

The ERW Regional Education Service

Local Authorities in Wales operate within a statutory framework that places upon them, amongst others, the following general powers:

- Local authorities must contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the people in its area
- Local authorities must secure that their education and training functions are exercised with a view to promoting high standards and promoting the fulfilment of learning potential.
- Local authorities must also secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available for its area.
- Local authorities play a key role in the financing of schools.
- Local authorities have statutory duties to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs.

Any collaboration or cooperation must respect these statutory responsibilities and where collaboration is enacted, it must be subject to local accountability and scrutiny, and assessed to add value.

Education in Wales is in the throes of unprecedented reform; stakes are high in terms of realising the intended outcomes and securing the delivery of the reform agenda. Running parallel to this, are the immediate budget pressures faced by local government and challenges to sustain services.

These options for future delivery of school improvement in its widest terms, developed by Directors of Education/Chief Education Officers, must be considered within this context. Also, the options should be assessed for their effectiveness in delivering a self-improving system where peer review and strategic partnerships drive improvement.

Background

In February 2011, as Education Minister, Leighton Andrews introduced a series of reforms in schools, in higher education, and student finance. He set out his schools' agenda in a speech, *'Teaching makes a difference'*. His 20-point plan became the focus of education reforms after the May 2011 Assembly elections. Andrews introduced banding of schools (since modified into a categorisation of schools), reforms of school governance, the Literacy and Numeracy Framework accompanied by reading tests for years 2-9, and the review of Qualifications.

One of the priorities the Minister identified was about the structural management and leadership of education in Wales. He included the following direction to local authorities:

"We will expect local authorities to participate in consortia arrangements, including shared consortium services, or suffer financial penalties, including the withdrawal of Better Schools Funding. The consortia will identify system leaders, who will support and challenge the professional learning communities, which will have a focus on literacy and numeracy."

As a consequence, local authorities had to formalise their various informal arrangements for working together into the four regional consortia that exist now. For South West and Mid Wales, the previous model, originally designed to address the arrangements for teachers' workload, was the identified footprint for collaboration between the councils.

The current ERW Consortium is a Joint Education Service for six local authorities:

- Carmarthenshire
- Ceredigion
- Neath Port Talbot
- Pembrokeshire
- Powys
- Swansea

The Consortium acts on behalf of the six local authorities to deliver a service that supports schools to raise standards. There is much speculation at present regarding the future configuration and purpose of ERW. This is a matter of serious concern to our education service in Carmarthenshire. It is difficult to find any logical or evidence-based argument set out at that time for this collaboration footprint to be the right footprint for the consortium-based approach going forward.

Challenges

Since its inception ERW has struggled, due to numerous reasons, to function as an effective consortium. It has experienced a number of challenges-

- There have been several changes of political and managerial leadership and it has struggled to maintain a consistent strategic grip.
- The sheer size and diversity of the geographical area of the ERW footprint has presented operational and organisational difficulties
- School improvement has in many ways become compartmentalised and divorced from the broader learning, ALN and skills agenda. It has focussed on specific performance measures based almost exclusively on the traditional lines of attainment and attendance within schools and divorced from economic ambition.
- Different Local Authorities have different challenges and priorities and ERW has failed to address all of these successfully.
- There is sometimes conflict between accountability and provision of services.
- Some partners do not identify the added value that ERW provides and are not committed to making it work.
- To date three of the partner Local Authorities have been inspected by ESTYN and the outcomes are as follows-

Neath Port Talbot (Pilot Inspection)	<i>December 2017</i>	GOOD x 3
Powys	<i>July 2019</i>	Causing significant concern and require follow-up activity.
Pembrokeshire	<i>December 2019</i>	Causing significant concern and require follow-up activity.

DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

Following the previous Managing Director's secondment to Welsh Government, an Interim Managing Director was brought in to lead a review of ERW and develop a revised structure.

Since the inception of ERW the service structure has evolved on a basis of need. During that time the changing operational environment, strategic priorities and operational needs have changed considerably. These changes which include Leadership Programmes and Curriculum Development have placed an increasing strain on the structure to the point where it was not fit for purpose.

