

Document Pack



THURSDAY, 1 JULY 2021

**ERW JOINT COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL MEETING AT 2.00 PM,
ON THURSDAY, 8TH JULY, 2021**

A G E N D A

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS**
- 3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 30TH MARCH 2021** 3 - 8
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- 11. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 100(4)(B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**



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Agenda Item 3

(NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING)



**ERW Joint Committee
Tuesday, 30th March, 2021
Virtual Meeting
2.00 - 2.45 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Emlyn Dole [Chair], Carmarthenshire County Council

Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn	Ceredigion County Council
Councillor Rosemarie Harris	Powys County Council
Councillor Jen Raynor (substituting for Cllr Rob Stewart)	Swansea Council
Councillor Guy Woodham (substituting for Cllr David Simpson)	Pembrokeshire County Council
Mr Richard Brown	Pembrokeshire County Council
Mr Phil Roberts	Swansea City Council
Dr Caroline Turner	Powys County Council
Mrs Wendy Walters	Carmarthenshire County Council
Councillor Robert Smith	Swansea Council
Mr Jonathan Haswell	Pembrokeshire County Council (ERW – S151 Officer)
Ms Elin Prysor	Ceredigion County Council (ERW - Monitoring Officer)
Mr Gareth Morgans	Carmarthenshire County Council (Lead Director)
Mr Stephen Richards-Downes	Pembrokeshire County Council (Deputy Lead Director)
Ms Helen Morgan-Rees	Swansea Council
Mr Greg Morgan	ERW Chief Officer
Mr Ian Altman	ERW Chief Officer
Mr Ceri Davies	Pembrokeshire County Council (ERW - HR)
Ms Helen Lewis	Pembrokeshire County Council (ERW - HR)
Ms Ruth Lee	ERW Business Support Manager
Ms Natalie Chambers	ERW Principal Accountant

(NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING)

Mr Alex Ingram	Welsh Government
Ms Karen Newby-Jones	ESTYN
Mrs Llinos Jenkins	Carmarthenshire County Council
Mrs Michelle Evans Thomas	Carmarthenshire County Council (Democratic Services)
Mrs Jessica Laimann	Carmarthenshire County Council (Democratic Services)
Ms Emma Bryer	Carmarthenshire County Council (Democratic Services)
Ms Siwan Rees	Carmarthenshire County Council (Translation)
Mr Jonney Corner	Carmarthenshire County Council (Technical Support)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr David Simpson (Pembrokeshire County Council), Cllr Rob Stewart (Swansea Council), Eifion Evans (Ceredigion County Council) and Mark Campion (Estyn). Cllr Jen Raynor (Swansea Council) and Cllr Guy Woodham (Pembrokeshire County Council) attended the meeting as deputies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
E. ap Gwynn	7 – Ceredigion Letter	Author of letter

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 9TH FEBRUARY 2021

RESOLVED that the minutes of the ERW Joint Committee meeting held on 9 February 2021 be signed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute Item 7

The meeting was advised that both Carmarthenshire County Council and Swansea Council had temporarily rescinded their notice to leave the Consortium to facilitate an extension of the new implementation date to 31 August 2021.

5. ERW BUDGET 2021-22 (APRIL - AUGUST)

The Joint Committee received an update on the draft budget for April to August 2021, relating to the following areas:

- Outline draft budget for 1 April to 31 August 2021;
- Outline Local Authority Contributions for 1 April to 31 August 2021;

(NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING)

- Outline Grant Allocations required from Local Authorities to ERW for 1 April to 31 August 2021;
- Outline of risks for 1 April to 31 August 2021.

The Joint Committee was advised that no increase of Local Authority Contributions had been added to account for the withdrawal of Ceredigion County Council in line with the approach following the withdrawal of NPT, where the shortfall had been covered by unused funding carried forward.

With regard to grant funding, the meeting was advised that PDG and RCSIG funding would be disaggregated to each Constituent Authority and not paid to ERW directly as done in previous years. In order to fund ERW and allow for the delivery of the Business Plan until 31 August 2021, each Local Authority would need to transfer a proportion of received grant funding to ERW as detailed in the report. The same applied to the PDG LAC, subject to the funding being approved by Welsh Government.

Risks continued to be identified around dependency on grants, the future ERW footprint and diminishing reserves.

In response to a query, the meeting was advised that risks relating to potential staffing changes/redundancies had been estimated but these would not affect the draft budget for April to August 2021.

RESOLVED to

- 5.1. Note the assumptions and estimates made in compiling the outline budget for 1 April to 31 August 2021;**
- 5.2. Note the risks associated with the uncertainty over ERW from 1 September 2021 onwards;**
- 5.3. Approve the outline budgets for 1 April to 31 August 2021;**
- 5.4. Approve the Local Authority Contributions for 1 April to 31 August 2021;**
- 5.5. Approve the use of reserves and unused funding carried forward to support the outline core Central Team budget for 1 April to 31 August 2021;**
- 5.6. Approve the transfer of RCSIG, including EIG, and PDG funding from each Local Authority to ERW as outlined in the report;**
- 5.7. Approve the transfer of PDG LAC funding from each Local Authority to ERW as outlined in the report;**
- 5.8. Authorise the ERW S151 Officer to make amendments to the outline budget as assumptions and estimates are confirmed.**

6. NEATH PORT TALBOT LETTER - PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES

The Joint Committee considered a letter from the Leader of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPT). The Joint Committee was advised that the letter



(NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING)

requested to continue current service provisions to NPT schools until 31st March 2022 or until the date of the dissolution of the existing consortium, if earlier.

The meeting was advised that the Variation to the Legal Agreement had not yet been signed and reminders had been sent to the Constituent Authorities. Work on the preparation of a separate legal agreement between NPT and the remaining Constituent Authorities could only commence once this had been completed.

RESOLVED to

- 6.1. Extend the current arrangements to provide Neath Port Talbot schools with access to agreed services until 31st March 2022 (or on the dissolution of the existing consortium, if earlier) on the current terms and subject to a formal contractual agreement;**
- 6.2. Establish clear lines of communication with the consortium over the next period, in particular in regard to their financial liability attached to the dissolution of the current arrangements.**

7. CEREDIGION LETTER - PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES

[NOTE: Councillor E. ap Gwynn had earlier declared interests in this item and was not present during consideration thereof.]

The Joint Committee considered a letter from Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn, Leader of Ceredigion County Council, regarding the provision of services to Ceredigion County Council schools. The meeting was advised that Ceredigion County Council would leave the ERW Consortium on 31st March 2021 and had requested that the provision of specific programmes and services be extended until 31st August 2021.

The Chair thanked Cllr ap Gwynn for her contributions to the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED to

- 7.1. Agree to provide Ceredigion County Council school with programmes and services as specified in the report until 31st August 2021;**
- 7.2. To develop a formal contractual agreement to agree the terms and conditions of the temporary service provision to Ceredigion County Council.**

8. Y LLWYFAN LEASE

The Joint Committee considered a report on the lease agreement of the office space at Y Llwyfan. It was advised that notice would need to be given before 30th April 2021 to terminate the current lease agreement and vacate the offices by 31st October 2021.

The meeting was advised that, from 1st September 2021 the new partnership would require a base with a limited amount of office space, a registered postal address and storage space to carry out its activities. A quote had been received

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from the University of Wales Trinity St David (UWTSD) to lease reduced office space at Y Llwyfan from 1st September 2021, but availability could only be guaranteed if the existing lease was carried forward rather than terminated by 31st October 2021. This would require that the current lease be continued and taken over by the new partnership from 1st September 2021.

The meeting was advised that the current lease was held by Powys County Council on behalf of ERW. As Powys County Council would leave the partnership by 31st August 2021, the lease would need to be transferred to another Local Authority.

RESOLVED that the Leaders of the Constituent Authorities further discuss the lease arrangements before the notice deadline on 30th April 2021.

9. LEGAL AND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS APRIL - AUGUST 2021

The Joint Committee considered a report on the provision of Legal and Monitoring service arrangements from 1st April to 31st August 2021.

A proposal was received to appoint Swansea Council as Lead Authority responsible for Legal and Monitoring Officer Services for the period specified.

The Chair thanked Elin Prysor for her support as Monitoring Officer to the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED to appoint Swansea Council as the Lead Authority responsible for Legal and Monitoring Officer Services from 1st April to 31st August 2021.

10. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 100(4)(B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

The meeting was advised that Carmarthenshire County Council, Powys County Council and Swansea Council had all temporarily rescinded their notice to leave the Consortium. The existing partnership would continue from 1st April to 31st August 2021 with Carmarthenshire County Council, Powys County Council, Pembrokeshire County Council and Swansea Council, to facilitate implementation of a new partnership model from 1st September 2021.

CHAIR

DATE



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ERW JOINT COMMITTEE 8 JULY 2021

CORRESPONDENCE

PURPOSE:

The Joint Committee receive the following correspondence:

- Letter from Chair of ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group to Chair of Joint Committee, reflecting on views following last meeting of ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group on 1st March 2021.
- Response from Chair of Joint Committee in reply to Chair of ERW Scrutiny Group letter above.

RECOMMENDATIONS / KEY DECISIONS REQUIRED:

That Joint Committee receive the above correspondence for information.

REASONS:

Information only.

Report Author:
Greg Morgan/Ian Altman

Designation:
ERW Chief Officers

Tel No.
E. Mail: greg.morgan@erw.cymru
ian.altman@erw.cymru

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
ERW JOINT COMMITTEE
8 JULY 2021**

CORRESPONDENCE

BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT

- Letter from Chair of ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group to Chair of Joint Committee

Letter reflecting on the views following the last meeting of ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group held on 1st March 2021.

