Item 5

22nd September 2022

Glasgow City Region

Education Committee

Report by: Tony McDaid, Regional Lead Officer

Contact: Professor Chris Chapman

A Report by the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change on the development of the West Partnership.

Purpose of the report

To provide the Committee with an update on the external Evaluation Report by the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change on the development of the West Partnership.

Recommendations

The Committee is invited to:

- Note and endorse the report and the identified next steps.

1. Overview

This paper summarises the key messages from the report by the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change on the development of the West Partnership.

2. Key Points

2.1. The report by the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change offers insights into the developments of the West Partnership (WP) Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC). Appendix 1 contains a Summary of the Report and Appendix 2 is the detailed Report.

3. Progress of ROC evaluation of the West Partnership

3.1. The team employed a mixed-methods approach, including a survey of West Partnership groups/networks and strategic in-depth interviews with key personnel, e.g., LA Lead Officers involved in the WP Workstreams/Networks and Lead Officers and Coordinators in e.g. IOC and West OS.

3.2 The agreed research questions were:

- How has the `Recovery` response of the West Partnership during the period of January – August 2021 contributed to the work of the local authorities in their efforts to build-back better? (Phase 1)
- How has the `Recovery` response of the West Partnership impacted on the nature/type of collaboration across the RIC? (Phase 1)
- What is the impact of the RIC and how can it be optimised at LA, School and Teacher level? (Renewal focus) (Phase 2)

3.3 The evaluation was conducted, in a time of great pressure and uncertainty, particularly for those working in the front line of education. These challenges led to some delays in data collection.

3.4. In comparison with the interviewing process for the previous evaluation report, there was greater fatigue and disruption in the system which has posed challenges for arranging interviews. For example, those 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.

3.5 However, those who have been interviewed were well placed to provide key information and insights regarding the research questions.

4. Key Learning

4.1. The evaluation report noted a shift in mind-sets, culture, and ethos across the West Partnership, propelled by the power of networks and agency within them.

4.2. The added value (to local authorities) of this approach is evident in the upskilling of staff, individual empowerment and agency, knowledge mobilisation, professional capital, improvements in learning and teaching and networked learning.

4.3. The ROC report asserts that West partnership is in a very good position to build on the momentum gained during the pandemic. The flexibility and agility shown in responding to the needs of the system were particularly noted as positive and helpful.

4.4. In the concluding chapter of the report, it was stated that:

"There is a broad view that the West partnership has *come in to its own* during the pandemic. It has been able to successfully respond to the needs of the system and practitioners by creating effective networks. "

5. Issues for Consideration

5.1 The report concludes with a range of issues for the West partnership to consider in planning the next phase of growth. These include:

- Further engagement and dialogue with other RICs and Scottish Government on alternative workforce development models to the seconded one;
- Continue to develop a range of systemic strategies for reaching teachers / practitioners;
- Continue to develop systematic approaches to 'engagement'
- Build teacher networks with a broader range of practitioners and empower them to connect to, collaborate with, each other;
- Map and communicate all activity and publish calendar at the start of the session to encourage greater engagement;
- Clarify roles of key stakeholders in networks and workstreams;
- Consider more targeted follow up evaluation over time;
- Encourage more high level policy discussions by workstream members and network participants;
- Consider how to consolidate and develop West OS; and
- Consider the issue of capacity and scale in relation to the 'Improving Our….' Programmes.

6. Next Steps

6.1. A summary version of the report is currently being prepared by Professors Chris Chapman and Graeme Donaldson. This will complement the full report and is intended to reach a wider audience.

6.2. There is a session planned this term, for the West Partnership Core Team to engage with the report more fully and respond to the Issues for Consideration.

7. Recommendation

7.1. It is recommended that the Committee:

- Note and endorse the report and the identified next steps.