In September 2018, a widespread engagement exercise was undertaken with the 6 Local Authorities' education department leads and subsequently with the wider headteacher community across the region. Due to the feedback received from the engagement exercise it became evident that an evaluation of the organisational structure needed to take place. The evaluation has shown that the introduction of a clearly defined central staffing structure was required to enable ERW to work in partnership with the 6 Local Authorities and provide an effective and efficient model to provide leadership and co-ordination of a self-improving system.

The case for change

- Notice of withdrawal from ERW issued by Neath Port Talbot (27-03-19)
- Internal Audit reports
- Internal Evaluation and intelligence
- Welsh Government expectations
- Future regional responsibilities
- Grant conditions
- Estyn reports
- Schools below regression line.
- Views expressed by Headteachers/Governors
- Value for Money
- Duplication
- Inter LA and School variation
- Accountability
- Feedback from teachers
- Quality of support to schools
- Pace of progress only adequate
- Self-evaluation

The Interim Managing Director worked with Directors on this review and a revised 'Mission Statement' and business priorities were developed-

AIM- ERW is a regional partnership designed to promote excellence in all schools through a self-improving system. This will be achieved through collaborative planning for the new curriculum and the provision of professional learning and leadership opportunities that can develop all as individuals, learners, citizens and contributors.

Priorities-

- **Developing and delivering a transformational curriculum**
- **To develop a high-quality education profession**
- **To develop inspirational leaders and to facilitate them working collaboratively to raise standards.**

- **To develop strong and inclusive schools that are committed to excellence and wellbeing.**
- **To develop robust assessment, evaluation and accountability processes that support a self-improving system**

The new priorities are absolutely crucial to the improvement journey that we are embarking upon. In addition, a revised staffing structure was presented to and ratified by the Joint Committee. Staff were permanently appointed to the majority of the agreed posts and secondments were offered to suitably experienced practitioners to posts which did not attract suitably experienced applicants. Since September 2019 the new revised model has been operational.

The staffing structure was designed to offer an effective and efficient school improvement service. Most of the positions are employed on a permanent basis via Pembrokeshire County Council on either Soulbury or Teachers' Terms and Conditions. New job descriptions were developed and evaluated according to Pembrokeshire's evaluation process. Remuneration for each position was evaluated by Finance Department to ensure cost effectiveness and affordability.

The structure would enable ERW to create a centrally employed permanent Regional Strategic Team under the leadership of a Managing Director.

The Regional Strategic Team consist of 7 individuals:

- Managing Director (*Currently a Secondment*)
- Assistant Managing Director (*Fixed-term contract*)
- *Head of Primary Sector (Currently Vacant at 01-01-20)*
- Head of Secondary Sector (*Currently a Secondment- 0.5*)
- Head of Special Schools and Education in Alternative Setting (*Permanent- 0.6*)
- *Head of Professional Learning and Leadership (Currently Vacant at 01-01-20)*
- Head of Curriculum Reform and Innovation (*Currently a Secondment 0.8*)

The following positions provide support to the Regional Strategic Team:

- Secondary Support Lead (*0.6 until March 2020*)
- Lead for Leadership (*Full time*)
- Lead for Research and HEI Partnerships (*Full time*)
- Lead for Secondary Curriculum and Examinations (*Full time*)
- Lead for Welsh in Education (*Full time*)
- Lead for Digital & Systems (*Full time*)
- Lead for Health and Wellbeing (*Full time*)

In addition, the following positions enables ERW to provide Welsh Government's Curriculum Reform and Professional Learning requirements:

a. **Secondary Subject Specialists** to support middle leadership and provide support through curriculum and examination reform (11 posts in total working under the Lead for Secondary Curriculum and Examinations).

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|-----------|---------------|
| • English | • Mathematics |
| • Welsh | • Science |

- Humanities
- Technology
- Modern Foreign Languages and
- Expressive Arts

b. Pedagogy and AOLE specialists to provide leadership across the region for the development of pedagogical approaches and appropriate integration across the 6 AOLEs, with a focus on primary education and transition (12 posts in total).