- Response from Chair of Joint Committee in reply to Chair of ERW Scrutiny Group.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities NONE	Legal NONE	Finance NONE	Risk Management Issues NONE	Staffing Implications NONE
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CONSULTATIONS

N/A.

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE



To:
Cllr. Emlyn Dole
Chair of the ERW Joint Committee

Please ask for: **Scrutiny**

Scrutiny Office Line: 01792 637256

e-mail: scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

Date: 23 March 2021

Dear Councillor Dole

ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group – 1 March 2021

The Scrutiny Councillor Group would like to thank Gareth Morgans, Ian Altman and Greg Morgan for attending our meeting, for presenting the information we requested and answering our questions. I am writing to you to reflect on the views from that meeting.

We thank you for your letter, dated the 15 February, responding to the issues raised at our meeting on the 26 November. We felt that on this occasion your letter did not fully answer our questions because we were looking for some more clarity on a number of issues. We do recognise that it is a difficult time and that ERW are at a crossroads but we do need to understand how the new model will work for those who will be partners and those who are not. Can we therefore ask you to address the following points in your reply?

1. How will the new model deliver value for money for those who will be members of the partnership and for those who would commission work from it?
2. How will it add value for those councils that sign up? We still have concerns around the concept of Local Authorities (LA) commissioning activities. We asked why should LAs be part of a consortium when they can just 'buy in' the services they need and not have to commit to and pay for the costs of running a regional body.
3. Clarity on funding the new model is required. How will the commissioning aspect work financially in the new model? Also what will the likely financial burden be on those LAs who sign up compared to those who choose to commission services?
4. We were also still not clear where regional collaboration will go from here, especially how the evidence base has been interpreted because each LA in the region has come to a different conclusion about how it will progress and all based on that same evidence. Can we see the summary of what local authorities want from the new model, both those within the proposed partnership and those looking to commission

services? It would also be useful to see the areas that are proving to be problematic?

We wished to emphasise the need for the new model to commence with a stable and solid foundation but we feel for this to be the case, confidence needs to be built across LAs and Schools, while also obtaining good 'buy in'.

We would like to congratulate ERW staff on their achievements while working throughout this difficult period, not only working through the pandemic but through the uncertainty of the changing ERW model. We were particularly impressed with the work around remote and blended learning, which schools across the region will have benefitted from hugely.

We look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Lyndon Jones
Chair of the ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group & Swansea Education Scrutiny
Performance Panel
Cllr.lyndon.jones@swansea.gov.uk

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Gofynner am / Please ask for:

Fy nghyf / My ref:

Llinell Uniongyrchol / Direct Line:

01267 224050

Dyddiad / Date:

E-bost / E-mail:

20th April 2021

EDole@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Cllr. Lyndon Jones

Chair of the ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group and Swansea Education Scrutiny Performance Panel

(by email only:- cllr.lyndon.jones@swansea.gov.uk)

Dear Cllr. Lyndon Jones,

Thank you for your letter dated 23rd March on behalf of ERW's Scrutiny Councillor Group. I'm pleased to hear that officers were able to attend your recent meeting to present the information requested and respond to your questions.

In my last letter, I provided you with the information I had at hand at that point in time. As you note in your letter, ERW is at a crossroads or probably better described at a dead end at this point in time and the way forward from September is not yet resolved.

I will, if I can, respond to each of the issues you raise in your letter however I would advise that some of your questions are best answered by individual Councils, especially those who have left the current partnership. Just to clarify, ERW's approach to school improvement is markedly different to the other regional consortia. Whilst GWE, EAS and the Central South Consortia provide all aspects of school improvement, in ERW the pure school improvement function i.e. employment and deployment of school improvement officers (Challenge Advisers/Education Support Advisers) has remained, from ERW's conception, with each constituent partner. In respect to school performance and value for money the Local Authority is therefore the lead responsible body with ERW contributing to this work.

In response to your specific enquiries, I would like to make the following comments: -

1. In respect to 'value for money' I believe that working in partnership can realise added value for each partner. For example, as a partnership you might only need to employ one of two officers to deliver a particular function whilst working alone could necessitate each partner employing their own staff. Another example would be the need to develop a specific strategy- this can be done at a regional basis rather than asking each Local Authority to develop individual strategies- this saves time and ensures best value for money.

We have seen these approaches being implemented effectively in some areas of ERW's work with an ERW officer representing all the partners and being that key link with Welsh Government and Local Authorities. However, I accept that the size, geography and different context of ERW's constituent

partners has not ensured value for money for all partners at all times as funding, as agreed by the Joint Committee, has in some instances been directed to the areas of highest need.

In respect to the new partnership, which is being developed, partners plan to work together on some functions to ensure value for money but provide other functions locally. However, I have been advised that those local leads will work collaboratively across the new partnership if this adds value to the work.

It is unclear as yet if the new partnership will provide services to other Local Authorities.

2. As I noted above the new partners will work together on some service provision and ensure local leads work together when it will add value. As you're aware ERW has agreed to continue to provide some services to Neath Port Talbot and Ceredigion schools for this term, however, in respect to providing services to other Local Authorities from September onwards that will be a decision for the new partnership's Joint Committee. I agree that this should not be at the detriment of the partners.
3. For this financial year, as two partners have already left ERW, Welsh Government have disaggregated ERW's funding and plan to directly fund each Local Authority individually. All Local Authorities will therefore have access to funding to support new partnerships and to fund the locally provided services.

Officers are currently agreeing the functions of new partnerships and the structure of the teams required to deliver those functions for the partnership's schools. Once the staffing structures have been agreed the funding required will be calculated and the level of contribution from each partner.

As I noted above, the option to provide services to others outside the formal partnerships, will be a decision for the new Joint Committees operational from 1st September 2021. I would advise that if that's to be part of the offer, we will need to ensure that providing for another Local Authority will need to be viable, both operationally and financially, and not impact negatively on services to the partnership's schools.

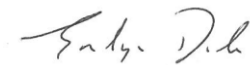
4. In respect to the remaining partners I believe they realise the value of collaboration and wish to work in partnership. Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Swansea wish to work in partnership as do Ceredigion and Powys. It is unclear what Neath Port Talbot's intentions are at present. In respect to what each partner wants from the new model, once agreed, I would be happy, with their agreement, to share their respective requirements. In respect to Ceredigion and Neath Port Talbot I would not have access to that information apart from the services they want to commission from ERW and were agreed by Joint Committee on the 30th March 2021.

In relation to 'problematic areas' I would suggest that the functions currently being discussed for local delivery would be the ones where partners feel that their schools are not getting the best possible support and value for money.

I agree that the new collaboratives will need to be stable and solid and provide schools with high quality support. They will be Local Authority led partnerships working to the direction of the Directors of Education. We will need clear communication in regard to the agreed functions of the partnership and regular interaction with school leaders and local authority officers.

I would like to reiterate your praise for ERW's workforce who have complemented Local Authority work during the last year. Officers have used their expertise to support the region's schools and provide high quality professional development opportunities, advice and guidance.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr. Emlyn Dole
Chair of ERW Joint Committee

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ERW JOINT COMMITTEE 8 JULY 2021

ERW UPDATE, EVALUATION AND BUSINESS PLAN

PURPOSE:

To provide Joint Committee with an update on ERW evaluation of Business Plan 2020-21, and draft Business Plan April-August 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS / KEY DECISIONS REQUIRED:

That the Joint Committee approve current Business Plan through to August 2021.

REASONS:

To ensure continued delivery of priorities in Business Plan for remainder of Business Plan period.

<p>Report Author: Greg Morgan/Ian Altman</p>	<p>Designation: Chief Officers</p>	<p>Tel No.</p> <p>E. Mail: greg.morgan@erw.cymru ian.altman@erw.cymru</p>
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
ERW JOINT COMMITTEE
8 JULY 2021**

ERW UPDATE, EVALUATION AND BUSINESS PLAN

BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an evaluation of ERW Central Team service in relation to the 2020-21 Business Plan and a draft Business Plan for delivery April-August 2021.

Also included within the report is:

- Business Plan Evaluation 2020/21
- Draft Business Plan April-August 2021

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

Yes

IMPLICATIONS

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications
NONE	NONE	YES	YES	YES
<p>1. Finance All aspects of the BP have now been subject to financial planning with principal accountant, taking into account revised budget.</p>				
<p>2. Risk Management The report addresses elements connected to our risk management content with regard to delivery of business plan.</p>				
<p>3. Staffing Implications The report reflects current staffing levels and overall staff capacity.</p>				

CONSULTATIONS

N/A.

