External Evaluation report by Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change on development of the West Partnership – Position noted etc.

5 There was submitted a report by the Regional Lead Officer providing an update on the external Evaluation report by the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change (ROC) on the development of the West Partnership, advising

(1) of a summary of the key messages from the ROC report which offered insights into the West Partnership Regional Improvement Collaborative, all as detailed in appendices to the report;

(2) that the team had employed a mixed-methods approach, including a survey of West Partnership groups/networks and strategic in-depth interviews with key personnel, as detailed in the report;

(3) of a number of agreed research questions that had been utilised, as detailed in the report;

(4) that the evaluation had been conducted, in a time of great pressure and uncertainty, particularly for those working in the front line of education, all of which had led to some delays in data collection;

(5) that, in comparison with the interviewing process for the previous evaluation report, there was greater fatigue and disruption in the system which had posed challenges for arranging interviews, eg, those who had been invited to participate were more likely to postpone their arranged interview due to contingencies in their schools, such as staffing absences and more non-responses to interview invitations than in the previous strand of work, however, those who had been interviewed were well placed to provide key information and insights regarding the research questions;

(6) that the evaluation report had noted a shift in mind-sets, culture, and ethos across the West Partnership, propelled by the power of networks and agency within them and the added value (to local authorities) of this approach was evident in the upskilling of staff, individual empowerment and agency, knowledge mobilisation, professional capital, improvements in learning and teaching and networked learning;

(7) that the ROC report had asserted that the West Partnership was in a very good position to build on the momentum gained during the pandemic and the flexibility and agility shown in responding to the needs of the system had been particularly noted as positive and helpful;

(8) that the report had concluded with a range of issues for the West Partnership to consider in planning the next phase of growth, all as detailed in the report; and

(9) that a summary version of the report was currently being prepared by Professors Chris Chapman and Graeme Donaldson that would complement the full report and was intended to reach a wider audience, with a session

being planned this term, for the West Partnership Core Team to engage with the report more fully and respond to the issues for consideration.

After consideration and having heard Professor Chris Chapman, University of Glasgow, the committee noted and endorsed the report and the identified next steps as outlined at paragraphs (8) and (9) above.