Carmarthenshire’s officers believe that this new structure ensures greater clarity in regard to respective roles and that the new model is starting to embed and deliver on our agreed actions. The central staff are well respected and are adding value and the communication between the Consortia and Local Authority has improved.

Funding

The majority of ERW’s funding is secured through Welsh Government grants. Prior to working as a Consortia, the partner Local Authorities were the recipients of these school improvement grants. The quantum however has increased substantially with the introduction of e.g. the Pupil Development Grant and specific elements of the grant for Curriculum reform and professional development.

In addition to the grant funding there is core funding provided by each partner local authority based on a total contribution of £250,000 split according to PLASC Pupil numbers.

<i>Local Authority</i>	<i>Current contribution</i>
Carmarthenshire	53,167
Ceredigion	18,691
Neath Port Talbot	40,713
Pembrokeshire	33,895
Powys	33,535
Swansea	69,998
TOTAL	250,000

As part of the review there was a requirement, as from the start of the 2020/21 financial year, to increase contributions from partner authorities to fund the new structure agreed at the Joint Committee.

For 2020/21 an additional £322,140 is required. It was proposed to transfer grant funding to the value of £161,400 to local authorities, to be passported back to ERW, leaving a deficit of £160,740 to be met by additional contributions from each local authority. Directors were tasked with reviewing the core staffing model and develop proposals to reduce spend to reduce the quantum of the additional contributions required.

Carmarthenshire’s additional contribution will amount to **£34,185** which will have to be secured from Council resources.

Reasons why an alternative Consortia footprint is being considered

1. Carmarthenshire agreed with the new structure and funding requirements however officers would be monitoring progress and seeking assurances that our needs were being met and there would be equitable allocation of resources.

2. Although the new structure was agreed by all partners, Neath Port Talbot stated that they were not willing to increase their financial contributions to ERW.
3. Neath Port Talbot have indicated in meetings that they will implement their withdrawal from ERW.
4. Swansea are advocating a 'commissioning model' i.e. only buying the services they require.
5. The City Deal footprint was proposed as a new Consortia footprint as it aligned the education and skills agendas and was in line with current legislative proposals considered by Welsh Government.
6. Led by Ceredigion, an alternative footprint, Dyfed-Powys was tabled.
7. It has become clear that there is no appetite from partners to the status quo.

In light of the above Directors were tasked to develop evaluated proposals for a new Consortia configuration. Workshops have been held to examine each option and to articulate the positives and negatives of each proposal. Carmarthenshire now needs to decide on the model which will deliver the best service for Carmarthenshire's schools.

Possible Options

1. The status quo
2. Transfer to a model based on the City Deal and Growing Mid Wales Partnerships
3. Dyfed Powys (Ceredigion Proposal) and West Glamorgan footprints
4. To operate school improvement as individual councils (those councils who wish to continue collaboration continue to do so)

Details in regard to evaluating each model are included in Appendix 1.

Proposal

Having considered all the possible options, it is our view that Option 2 is Carmarthenshire's preferred footprint. It would be advantageous of all Local Authorities agree with this option to avoid partner Local Authorities having to issue 'Withdrawal Letters'.

Therefore, it is suggested-

1. The Executive Board is requested to agree the Swansea Bay City Deal footprint, subject to the provisions of the Legal Agreement.
2. The Executive Board agrees that Carmarthenshire County Council issues notice to withdraw from ERW, should unanimous withdrawal not be agreed, subject to the provisions of the Legal Agreement.
3. The Executive Board to agree an appropriate transition period subject to the provisions of the Legal Agreement. A year (2020/21) is recommended.
4. The Executive Board to authorise the Director of Education and Children's Services and the Executive Board Member for Education and Children's Services in liaison with the Leader and Chief Executive Officer to develop the preferred model and ascertain impact of any changes (including legal, HR and financial), subject to the provisions of the Legal Agreement.