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW**

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
N/A	N/A	N/A



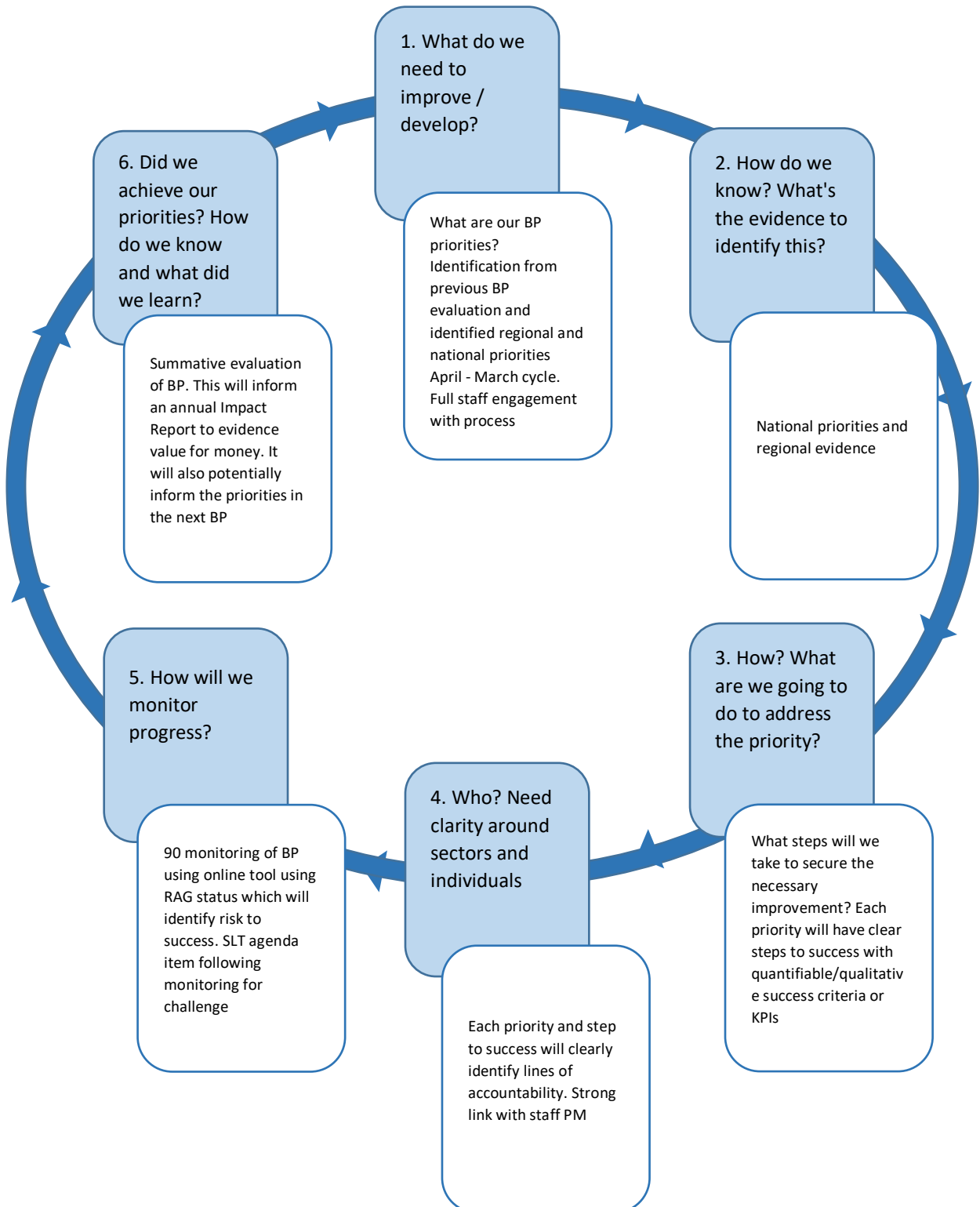
Ein Rhanbarth ar Waith
Education through Regional Working

ERW Business Plan Evaluation 2020-21



ERW Business Plan – monitoring, evaluation and review

The progress of the ERW Business Plan will be monitored and challenged robustly on a 90 cycle. The monitoring outcomes will be reported to all levels of the ERW governance structure.



Curriculum Strategy Group

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. develop whole school understanding of a purpose-led curriculum
2. consider how the Four Purposes drive all school priorities.
3. develop an agreed view of priorities for developing teaching and approaches to assessment set out in the Curriculum for Wales guidance.
4. remain abreast of qualification requirements and future reform.
5. design, plan and trial inclusive approaches to curriculum and pedagogy
6. collaborate within and between settings to develop and share their thinking

What Will Success Look Like?

Across the region, all schools, settings and school improvement staff will have had opportunities to develop their whole school understanding of Curriculum for Wales. Clusters of schools will collaborate to develop a shared understanding of the curriculum model and approach to assessment. Schools and settings will consider and create their co-constructed vision for curriculum design which considers every learner and reflects the unique needs of the community. Identified departments in a range of secondary schools and settings will have benefitted from a bespoke package of support to develop teaching and learning. Schools and settings will develop meaningful, evidence informed professional learning opportunities which allow practitioners to explore pedagogical approaches in order to select those which are best suited to the progress of all their learners.

End of BP Evaluation:

Due to the pandemic, the curriculum team were unable to arrange further curriculum events. However, ERW officers provided significant support to national and regional guidance for schools on development during this time. This included attendance at Continuity of Learning (CoL) meetings in which we were able to advise as appropriate and keep colleagues and LA officers up to date on expectations as they unfolded. Creation and sharing of the Time Capsule resource to support summer guidance and the Journey to CfW ERW in preparation for autumn term professional learning aligned to national expectations. Since early autumn we have successfully engaged with schools and clusters to produce development plans, planning meetings, twilights and Inset days linked to their progress towards CfW.

Consistency has been achieved, mainly through ensuring that the curriculum team collaboratively work to ensure all messages going out to schools remain consistent with the national message. For example, significant in-house training and quality assurance, including listening to the feedback from schools and settings as we deliver high-quality training.

In order to reach as many school leaders as possible within a short time-frame, and in light of the difficulties posed by the pandemic, the curriculum team provided several dates on which schools could attend workshops with George MacBride, a CfW expert. A series of four whole-school workshops provided models for design development and the discussion element of the sessions allowed leaders to share their ideas, whilst still receiving a consistent steer on the conceptual framework where there were misconceptions arising. Around 180 schools from the five authorities attended in person, but the workshops are available to all schools in the region, alongside the guidance workshops available in our professional offer, particularly through the Journey to CfW 2022 website, the Principles for Excellence website, and the Transforming Your Curriculum website. Our face-to-face online training, successfully mirrors each of these resources.

The roll out/re-launch of the Transforming your Curriculum has been successful, with many practitioners and schools using its contents to direct their professional learning. Data shows that engagement is growing month on month with March 2021 data showing 3000 views of which 1/3rd were returning users. A significant number of schools and settings from four of the five LAs have received training and guidance with developing CfW. In the LAs with the highest level of engagement, most (90%) schools have undertaken training. However, this reduces to a minority in the least engaged LA (around 30%). These figures are for direct school support rather than self-facilitated via the online resources. From September to mid-March, team members led 18 school and cluster Inset days, 55 Twilight sessions, 20 Headteacher updates for LAs, 63 LA and school support and planning meetings, and funded an additional 95 schools and LAs with specific support programmes. One LA has benefitted from support across all settings and this has ensured a wide rollout of the LfE programme as well as the schools using the workshops online to support development. The programme has been successfully adapted to the changing landscape and is currently a

blended learning programme designed to support schools and practitioners to move from good to excellent in the classroom. Spring 2021 has seen its first four cohorts, of 96 practitioners undertake the full programme with a further two booked for the summer term and more booked for September onwards. The feedback to date has been over 95% positive.

Growing numbers of schools are utilising online workshops and resources to support the understanding of the purpose-led curriculum and the role of the four purposes in design and planning a local curriculum. However, despite positive feedback, there is still misunderstanding and this has been passed to WG in relation to a national programme to include specific work for all on misconceptions and potential areas of concern which may arise. In addition, the curriculum team will focus on a new support package, '5 steps to curriculum design' which takes understanding the vision into the classroom.

A growing number of schools are making use of the online assessment and progression workshops as a starting point for this vital aspect of design, and a smaller number of schools who are more ready for the next step are making use of facilitated workshops on understanding progression. However, this is currently in its infancy in some settings due to national constrictions around PL and the need for further time to develop middle tier understanding. It is vital now that schools do not move too quickly, and that they receive consistent messages from central team and LA SIOs. Assessment and progression in particular, need time across the middle tier to ensure successful implementation.

Much of our summer term was taken up with creating the resources outlined above, and the team continue to develop new programmes to support Phase 2 working. The curriculum team have supported Challenge Advisers and LA officers directly. However, working with the whole team of Challenge Advisers has been less successful and will need to be addressed in the coming months in order to ensure that the message is consistently understood. For example, schools are beginning to report conflicting expectations and central team officers have a key role in supporting consistency.

Working more closely with schools in recent months has highlighted the need for greater understanding of the purpose-led curriculum, not only within schools, but within the middle tier. The range of schools the curriculum team work with closely are developing their thinking with regard to design. However, there remains a minority of schools, not yet engaged with the work of the team. The team are working on further resources to support schools and LAs to evaluate this aspect more closely. However, it is crucial at this stage that Challenge Advisers continue to support this element within their school evaluation, communicating support needs to the region.

In addition, it has been difficult, understandably, to gather case studies from schools during this period, and again, this will be an important aspect going forward.

ERW now has six operational online programmes, two fully facilitated programmes and one sister programme which is under construction (all aligned to the phases of the Journey 2022):

Journey to Curriculum for Wales ERW has been used by a wide range of schools to support their own professional learning although successful work is undertaken with many schools who prefer us to facilitate or to talk practitioners through the workshops ‘train the trainer’ style. Schools have reported that they find the videos useful in supporting understanding of the conceptual model. For example, workshops have on *Vision, Assessment and Progression* and the six AoLE workshops have regularly delivered through Insets and Twilights. The suite of additional bespoke workshops on aspects such as *Creativity* and *The Story of Wales* are also well received by those schools engaging.

The Principles for Excellence programme supports schools with developing the pedagogical principles. Facilitated workshops or discussions as a starting point have been effective but more schools are reporting that they are using them to self-support professional learning across the school. In some cases, the programme is being used by clusters as a backbone to their CfW development with practitioners working in networks across schools. Other schools are using them as an internal research project across their school.

