence, returns and existing materials, by the SG to identify key themes and any areas requiring clarification, etc; and

(d) validation and clarification discussions with each RIC area, supported by a small number of focus groups, based around the key improvement themes, impacts and relationships;

(4) that following this, the SG would submit a review report to the Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills and to the COSLA Spokesperson for Children and Young People (CYP), to be delivered in October 2023;

(5) that the Cabinet Secretary would consider the findings of the review and discuss the next steps with the COSLA CYP Spokesperson which would take place following delivery and consideration of the review report;

(6) that the West Partnership had been working closely with other RICs to influence the SG methodology to ensure that the reviews took full account of evidence of impact across the 8 local authorities;

(7) that the West Partnership was also keen that the review would take account of the evidence gathered nationally by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development peer learning event which had taken place in May 2023 and had included interviews with key stakeholders at different levels

across Scotland and had been well represented by the West Partnership, together with colleagues from Education Scotland;

(8) the latest findings from the Robert Owen Centre which had previously been shared with this committee on 30th May 2023;

(9) that a co-ordinating group, which included representatives from all key partners, had been established by the SG to oversee and support the review, and to discuss key aspects; and

(10) that an update on the review would be provided to the next meeting of this committee on 21st November 2023.