Appendix 1- Evaluation of each model

Appendix 2- ERW- KEY PRINCIPLES

Appendix 3- ERW- KEY DELIVERABLES

Appendix 4- ERW- CORE VALUES

Appendix 5- ERW- What do we do?

Appendix 6- ERW Business Plan

Appendix 1- Evaluation of each model

1. Status Quo	
A continuation of the current footprint of 6 LAs and the revised structure.	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERW provides a critical mass and economies of scale • The revised structure already in place that includes high-quality and respected individuals in key posts. • There is now a better understanding of ERW's responsibilities and structure. • There is better face-to-face communication between ERW and school leaders • There is the ability to build on elements of current practice e.g. Middle Leaders programme, school to school work • There is some effective support for secondary schools following inspections • There is evidence of effective support for schools causing concern • Our Challenge Advisers know each other well and work across region • Lack of capacity in some authorities to continue to meet responsibilities and therefore dependent on ERW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still a lack of trust in the organisation being able to deliver • Still a lack visibility • Less connection to local issues • Lack of link to key officers in the local authority e.g. Education Welfare Service (EWS) • Too far removed from schools/LAs (geographically) • Risk to capacity as people do not want to work for ERW • Could be seen as a regional bureaucratic industry when school budgets so stretched • Support for secondary schools has been variable due to capacity • Model not agile enough to meet needs/not responsive enough • Perception that ERW that does not provide value for money/impact of ERW • LA contributions do not meet the core costs. • Lack of flexibility for using grant funding terms and conditions. • Large land mass and geography of region poses significant logistical challenges • Diverse nature of the region, the socio-economic profiles of LAs and linguistic makeup make it difficult to provide a service that meets the needs of all school communities. • A lack of clarity on exact nature of ERW's role and relationship with LAs.

2. Model based on the City Deal and Growing Mid Wales Partnerships	
This would be a partnership of 4 (Carmarthen, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea) and 2 (Ceredigion and Powys)	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The geography is more manageable • Geographical advantages and in line with emerging footprints • There is already a degree of political support for this pattern of working • It will enable us to better link the education agenda with skills, apprenticeships and employment pathways in the key sectors we want to support. • It allows us to disband current structures and re-create new ones and therefore address the brand, governance and structure issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current structure not suitable/sustainable leading to redundancies etc. • Continue to be unsure of accountabilities • Consistency in CAs performance • Could still be faceless to schools • Still could be issues of perceived quality • Could be very challenging for 2 relatively small LAs to deliver a comprehensive school improvement

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller scale could ensure improved consistency • Ability to build on current strengths • School leaders value local response from Challenge Advisors • Could realise clearer communication • Could realise clearer division of functions • Improved tackling of under-performance • Better perception of model with local face • Easier to build positive relations with schools and build reputation • More agile to deliver local/national priorities • Greater control of apportioning of resource • Small enough to function in a timely way to support schools • Not seen to be fattening a middle tier • Greater autonomy for schools on funding 	<p>service (19 secondary schools across the 2 LAs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differences in socio-economic footprint within the different partnerships • Issues in delivering Welsh language support as there are different priorities and expectations in each LA. • Need to revisit commitment to collaboration- fresh start needed
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3. Dyfed Powys / West Glamorgan footprints	
This would be a partnership of 4 (Carmarthen, Ceredigion Pembrokeshire and Powys) and 2 (Neath Port Talbot and Swansea).	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The geography is more manageable • It allows us to disband current structures and re-create new ones and therefore address the brand, governance and structure issues • Improved consistency • Building on current strengths • Heads appreciate local response from Challenge Advisors (CAs) • Clearer internal communication • Clearer division of functions • Tackling under-performance • Better perception of model with local face • Easier to build positive relations with schools and reputation • Geographical advantages • More agile to deliver local/national priorities • Greater control apportioning of resource • Return to pre-LGR footprint of West Glamorgan and Dyfed Powys • Small enough to function in a timely way to support schools • Greater autonomy for schools on funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current structure not suitable/sustainable leading to redundancies etc. • Could continue to be unsure of accountabilities • Consistency in CAs performance • Tension between region and local authority • Could still be faceless to schools • Still could be issues of perceived quality • Losing advantage of working with diverse authorities. • Not aligned to the Swansea City Deal thus losing education and skills opportunities • Risk if CCC does not sign up to the DP and impact on the 3 partners- viability? • Redundancy issues