Alongside the LfE we’ve created a sister programme, Dysgu da, based on a session taken from the ***Learning for Excellence*** programme, we’ve extended it as a stand-alone website which focuses on classroom application of learner-focussed practice and pedagogy, with particular reference to digital application in a blended capacity.

Also newly launched is our Outdoor Learning website which supports schools with outdoor learning pedagogy as a critical practice for achieving the four purposes and which is a vital component of recovery strategies. It has been recognised for its high quality across Wales and we are in discussion with a number of organisations with regard to its possibilities in supporting national reform.

In addition, the curriculum team has led professional learning supporting schools in developing their approaches to designing and embedding the new RSE statutory framework. This is complemented by a day’s training for the Challenge Advisers who support those schools.

Throughout the BP period, engagement with CfW in the region has been very strong. For example, the team has led 16 school and cluster Insets, 55 Twilight sessions, 20 Headteacher updates for LAs, 75 LA and school support and planning meetings, and funded an additional 95 schools and LAs with specific support programmes.

Across the region, schools tend to fall into three categories at present. A few schools have been able to stay on course in relation to the Journey to 2022 timeline. For example, the schools engaging well before Covid, but also because they have continued to prioritise curriculum development throughout and have related the reform to the lessons learned, research undertaken and an appetite for professional learning

displayed across the school. Many schools have engaged in some way or another with the reform but may have had this development halted during the pandemic. However, in a minority of cases, the level of engagement is not reflected in good progress, particularly where schools have prioritised content without developing the appropriate foundations.

A minority of schools in the region have not engaged with the work of the curriculum team for a variety of reasons. For example, other areas such as leadership have been prioritised or, in a few cases, schools have taken their own direction. However, requests for bespoke support for these schools is being brokered as they evaluate and look to realign.

In addition to supporting schools with design and development of Curriculum for Wales, ERW CfW development officers have prepared and delivered the following professional learning on behalf of local authorities and Welsh Government:

- MDLP
- ACEs training
- NQT training
- Professional Learning Networks
- Physical literacy
- Biophilia
- Explorify
- Public Health training
- UNCRC support

The team also continues to support school engagement with international work through Global Futures; Empathy Lab; Into Film; Translanguaging; Powerlanguages; Cerdd Iaith; Young Money and Welsh Government development and guidance and resources for RSE, CWRE, BAME and assessment as well as contributing to the CfW implementation plan going forward.

The secondary team has offered worthwhile and meaningful bespoke support for secondary schools when offers have been accepted or requested. Where schools have engaged, nearly all underperforming teachers have engaged well in support offered. Of these teachers, many have found support for improving online teaching useful in improving their own practice. Many Heads of Department indicate that teachers that have been accessing individual support are now providing better quality online, distance and blended learning. Many schools have found the support of high quality resources supportive in aiding them in improving teaching and learning and exemplifying what effective blended learning looks like. Of the teachers and leaders who accessed the Online Learning Guidance, many teachers and leaders found the exemplification of effective online learning beneficial in supporting other teachers and leaders in their school to deliver effective lessons. Most Heads of Department have found the communication with the ERW Secondary Subject Specialists valuable in informing their decisions around qualifications and supporting them in their roles within schools.

To improve the secondary team's individual school support:

- Increase the amount of bespoke support provided for individual schools as we move to the 'new normal;'
- Improve the collation of first hand evidence in order to fully evaluate the impact support has had on improving the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make.
- Facilitate the secondary team to make a seamless return to face to face support

The ERW secondary team provided a wide range of professional learning which was available to all in schools in the region. Nearly all of these professional learning events were well attended and, overall, evaluations were positive and indicated that delegates felt that they had improved their skills.

Nearly all delegates indicated that all of the planned material was appropriate to their needs and most indicated that the team had taken useful account of the current situation whilst maintaining a focus on improving the quality of teaching, leadership and in supporting leaders and teachers to consider curriculum reform and the changes to qualifications. Most delegates felt that the secondary team's approach to considering Curriculum for Wales was helpful in enabling them to reflect on current practice and consider how they may adapt, change and improve the quality of teaching and learning and to evaluate the effectiveness of their current curriculum offer.

Feedback from senior leaders about the professional learning offer has been positive and most have indicated that they particularly appreciated the wide range of support for improving the quality of distance and blended learning.

To support teachers and leaders during the pandemic the team were asked to ensure that all professional learning sessions provided useful and high quality resources that would support leaders and teachers to improve the quality of their teaching, learning and curriculum whilst clearly demonstrating effective practice. For example, the English team provided a support resource to enable teachers to develop their approaches to improve the quality of pupils' oracy skills during face-to-face and distance learning. Many delegates welcomed these supportive resources and in our follow up with targeted schools, middle and senior leaders have indicated that these resources were useful and supported departments to improve their approaches to teaching and learning during this time.

In order to support the improvement of teaching and learning, the ERW secondary team targeted specific aspect of teaching during each session. Delegates were very positive about this approach and felt that the 'bite-size' approach was useful in enabling them to trail, develop and improve their practice. For example, a session on questioning in Humanities supported most delegates to consider how they can make more effective use of questioning during live online lessons.

To further improve our professional learning offer:

- Reduce the content in a minority of professional learning sessions to improve the pace and engagement of all teachers and leaders
- Make better use of break out rooms during online sessions to increase opportunities for discussion and collaboration
- Ensure the quality and impact of all professional learning sessions is consistent and effective

The ERW secondary team has continued to offer network meetings for all Middle Leaders throughout the pandemic. Nearly all Middle leaders that attended these sessions felt they were supportive and helpful in enabling them to consider their approaches during this time period and in enabling them to plan and think strategically about the future as well as responding to the current situation. The secondary team have been responsive to the needs and requests of middle leaders and this has supported them well to improve engagement with schools.

All network meetings for middle leaders had a clear focus on improving the quality and leadership of teaching and improving all leaders' ability to evaluate and strategically plan for ongoing improvements. Feedback from middle leaders on all sessions has been positive and nearly all delegates have indicated that they have been supported to:

- Improve the quality of their distance learning offer
- Respond more appropriately to the ever changing environment
- To consider how they can plan for their approaches to Curriculum for Wales
- Develop their approaches to improving teaching and learning.

However, this is based on delegate feedback and not evidence of impact. To improve network meetings:

- Monitor the impact of middle leadership sessions on improving leadership and teaching
- Target middle leaders requiring support as a result of these sessions to provide more bespoke and specific support

Professional Learning and Research Strategy Group

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. engage with a national professional learning offer, appropriate to the individual's role, to enhance their skills, improve their teaching, knowledge and career progression
2. collaborate with higher education institutions to make effective use of high-quality research to inform their practice and contribute to research where appropriate
3. use the professional standards to identify areas for professional learning to improve practice and develop themselves as learning organisations
4. engage with professional learning that promotes inclusivity and equity

What will success look like?

Across the region, all schools and settings will have the opportunity to engage in a national professional learning offer appropriate to their role. Where settings engage with this offer they will be equipped and ready for introducing Curriculum for Wales 2022 having received support in managing change, engaging all stakeholders in developing a vision for their context as well as planning a curriculum that suits them with a workforce who have been given time and space for professional learning. Pedagogy will be a strong focus in nearly all schools. Many schools will have had the opportunity to develop links with HEI partners to develop themselves as research informed, reflective practitioners. All professional learning will be in line with the professional standards for teaching and leadership and many schools will be using the results of the Schools as a Learning Organisation survey to inform their planning for improvement.

End of BP Evaluation:

1. Schools have begun to engage with the cross-regional PL offer for CfW for senior leaders through a range of high-quality asynchronous sharing of resources via Dolen. In May 2021, senior leaders will be invited to attend 4 workshops (offered bilingually) on 4 modules (materials were designed and developed in autumn and spring 2021 have already been published on Dolen) covering the following topics:
 - Managing Change, published November 2020 (274 Views on Dolen)
 - Developing Vision, published November 2020 (182 views on Dolen)
 - Creating Time and Space for PL, published March 2021 (93 views on Dolen)
 - Leading Pedagogy, published March 2021 (36 views on Dolen)

In addition to the national PL Offer, 41 schools have undertaken training in Remote Asynchronous Learning Design training as part of the Wales Collaboratory for Learning Design (evaluation summary link can be accessed [here](#)) and 8 secondary schools from the region have participated in the cross-regional Leading Collaborative Learning Project through a series of live events with Canadian educationalist Dr Lyn Sharratt (evaluation summary link can be accessed [here](#)).

2. Successful collaboration with HEIs on a range of enquiry-based projects including:
 - 121 schools from across the region working with 3 HEIs UWTSD, Swansea, and Aberystwyth on the National Professional Enquiry Project supported by 7 ERW Professional Learning Networks facilitated by ERW Central team staff and challenge advisers. All schools have submitted Form 1 (Enquiry Overview) and Form 2 (emerging findings) to Welsh Government and playlists have been published on HWB detailing the enquiry journey of the schools involved [NPEP PLaylists](#) Evaluations were collected at the start of the project (evaluation summary link from launch event in September 2020 can be accessed [here](#)) and evaluation of longitudinal impact will take place in July 2021 when the final reports are due to be submitted to WG.
 - 10, 11-18 schools and 4, FE Colleges have begun to work collaboratively in 4 clusters with UWTSD on the Post-16 Professional Enquiry Project [Post-16 PEP Pilot MS Team](#)
 - 8 Lead MAT Schools involved in the MAT Enquiry Project have been sharing best practice within clusters and carrying out MAT specific enquiries to be published on Dolen in April 2021 [MAT Lead Schools Google Site](#)
 - ERW support for ITE partnerships with Swansea, Aberystwyth, UWTSD, Cardiff Metropolitan and the Open University have also developed during the course of 2020-2021. ERW SLT members have attend strategic boards for these partnerships to collaborate on all

decision-making and quality assurance. A number of research-informed projects are being undertaken jointly with HEIs, network schools and the region in the summer term of 2021. These include: Research into practice, Co-Plan and Co-Teach, Effective Mentoring.

3. During 2020-2021 ERW Lead for Research and HEI has worked with WG secondee to raise awareness of SLO survey which has now moved to HWB. Half of ERW schools have now registered to complete the survey compared to a minority (18%) in September 2019. Moving the survey to HWB has led to several effective changes in the ways schools access data and this has required some additional training and support. ERW Lead for Research and HEI recorded an interview with WG secondee on changes to SLO shared with schools at the PLN Launch in September 2020. Follow up support for schools has been provided on request by ERW SLT. WG held a well-attended SLO Policy insight event (Link to Policy Insight held in November is available [here](#)). Lead for Research and HEI has successfully collaborated with a colleague in one of our partner LAs to develop a guide to SLO for governing bodies which has been shared via Dolen (access the resource [here](#)). It was published in February 2021 and has 131 views to date.
4. During 2020- 2021, work has been completed with WG and HEIs to develop the detailed overview of course content for the modules for the Masters units relevant for ALNCo's. Work is now ongoing with HEIs to develop the actual content for delivery starting in September 2021. Work has also taken place with UWTSD to develop the specialist qualification modules for teachers working in specialist settings at L6 and L7 in readiness for re-validation this Summer. Further professional learning to promote inclusivity is reported under Equity and wellbeing.

Equity and Well-being Strategy Group

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. design and deliver the health and well-being area of the curriculum
2. develop an understanding of the barriers to learning that many pupils face
3. Identify and develop universal approaches which promote wellbeing
4. be aware of and contribute to the PDG and PDGLAC regional priorities
5. be informed and prepare for the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act

What will success look like?

Across the region, all schools, settings will have had opportunities to develop an initial needs analysis methodology for designing the health and well-being area of learning and experience. Resources will be available on Porth to support and guide schools and settings through the process. Having received support and guidance on the factors which impinge on a 'readiness to learn' schools will be better placed to develop a curriculum which meets the needs of all learners in safe and supportive environments. Schools, settings and school improvement staff will have clear and consistent guidance on effective use of PDG and PDGLAC. All schools and settings will have been provided with relevant information and training to help them prepare for the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act.

End of BP Evaluation:

1. Design and deliver the health and well-being area of the curriculum

This strand of work was significantly adapted in order to respond to changing needs and priorities as the impact of the pandemic unfolded.

- The work with HAPPEN and SHRN had to be postponed as school closures made it unviable to complete the school surveys in a meaningful way. Materials were effectively developed and shared via Dolen on how HAPPEN and SHRN surveys can be used to develop the Health and Well-being AoLE. Plans are in place to resume professional learning for schools on this aspect of wellbeing provision in line with the Framework for embedding a whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing. One local authority has started to make plans to use HAPPEN in all primary settings.
- There has been closer partnership working with the WNHSS to ensure that there is alignment between the Health and Well-being area of Curriculum for Wales, PSE provision and the work of the WNHSS. PSE leads across the region have had opportunities to participate in a workshop delivered in partnership with WNHSS leads designed to provide opportunities to discuss the opportunities and potential barriers to implementation of the Health and Well-being AoLE. Feedback from these sessions has been used to inform the design of further support and training.
- A Google site was developed suggestions on how to keep learners physically active during lockdown. These materials were designed with the support of experts in physical literacy from Cardiff Met and Sports Wales to ensure that it aligned with the Health and Well-being AoLE approach to physical activity. Workshops on Physical Literacy have been delivered since January and 35 primary, 4 special, 1 3-16 and 21 secondary schools have attended the training. Members of the Curriculum Development Team have also worked closely with the training provider to develop their knowledge and skills in order that they can further develop the training and accompanying resources.

2. Develop an understanding of the barriers to learning that many pupils face

- A number of video resources have been developed to support schools work with parents, provide quality first teaching, understand neurodiversity and multisensory teaching have been uploaded to Dolen and viewed by over 400 people.
- Schools and settings have been provided with training opportunities and materials to help them develop their understanding of the negative impact that living in poverty can have on all aspects of a learner's educational experience. An awareness raising session and introduction to the Price of Poverty toolkit was delivered by Children in Wales and attended by 35 schools. Challenging Education were commissioned to deliver awareness raising training to ERW Central Team and Challenge Advisers.
- 140 schools have registered and accessed an online Professional Learning programme 'Thinking Differently for Disadvantaged Learners'. The programme is made up of 6 modules which are appropriate for staff at all levels in all schools/settings.
- 14 secondary schools across the region have been part of a RADY (Raising Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters) pilot. Challenging Education have worked remotely with the 14 schools to identify areas of focus, update strategic planning and look at how the golden thread of supporting FSM learners can be embedded across the whole school. The programme is not yet formally evaluated but anecdotal evidence tells us that schools have enjoyed the opportunity to be part of the programme and a large number of primaries would very much like to be part of any further project in the future. As a result of the RADY work in ERW, one local authority has taken the initial opportunity and funded their own LA wide expansion to include all clusters.
- Schools and settings have also had training opportunities on understanding the negative impact that adverse childhood experiences can have. Members of the Curriculum Development Team designed and delivered awareness raising sessions on 'Adverse Childhood Experiences' and 36 people attended their first session earlier in the spring term.
- More intense whole day training has been delivered by Trauma Informed Schools. Over 120 schools have engaged with this training and a number have gone on to commission the trainer to provide whole school training.

3. Identify and develop universal approaches which promote wellbeing

- Well-being resources were developed during lockdown which built upon the principle that the pandemic constitutes a traumatic event and that to promote wellbeing there should be a focus on redressing the balance in areas of loss: calm, safety, connections, hope and self-efficacy. These materials have had over 650 views on Dolen.
- Training on Emotion Coaching was delivered over 2 days early in the spring term. 112 attended and nearly all stated that they felt that the training would have a positive impact on outcomes in their school/setting. 28 practitioners from 22 schools have signed up to complete accredited practitioner trainer. These practitioners are being supported by Emotion Coaching champions who were part of the 2017 training cohort and a regional Emotion Coaching network is emerging. Another round of training is being delivered later in the summer term – all attendees will be required to commit to completing the accreditation in order to support capacity building in schools.
- The benefits of being outdoors has been promoted as a whole school approach to improving wellbeing. An outdoor learning Google site has been developed to serve as a portal for sharing research and good practice. Training in Biophilia was delivered in January to 72 practitioners from a range of settings. Nearly all said that they felt that it would impact positively on outcomes and that they would recommend the training to colleagues. As a result, further training will be made available through the remainder of the outdoor learning google site.
- Funding has been made available for schools to develop case studies to share their 'outdoor learning' journeys – there are currently 5 under development which will be featured on the
- The practical application of elements of positive psychology have been promoted. Gwylan were commissioned to develop 6 bilingual videos on the facets underpinning positive wellbeing and accompanying classroom resources have been developed. Alongside this Professor Neil Frude developed 2 video presentations on managing anxiety in learners and promoting staff wellbeing – both underpinned by positive psychology.
- A bespoke programme has been designed in partnership with Empathy Lab UK and 70 schools were involved in the first training session on how to develop empathy through literature. Following the training one local authority has started to make plans to make this a county wide approach.

4. Be aware of and contribute to the PDG and PDGLAC regional priorities

- Regional Co-ordinator for PDG has worked closely with PDG leads in the other regions to organise the very successful PDG Focus Week in March 2021 which provided schools with an opportunity to hear from national and international speakers and share best practice around supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged learners.
- Digital skills, literacy and numeracy were identified as 3 key areas of support heightened by the impact of the pandemic. 44 schools attended awareness raising to support pupils with an online reading programme for pupils with ALN and 28 schools have taken part in a pilot project. 46 staff have been training in 11 schools to support pupils with developmental difficulties improve early numeracy skills. All special schools and PRU's in the region have been involved in a project to support parental digital skills to enable greater engagement during periods of home schooling. All report increased engagement of parents and pupils to some extent.
- A 5 part training programme was developed for designated teachers on 'Supporting LAC and Vulnerable Learners'. 251 teachers and support staff from 76 schools engaged with the programme and many attended the 5 sessions and completed all the modules. Feedback was very positive with most saying that they would recommend the training and felt that it would impact positively on their practice. One delegate stated 'this is the best training I have attended in years – a really good mix of theory and practical hands on advice'.
- Each local authority has a funded project with groups of schools with a focus on family and community engagement. The projects will be showcased at the end of the summer term and shared across Dolen.
- 65 teachers / support staff from 25 schools have undertaken training with Adoption UK Cymru to understand the support needs of adopted learners and to discuss strategies for engagement and a whole school approach to supporting these often vulnerable learners. The very positive feedback from attendees contributed to Welsh Government's decision to provide funding to schools for membership of Adoption UK Cymru.