4. Operate school improvement as individual councils

Each local authority to operate separate improvement and support services with commitment to collaborate. (ERW could cease to exist or LAs could agree to commission a central team to provide specific support to deliver key aspects of the national reform agenda, e.g. curriculum development)

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The geography is more manageable • School leaders appreciate local response from Challenge Advisors (CAs) • Clearer internal communication • Clear division of functions • Clarity of role and responsibility • Current governance and scrutiny arrangements are in place and robust • School improvement service sits with the body which has the statutory responsibility. • Ability to commission from a wider range of providers and in line with LA priorities. • LAs can collaborate according to strategic priorities. • Each LA can commission what it needs and therefore more funding could reach front line services. • Services provided more bespoke to individual LA's needs • ERW could provide critical mass, economies of scale and broker support required. • The revised structure is already in place and high-quality and respected individuals in key posts. • There would be a better understanding of ERW's responsibilities and structure. • There is the ability to build on current effective practice e.g. Middle Leaders programme, school to school work • Lack of capacity in some authorities to continue to meet responsibilities and therefore dependent on ERW • Market forces would drive ERW to improve its performance and quality of support offer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current structure not suitable/sustainable leading to redundancies etc. • Consistency in CAs performance • Does not meet Welsh Government expectations • Does not align with the Wellbeing of Future Generation Act. • Danger of isolation for LAs/ schools/ leaders • Possible capacity issues from providers • Lack of capacity in some authorities to continue to meet core statutory responsibilities to intervene in school/deliver school reorganisation • HR challenges- redundancy/challenges • Not a consortium- need to start again • Challenges in some LAs in regard to senior leadership experience and capacity. • ERW unable to sustain a core structure without core funding • Current structure not suitable/sustainable leading to redundancies etc. • Risk to capacity as people do not want to work for ERW • Success to date has been variable • Model not agile enough to meet needs/not responsive enough • LAs could commission from outside ERW. •

Appendix 2- ERW- KEY PRINCIPLES

- Regional working will be underpinned by the principles of transparency, shared leadership, clear communication, robust quality assurance, accountability and integrity.
- The regional support service will be resourced and staffed in accordance with its remit and status. It will have a Head of Service and a dedicated team of experts who will add value to the regional approach to the national reform agenda.
- The regional school support service will commit to providing all aspects of support bilingually in line with expectations of the Welsh Standards.
- Current regional governance structures will continue.
- Regional working will be underpinned by the principle of working towards developing a self-improving system where peer review and strategic partnerships drive improvement.
- Regional working should strengthen the role of School Clusters (depending on theme/focus).
- Regional working will be guided by the aim of ensuring that all schools are at least good and that all pupils benefit from a high-quality education.
- Regional working will commit to support local authority capacity and ability to provide education services of the highest standard across all areas of its responsibility.
- That we strengthen relationships between the local authorities, the consortium and Welsh Government.

REGIONAL

The agreed regional support service priorities are-

- Developing and delivering a curriculum for Wales
 - Developing a high quality education profession that has a positive impact on learners' progress and standards
 - Ensure Inspirational leadership has a positive impact on provision and standards
 - Develop strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being
 - Develop robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system
- The regional school support service will lead on pedagogy, leadership development and moderation and standardisation.
 - The regional support service will engage on behalf of LAs with ITT institutions to ensure that local needs are shared.
 - Regional governance systems will relate to the performance and management of the regional support service.
 - The regional improvement service will contribute to governor training when appropriate and within remit.
 - The Business Plan will be informed by local priorities and steered through the Strategy Groups.
 - The regional improvement service will provide a directory of specialisms.
 - We will have an agreed model of resource deployment to secure improvement and to avoid duplication.
 - We commit to re-launching and re-invigorating our regional commitment to a self-improving system.