5. Be informed and prepared for the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act

- Resources have been produced and commissioned in collaboration with the ALN Transformation leads for the region to support schools to be prepared for the ALNET Act. ALN transformation awareness raising support materials have been viewed 90 times on Dolen the PCP practice power points 129 times; the ALNCO role guidance 34 times.
- Mike Gershon was commissioned to develop a series of 5 walkthrough power points “Maximising the impact of differentiation” and these have been viewed 1939 times on Dolen and 92 attended the awareness raising session.
- Materials to support ASD pupils transition back to school have been viewed by 249 people.
- Playlists have been developed to support schools provide more inclusive practice through effective use of teaching assistants and how they support pupils become more independent in their learning (WoW). 74 ALNCo’s attended training in Pembrokeshire and 48 in Ceredigion. The resource has been viewed 336 times on Dolen.

Leadership Strategy Group

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. access a high-quality, extensive portfolio of leadership development opportunities at every stage of the Professional Leadership Pathway.
2. utilise the Professional Standards in order to develop and lead effective learning organisations.
3. access development opportunities and accreditation for Higher Level Teaching Assistants.

What will success look like?

National Leadership programmes accredited by the NAEL will be accessible to all leaders and effectively delivered across the region. A regional system of identification, tracking and professional learning support for aspirational leaders will be implemented enabling leaders to secure timely professional learning opportunities and experiences and LA can monitor effective succession planning. An effective Aspiring HLTA programme and assessment process will be available across the region.

End of BP Evaluation:

1. access a high-quality, extensive portfolio of leadership development opportunities at every stage of the Professional Leadership Pathway.

- ERW delivers a national programme at every stage of the Professional Leadership Pathway. These national programmes have been made available to teachers across the region in all 6 Local Authorities. Each of these programmes (with the exception of the SLDP) has received the endorsement of the National Academy of Educational Leadership.
- All programme details and application processes are outlined in the ERW Professional Learning Offer which is promoted through Dolen and the ERW Newsletters. All applications for programmes are discussed with LA Leadership Leads to gain endorsement and to ensure LA identify, recruit and promote both programmes and personnel.
- In Spring 2020 all leadership programmes were paused due to Covid 19 restrictions. During the pause period all programmes were rewritten so that they are now being delivered through the Microsoft Teams Platform. The Experienced HT programme is delivered by Elishea Ltd and that programme will be the last to resume in April 2021.
- In addition to the national Programmes the Federated Headteacher network has continued to work together sharing ideas and support to Headteachers of Federated schools and schools on more than one site.
- Delivery of the programmes in ERW is mostly through School based personnel who are trained to deliver the national resources as either Facilitators or Leadership Coaches. This arrangement ensures programmes are delivered by credible current practitioners who offer practical and current advice. Schools are reimbursed for the preparation and delivery time of these facilitator/coaches. During the year 20-21 £246,120 was paid directly to schools for their work with Leadership programmes.
- Arrangements have been made to ensure that participants on all current programmes will be able to continue with the programmes until they conclude in Autumn 2021.

National Programmes ERW	Primary			Secondary			Special/PRU/Other			Total
	E	W	T	E	W	T	E	W	T	
Middle Leaders	79	36	115	24	9	33	8		8	156
Senior Leaders	11	6	17	9	2	11	1		1	29
Aspiring HT	39	17	56	14	3	17	3		3	76
NPQH Assessment Only	7	0	7	5	1	6	3		3	16
New & Acting HT Cohort 1	23	18	41	5	2	7	4		4	52
New & Acting HT Cohort 2	12	4	16	3	0	3	1		1	20
New & Acting HT Cohort 3	7	0	7	0	2	2	1		1	10
Experienced HT Prog	11	5	16	2	2	4				20
Participants			275			83			21	379

2. utilise the Professional Standards in order to develop and lead effective learning organisations.

- A self-reflection against the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership must be submitted as part of the application process for most National Programmes.
- The Professional Standards remain an integral part of all national programmes, engaging participants to reflect upon and develop their practice against the National Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership. The Leadership Standards review and the Leadership Experience Task that reflects against the standards is a common aspect of most programmes.

3. access development opportunities and accreditation for Higher Level Teaching Assistants.

- All TAs across the region has had opportunity to engage with Professional Learning throughout the year 20-21.
- An on-line national TA Induction Programme is available to all TAs across the region.
- The ERW TA Google Classroom has been available to all Practicing TAs and has been constantly updated throughout the year with new and additional resources made available.
- Whilst the Aspiring HLTA Programme paused early in the year, it resumed as on on-line model in October 2020 with 27 participants in Cohort 1. This cohort of the AHLTA programme are in the process of assessment March 2021.
- Cohort 2 of the AHLTA programme begun in February 21 with 37 participants. This cohort will be eligible for assessment in Autumn 2021.
- During January/February 2021 13 HLTA assessors were trained in the new HLTA Assessment model. This is the completely new model developed during 20-21.
- 19 Candidates from ERW Cohort 1 of AHLTA are being assessed during March 2021.
- A new TALP Delivery team of 22 HLTA from across the region are undertaking a 'Train the Trainer' programme. Following this training the team will facilitate and promote the TALP resources in each LA. Each LA will have its own team of personnel and TALP Team supported by the TALP Delivery Team.

Digital Skills Strategy Group

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. develop leadership of Digital Learning
2. ensure Online Safety, across all stakeholders, is as robust as possible
3. develop digital competence as a cross-curricular skill, engaging with the Digital Competence Framework
4. setup and run Code Clubs to develop logical thinking and coding skills
5. share effective practice in the use of digital technology, both in the classroom and as a management and collaboration tool for staff

What will success look like?

Leaders from all settings across the region will have had opportunities to receive support in developing their strategic approach to the use of digital learning, both in the classroom and as a management and collaboration tool. This support will include the creation of a clear vision for their setting, involving, and being shared with, all relevant stakeholders. Staff will be able to access relevant and up to date information regarding Online Safety to ensure all stakeholders in their setting are as safe online, as possible. Support in engaging with the 360 degrees Safe Cymru online safety framework will have been made available to all settings that require it. Support for the development of digital competence will have been identified and brokered by Challenge Advisers. This support will have been delivered by relevant ERW or LA colleagues as well as Digital Innovation Schools via a school to school model. Settings that have not already done so, will have the opportunity to receive the necessary support to either setup and run an extra-curricular Code Club or include activities to develop logical thinking and coding skills as part of their curriculum. A Regional Digital Learning Event and a series of ERW DigiMeets will have given settings the opportunity to share examples of good practice in the development of digital competence beyond their own settings. Further examples of good practice will have been made available to all members of staff in ERW schools via Dolen.

End of BP Evaluation:

Digital support for this financial year has had to be very flexible and adapt to the needs of schools during different phases of the pandemic.

1. Digital Leadership

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a focus on developing digital leadership through strategies and approaches to deliver online/blended/hybrid learning effectively. Training has centred around a number of webinars that have run throughout the year that have given guidance from ERW officers on adopting a whole school approach to online learning through the effective use of Hwb tools. A number of schools have also contributed during these webinars, with school leaders and digital leads highlighting key strategic elements to adapt provision depending on the school and national situation regarding Covid-19. All webinar recordings and supporting resources were made available on demand on Dolen.

There has been a delay in the release of the national Digital Self-review Tool created by a cross-regional partnership. However, some schools have worked with ERW on the evaluation of the beta version and created supporting resources on various elements of tool. The release date has now been moved to June 2021.

Digital Leadership webinars (Summer 2020): 1294 attendees across all webinars. Recordings and supporting resources available on demand on Dolen.

Supporting online learning in a blended learning model - this leadership resource was created in Summer 2020 to support digital leadership: (941 Dolen views)

2. Online Safety

Online safety and safeguarding learners and schools staff during remote/blended/hybrid learning has been a priority as the use of online learning has increased significantly. ERW colleagues worked with Welsh Government to create a live streaming guidance document (Hwb resource). Also, all webinar training has highlighted the online safety and safeguarding considerations in using particular software tools. ERW digital team worked closely with Welsh Government and LA colleagues on this work.

Summer term 2020: Live streaming guidance and safeguarding protocols resource produced in collaboration with Welsh Government.

October 2020: Training on the latest updates around online safety provided in partnership with Welsh Government and SWGFL (**90 schools attended**)

January 2021: A series of webinars on delivering live sessions (included all safeguarding elements and online safety protocols) when using Teams and Google Meet – **303 attendees**

January 2021: Webinars	Attendees	Number of hits on Dolen resource to support webinar
Delivering live session through MS Teams	121	1935 (Links to resources for these webinars are all held on one Dolen Card)
Delivering live sessions through Google Classroom / Google Meet	66	
Connecting and engaging learners through Google Classroom & Teams	55	
Connecting and engaging learners through J2e	61	507

March 2021: As part of the ERW RDLE (see point 5 below), an ERW school showcased their development and implementation of a number of online safety protocols through using the 360 Safe Cymru tool.

3. Blended Learning

The focus from developing DCF skills shifted to preparing schools for distance learning during the Summer 2020 term. A series of webinars were provided to show how the Hwb tools could be used to facilitate distance learning. Schools showing innovative practice were asked to share their strategies and ideas during these webinars. As mentioned earlier (point 1), a large number of staff across ERW schools attended and used the supporting resources on Dolen (**1294 attendees at webinars**).

Autumn term 2020: webinars were delivered to schools (recordings and supporting resources available on Dolen) to provide guidance on blended and hybrid learning - **117 attendees**

Spring Term 2021 – As schools entered another lockdown period, a large number of schools decided to deliver live sessions. ERW provided a series of webinars on delivering live sessions and engaging & connecting learners during this period (see table above for attendance/ resource engagement numbers).

Blended learning project – During the spring term 2021, 60 schools have been awarded funding to be part of an ERW project to create and share resources. These resources will be quality assured and translated to be made available to schools, via Dolen, within the summer term 2021.

4. Coding

Due to a shift in school priorities during the Covid-19 pandemic, it was decided to put coding projects, coding device loan schemes and training on hold until the Spring term 2021.

Autumn Term 2020: ERW digital team created resources and supporting materials for schools to use with coding projects, coding device loan initiatives and CPD modules during the Spring term and beyond.

Spring Term 2021: ERW Coding Project: 32 schools were awarded funding to create resources to encourage schools to develop computational thinking and coding skills. Schools were also given Micro:bit class packs to promote coding skills at their schools. These schools were tasked with creating and uploading the resources to a coding website that all ERW schools will be able to access. Once the resources have been quality assured and translated, they will be made available to schools during the summer term 2021. This resource will be accessed via Dolen.

ERW coding device loan scheme: The second half of the spring term, as Welsh Government guidelines allowed, saw the re-introduction of the coding device loan scheme. Schools can apply to access coding devices on loan for a term to use within class lessons or during code clubs to promote coding skills. Schools who have used the devices then need to upload any ideas and activities that have worked well with learners on to a MS Team community. Any relevant resources will be added to the ERW coding resources on Dolen and the coding project website.

Spring Term 2020: Micro:bit offer: Schools that applied for the ERW coding project but were unsuccessful received a Micro:bit class pack to develop coding at their school along with access to training modules on coding and Micro:bits

5. Sharing practice

Summer term 2020: A number of schools were identified to share good practice during the first phase of distance learning and presented in webinars along with providing resources that are available on Dolen.

Autumn Term 2020: As schools were forced to adopt blended and hybrid learning approaches, a series of webinars were provided and schools shared good practice on strategies to implement

Spring Term 2021:

ERW RDLE: A virtual regional digital learning event (RDLE) was held between March 8th and 11th, consisting of 19 short webinars (20 minutes each), which were available for school staff. There was a large variety of presentations and attendees were added to a MS Team where they could access webinar recordings and supporting resources. There were **497** attendees across the week plus an additional **292** members being added to the MS Team.

Blended learning project – During the spring term 2021, **60** schools have been awarded funding to be part of an ERW project to create and share resources. These resources will be quality assured and translated to be made available to schools, via Dolen, within the summer term 2021.

Cymraeg – Welsh Strategy Group

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. deliver current and future curriculum to support improvement in the Welsh language
2. develop as bilingual communities
3. plan effectively in order to contribute to the delivery of the 'Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy'
4. develop the Welsh language proficiency of teachers and education assistants at different levels

What will success look like?

Centrally, the region will have a high level strategy with clearly defined priorities for the work of developing and supporting Welsh in education. Schools will be actively engaged with the aims of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy, the region's Welsh in Education Strategy and the Local Authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

Good practice will be further developed and shared to ensure effective pedagogy and methodology for teaching and learning Welsh, and through the medium of Welsh based on research and identified best practice.

All schools will be actively engaged with their own work in developing the Welsh Language Charter Framework in line with the most recent developments in the national Welsh Language Charter Framework. All schools will be ambitious in their targets, and will monitor progress internally throughout the year and will include the targets in their School Development Plans.

The region will support a programme of professional learning to develop practitioners' Welsh skills and expertise when teaching Welsh and through the medium of Welsh, in line with the criteria / principles of the National Professional Learning Model. ERW will work with external providers, including the regional Welsh Language Sabbatical Course providers to develop the Welsh language proficiency of teachers and education assistants at different levels. ERW will support schools and LAs to identify training needs, and seek to address those needs by ensuring the profession has access to suitable high-quality professional learning opportunities to develop their Welsh language skills.

End of BP Evaluation:

As with all other areas of the Business Plan, many aspect of the original plan were forced to change due to the pandemic, and school closure and social distancing guidance forced a change in approach for nearly all aspects of the work

1. Deliver current and future curriculum to support improvement in the Welsh language

School closure, lockdown and social distancing measures had a marked effect on the whole planned programme of work for the 2020 Summer Term to support the teaching of Welsh in schools. However, alternative arrangements and changing the method of delivery meant that the original intended aims were achieved by alternative means, and these methods of delivery remained in place for the rest of the year. The secondary school network meetings were all re-arranged to be held online, and departmental 'school visits' were also held online as were meeting with individual teachers / heads of departments / whole departments to deal with specific questions issues, to provide support and to trial online and blended learning approaches, and to trial new resources.

ERW staff contributed to and developed the work of the Continuity of Learning Plan in the 2020 Summer Term, and as a result a strong base was created for cross-regional collaboration; a basis that further built on during the course of the year. There are now national networks in place to discuss and address the need of all key stages, and to collaborate on the creation of resources and training courses etc. for teachers.

Several projects were developed during the course of the year. A few have been completed and others are ongoing. On the request of schools, learning and assessment packs were created to support the delivery of Second Language Welsh in particular, and good practice videos were created and uploaded onto HWB. Several resources were also created to support the delivery of Welsh (First Language) and all webinars and resources were greatly received. The feedback for the training and the support provided by the subject specialists, and the resources created throughout the course of the year has been overwhelmingly positive. Several new resources have been created and launched during the course of the year, and several new resources are currently being developed and will be completed during the Summer Term. These include a handbook of original 'Pisa' style exercises, a series of short videos to support different aspects of the secondary Welsh curriculum, and videos presenting the history of the Welsh language.

2. Develop as bilingual communities

At the start of the pandemic, the delivery of the Siarter Iaith in schools was hindered by school closure and lockdown, as was the programme of awarding achievements in the Summer Term. Due to the nature of the Siarter Iaith scheme which is heavily focused on the use of the Welsh language outside of the classroom and activities which promote the use of Welsh in the playground, school closure brought nearly all activities to a halt. This in itself was a cause of concern, but the wider impact of the lack of varied opportunities and contact pupils would have to the Welsh language, and the fact that the promotion of the importance of Welsh education and bilingualism as a skill would be lost whilst schools were close was a great cause of concern. However, centrally there was an attempt to maintain momentum by sharing and re-directing the work of the 'Clwb Ysgol' campaign by providing resources that could be used by pupils and their parents at home. The 'Clwb Cartef' sub-brand was established as a platform to share digital content such as videos of fun activities to do at home through the medium of Welsh e.g. P.E., cooking, singing and art lessons. These videos and resources were popular and well received by many schools. Alongside this, the 'Welsh in a Month' programme was created where a parent could start on a journey to learn Welsh with their children by following a series of fun challenges and videos. This programme was also well received and led to additional media interest.

School closure and social distancing measures prevented us as a region from visiting schools to support them with their plans and delivery of the Siarter Iaith. However, by the Autumn Term, that support was offered to schools via virtual meetings. As well as offering a level of support at a regional level, further support was provided by LA officers to ensure schools were able to maintain focus and momentum, and good practice was shared between schools and between LAs. The shift in the focus of the work also resulted in a greater demand for online resources. The ERW Siarter Iaith HWB network has been a popular and well used platform for a few years. However, in 2020-21 there was an increasing demand for new resources, and new resources were created and added to the site throughout the year. The resources were all well received by school and teachers. Building on this work, and in direct response to the greater focus on 'Cynefin' in Curriculum for Wales, a new website was developed by the region and LA colleagues to serve as a platform for a wide and varied collection of resources relating to Wales, the history of Wales, the Welsh language, and 'local history' with a range of ideas, and good practice to enable schools to plan lessons and projects which fit in with the concept of 'Cynefin' whilst also addressing elements of the Siarter Iaith framework. The 'Welsh Dimension' website will be launched in May 2021.

During the course of the year, termly meeting have been held with LA officers to share good practice and to ensure a consistent approach to the delivery of the Siarter Iaith across the region and to discuss strategic use of the Siarter Iaith grant. It was agreed that ERW would distribute grants to all LAs to enable them to focus on their local priorities and address the areas of need within their LA. Plans were agreed with all LAs, and although some activities were delayed due to school closure etc., it is foreseen that all activities will be completed in the Summer Term.

As a region we also participated fully with the ongoing discussions regarding the changes to the national framework. The evaluation of the framework has now been completed and the outcomes have been presented and the early stages of the rollout of the new framework has started.

3. Plan effectively in order to contribute to the delivery of the ‘Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy’

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Welsh Government formally amended the timescales for reviewing the Local Authorities’ Welsh in Education Strategic Plans to enable LAs to prioritise their support for schools. It was agreed that plans under the 2013 Regulations would continue to have effect until the LAs first ten year plans under the new 2020 Regulations would take effect. As a result, this aspect of the Business Plan has been put on hold. However, discussions regarding relevant aspects of the Plans e.g. language training for staff have been ongoing.

4. Develop the Welsh language proficiency of teachers and education assistants at different levels

Regular discussion have been held with the Sabbatical Scheme providers to confirm the varying programme of course, which have had to be changed and adapted during the course of the year due the COVID-19 pandemic, and social distancing measures. Most courses were cancelled or delayed due to these circumstances, whilst the delivery of other courses had to be changed, however the programme of courses for the Summer Term and 2021-22 has now been confirmed. There has also been collaboration with the National Centre for Learning Welsh which resulted in ‘taster’ language courses for teachers and leaders. The taster courses have been well received, and these taster courses developed by ERW colleagues are amongst the most popular taster courses offered by the Centre.

As a result of several discussions during the Autumn term, it was agreed to distribute grants to LAs to enable them to deliver their own programme of courses to support the development of the Welsh language proficiency of teachers and teaching assistants at different levels by taking a more localised approach, with the aim of addressing identified needs and doing so in a way that would be both practical and effective in addressing LA level priorities. Action plans were agreed with all LAs before the end of the Autumn Term, however a second national lockdown and school closure led to having to delay or adjust many of the original plans. It is now foreseen that the plans and the subsequent programmes will be delivered in the Summer Term.