LOCAL AUTHORITY

- Accountability and statutory responsibility lies with local authorities (LA) therefore school improvement resource and workforce will remain in each LA to be determined by local priorities and be subject to local scrutiny.
- Challenge Advisers will be responsible for support visits, annual reports on performance and progress and brokerage of support for schools.
- The LA CAs and school improvement resource will be available to work across the region in accordance with current legal agreement.
- Local scrutiny arrangements will apply to the performance of schools and the standards attained by pupils.
- ALN is a local authority responsibility.
- LAs will be accountable for schools causing concern by their individual systems however all local authorities will commit to providing support and challenge to each other in addressing issues of underperformance.
- The delegation of the Welsh element of the Regional School Consortium Improvement Grant (RCSIG) to each LA needs to be considered in order to support individual LA Welsh in Education Plans (WESP). Opportunities to secure economies of scale will be actively pursued.

Self-Improving School System

- School leaders and teachers have the skills, capacity and commitment to continually learn and improve their practice by collaborating.
- Schools are aware of their own strengths and areas for improvement, and with this knowledge seek support for their own improvement and offer support for others to improve.
- Schools become participants so that strengths are spread across the system and areas for improvement are tackled through peer engagement and support.
- Schools will thrive in a supportive and collaborative environment to raise standards and ensure that every young person can access excellent education.
- Schools have a strong vision for why, how and what children and young people learn.

Appendix 3- ERW- KEY DELIVERABLES

Performing

- Improved pupil and school performance.
- Effective use of data and deployment of high-quality resources to ensure effective interventions and support to deliver improved pupil outcomes
- Improved school categorisation and more positive Estyn school inspection reports in all partner Local Authorities

Accountable

- Establishment of a coherent regional school Improvement structure which promotes high performance.
- Clear accountabilities, streamlined and integrated services delivering monitoring, support and challenge to achieve a positive impact and provide genuine value for money.

Self-Improving

- Development of a culture of self-improvement which is reflective, collaborative and based on positive professional relationships.
- Issues and challenges addressed honestly and transparently in an environment which encourages innovation, demonstrating high trust and effective communication.
- An agile, responsive workforce with the skills to respond as required.

Strategic

- Effective management and use of data and other intelligence to provide improved knowledge of all schools, enabling the strategic deployment of high-quality resources to meet current and emerging needs of schools, local authorities and the region.

Talented

- Effective structures and arrangements to recruit, retain and develop high quality staff.
- A positive employment culture which builds capacity and expertise, motivating and valuing individuals to excel within systems which are clear, consistent and supported by effective performance management.

Influential

- Establishing an influential and respected consortium which is authoritative and influential in shaping Welsh Government policies.
- Effective in representing the views of Local Authority partners to secure arrangements which deliver National priorities in a way which reflects the unique nature of the region whilst offering consistent support to Welsh language and cultural heritage.

Appendix 4- ERW- CORE VALUES

Effectiveness

- We lead by example and inspire confidence in others
- We promote and drive continuous improvement by asking how we could do this better
- We focus on longer-term outcomes rather than short-term goals.
- Barriers and challenges are resolved promptly and success is celebrated.

Commitment

- We take pride in the job that we do and we are ambitious for all of our schools and their pupils
- We are passionate about learning and ensuring that pupils reach their potential
- We make a difference for thousands of pupils every year

Integrity

- We are trustworthy and reliable
- We are able to adapt to changing priorities and seek to create a positive and healthy working environment.
- We stand by difficult decisions and openly acknowledge errors
- We challenge and confront poor performance

Innovation

- We inspire others and continuously seek innovative solutions.
- We effectively plan and anticipate change.
- We act on opportunities.
- We recognise problems and implement solutions.

Collaboration

- We engage and support each other by working together and developing a shared focus.
- We build effective relationships with all stakeholders and partners.
- We recognise people's contributions and achievements
- We talk about 'we' and not 'I'.

Appendix 5- ERW- What do we do?

What do we do for schools and their pupils?

- Develop capacity of all schools to become self-improving, resilient organisations who continually improve outcomes and wellbeing for pupils
- Provide high quality differentiated support to schools in line with the national categorisation system
- Enable useful opportunities for school to school working to develop the self-improving system

What do we do for teachers?

- Provide high quality curriculum support to support the development of high-quality pedagogy
- Provide useful resources to reduce teacher workload, improve wellbeing and support the developments of high impact strategies to improve pupil outcomes
- Provide high quality bespoke support to develop the high quality of teaching and learning in all schools
- To provide useful opportunities for professional networks to encourage the sharing of good practice and to develop the self-improving school system.

What do we do for school leaders?

- Support education professionals to fulfil current and future roles in a wide range of educational settings.
- Provide, broker and quality assure a range of approved programmes for our education system. For example, middle leaders, aspiring heads, NPQH and support for newly appointed headteachers.
- We will develop current and future leadership talent for the ERW region

What do we do for our employees?

- We lead with clarity and focus
- We provide professional learning opportunities that build confidence and competence
- We provide a good balance between autonomy and clarity
- We provide opportunities for our team to develop professionally and reinvest in a self-improving system

Appendix 6- ERW's Business Plan and Provision

ERW has five improvement priorities that match the enabling objectives of The National Mission:

- **Developing and delivering a transformational curriculum**
- **To develop a high-quality education profession**
- **To develop inspirational leaders and to facilitate them working collaboratively to raise standards.**
- **To develop strong and inclusive schools that are committed to excellence and wellbeing.**
- **To develop robust assessment, evaluation and accountability processes that support a self-improving system**

Business Plan Priorities

1. Developing and delivering a curriculum for Wales

The region will work with the education system to support the development of the new curriculum and associated assessment arrangements that will help raise standards for all pupils in the region. The region will ensure that high quality professional learning will enable schools to plan for the new curriculum and all associated assessment arrangements.

2. Developing a high-quality education profession that has a positive impact on learners' progress and standards

The region will support our teachers to be lifelong professional learners that reflect on and enhance their own practice to motivate and inspire the children and young people in their care. The region will support schools to develop pedagogy and practice in order to effectively prepare for 'A curriculum for Wales, a curriculum for life.' The region will support, challenge & intervene in schools by implementing a rigorous and consistent approach to ensure that all schools have a clear understanding of what constitutes consistently high-quality teaching and learning for all learners. The region will ensure that assessment information is used diagnostically to influence teaching, learning and learner progress and secure robust reliability procedures for end of key stage assessment

3. Ensure Inspirational leadership has a positive impact on provision and standards

The region will prioritise developing system leadership as a prime driver of education development across our schools. Promoting and supporting effective, collaborative leadership will therefore be central to our delivery. The region will develop effective school leadership and increase capacity across the region by developing universal and targeted support, challenge and intervention for current and aspiring school leaders at all levels. The region will develop and implement a comprehensive programme of professional learning in order to promote high expectations and develop knowledge, skills, personal qualities, values and professional characteristics that will enable leaders to offer consistently high-quality education in all schools

4. Develop strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being

All learners must be supported to be emotionally and physically ready to learn in a safe and supportive environment. Each learner must be respected and challenged to achieve the best that they are capable of, including our most able learners, while being supported to overcome barriers that inhibit their learning. The region is committed to delivering a fair and fully inclusive education system ensuring where schools across the region are equipped to support all learners in a manner which minimises obstacles and maximises the opportunities for reaching their full potential. The region will continue to develop the workforce so that schools can receive the necessary levels of support and challenge around inclusive practice.

5. Develop robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system

Through the use of evidence-based approaches and co-construction, we will deliver a coherent assessment and evaluation framework that will ensure effective accountabilities so that schools, LAs and the region play a full part in delivering the best for our learners and their teachers. We will encourage and acknowledge schools that are collaborative and supportive of each other and will ensure that smaller and rural schools are better supported to play their full part in a collaborative self-improving school system.