Several new programmes and developments are now being discussed at a national level, and discussions regarding a mentoring programme for those who have recently completed Sabbatical courses is one of the priorities.

ERW effectiveness and efficiency

ERW will:

1. review its performance management processes
2. ensure that professional learning is appropriate and develops ERW staff's knowledge and expertise
3. align Business Planning more closely with the self-evaluation process
4. establish a coherent and well-understood process of self-evaluation and improvement
5. ensure a robust process of Business Planning monitoring underpinned by high quality first-hand evidence and high quality research
6. ensure that the self-evaluation process informs high quality impact reporting
7. ensure accountability is evidenced against the Business Plan success criteria.
8. ensure a high quality professional learning offer is provided for school during the summer term.

What will success look like?

Performance management cycle will be linked closely with Business Planning priorities and result in relevant, high quality professional learning opportunities for all staff. Business Planning will be clearly lined with self-evaluation and national priorities. A robust 90-day cycle of PM reviews and Business Planning monitoring, with first-hand evidence will be introduced. Business Planning monitoring will be reported by exception to JC at each JC meeting and a final evaluation report produced by the end of July each year. An annual impact report will be produced by the end of September each year. Case studies will evidence effective practice and value for money.

Schools will be provided with a professional learning offer during the summer term.

End of BP Evaluation:

All staff have set appropriate targets for the duration of the business plan. However, due to change in working practices throughout since March 2020, staff have had the opportunity to review and evaluate targets more frequently. This has ensured that central team targets have continued to be aligned with the business plan but also be adapted as appropriately. For example, a target linked to in school support has not been feasible during this period and this will have been adapted to reflect remote circumstances. A 90-day review period has been successfully built in to the process to ensure interim progress checks.

A minority of central team staff have completed coaching and mentoring sessions delivered by two separate providers. The models of training enable effective training of a significant number of colleagues and will enable most of central team staff access to training. Further significant opportunities are being developed to enable staff to complete Level 3 accreditation.

A limited range of PL opportunities have been undertaken by nearly all staff. For example, Welsh courses have been reconvened during the Covid-19 Pandemic and are delivered effectively via remote means. Additional training is available through central team events and challenge adviser training. However, budget cuts have resulted in the staff PL budget being reduced. A few staff have accessed additional training through strategy group budgets to ensure delivery of the business plan. These spending plans are approved by each strategy group to ensure consistency.

Work is progressing in reviewing the ERW vision and ensure stakeholders are fully engaged in the process of contributing to the rationale, aims and objectives of the new organisation from September 2021.

Business plan monitoring routines are now well established and business plan leads, in collaboration with team members, update the monitoring spreadsheet as part of the 90-day review cycle. This enables leads to share the progress in achieving the business plan with the relevant strategy and stakeholder groups. The business plan and monitoring processes were both approved during the Joint Committee meeting in November 2020. The (B)RAG rating overview ensures any areas at risk of not being completed are easily identified and addressed in a timely fashion and updates are given to HTRB/Exec Board/Joint Committee.

The ERW PL learning offer was launched as a Google Site in autumn 2020 and captures a range of professional learning opportunities for leaders and practitioners across the region. The site is available to schools through a card in Dolen and has been promoted extensively through our newsletters and through Twitter. The offer has been shared across stakeholder groups and has been well received.

The site has a range of synchronous and asynchronous professional learning and is regularly updated to ensure high quality support for schools and practitioners across the region.

ERW Officer support

(April 2020 – March 2021)

During the Financial Year 2020/2021, ERW officers engaged with schools across the whole region, providing the equivalent of 5,462.5 days of support. The table below provides a breakdown per LA, of number and percentage of schools where support has been provided by ERW officers during this period.

	Number of schools per LA	Number of schools where support was provided by ERW officers*	% of schools supported
Carmarthenshire	112	112	100%
Ceredigion	44	41	93%
Pembrokeshire	62	62	100%
Powys	92	92	100%
Swansea	94	89	95%

*source: ERW Support Log

The following table shows the number of days delivered against each focus area, as recorded in the ERW Support Log.

Focus Areas recorded in ERW Support Log	Support days delivered*
Curriculum for Wales	3,275.3 days
Secondary Support	1,047 days
Health and Well-being AoLE	306.5 days
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	735 days
Leadership	464.5 days
Leadership and management	1,038.5 days
Teaching and learning experiences	4,921 days
Digital Learning	583.5 days
Standards	685 days

*source: ERW Support Log

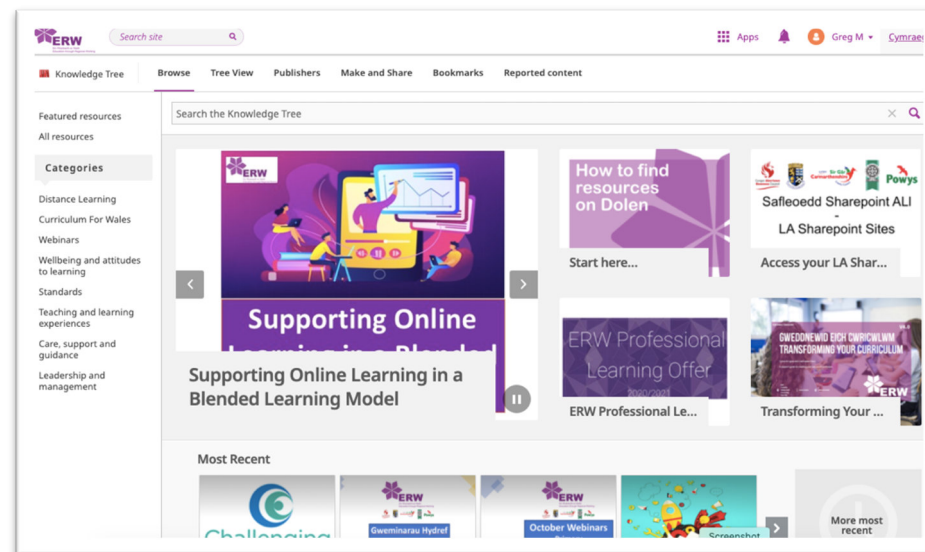
Communications

Newsletter

ERW published a newsletter every Thursday of school term time, which was issued to school leaders in all settings across the region. It was also available to anyone who subscribed to the newsletter via the ERW website. The content has focused on ERW guidance and support for Distance Learning, Blended Learning and wellbeing of staff and pupils. The overarching themes covered include support for Curriculum for Wales, Secondary curriculum and qualifications, Professional Learning, Digital support (including the Hwb toolset), middle and senior leadership, vulnerable learners, NQTs and HLTAs. The newsletter also communicated Welsh Government Covid-19 guidance and Continuity of Learning Plan to all schools. Support material created by ERW officers and referred to in the newsletter is accessible via ERW's digital platform, Dolen.

Dolen

Over 276 new resources have been produced and published on Dolen since March 2020 with a number of resources being accessed more than 2500 times .



Twitter - @ERWCymru

Followers	4,784
Tweets (average monthly) The number of Tweets published by @ERWCymru	58
Tweet Impressions (average monthly) The number of times people have seen the Tweets	80,000+
Profile visits (average monthly) The number of times users visited our Twitter profile page.	2,500+

Links

ERW Website

<https://www.erw.wales/>

Dolen <https://porth.erw-rhwyd.cymru/repository?redirectedFrom=Hwb>

ERW Professional Learning Offer

<https://sites.google.com/hwbcymru.net/erwpl/home-english>



ERW Business Plan

April-August 2021

ERW Business Plan

April-August 2021

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Section 1: Our context and provision

ERW is one of four regional education consortia in Wales. Its purpose is to deliver a single consistent and integrated professional school improvement service across the four local authorities.

The national model for school improvement in Wales is based on a vision of regional school improvement consortia working on behalf of local authorities to lead and coordinate the improvement in the performance of schools and education of young people.

ERW officers play a key role in a range of strategic groups with Welsh Government as well as cross-regional project groups. This allows central team staff to contribute and collaborate on a national level and ensure all stakeholders are fully informed and supported to deliver these priorities.

Unlike the other three regional consortia, challenge advisers and school improvement officers are employed by the local authorities. A close working relationship and school support co-ordinated through an agreed protocol between Senior Challenge Advisers and ERW Central Team.

ERW'S AIMS

- Improve the quality of leadership and its impact on outcomes.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning experiences and its impact on outcomes.
- Reduce the impact of poverty on attainment, support vulnerable learners and ensure all learners reach their potential
- Deliver high quality and bespoke support, challenge and intervention to schools
- Communicate effectively with all stakeholders

ERW's VALUES

To achieve our vision, we have defined values to guide all we do at ERW. These include:

- Effectiveness
- Commitment
- Integrity
- Innovation
- Collaboration

ERW utilises a wide range of flexible approaches so that bespoke solutions can be used to support schools at their point of need. We support teachers through the provision and brokering of professional learning programmes to support individuals in their leadership journey whilst building expertise and capacity where and when it is needed in schools across the region.

Business Plan

The ERW Business Plan aligns and reflects that aspirations and enabling objectives of Our National Mission, whilst reflecting local and regional priorities. These are:

- 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

Our Business Plan has been developed by using the outcomes of self-evaluation, research findings, cross-consortia planning as well as identification of school, local authority, regional and national priorities. A wide range of stakeholders have contributed and been consulted on the development of the plan prior to publication.

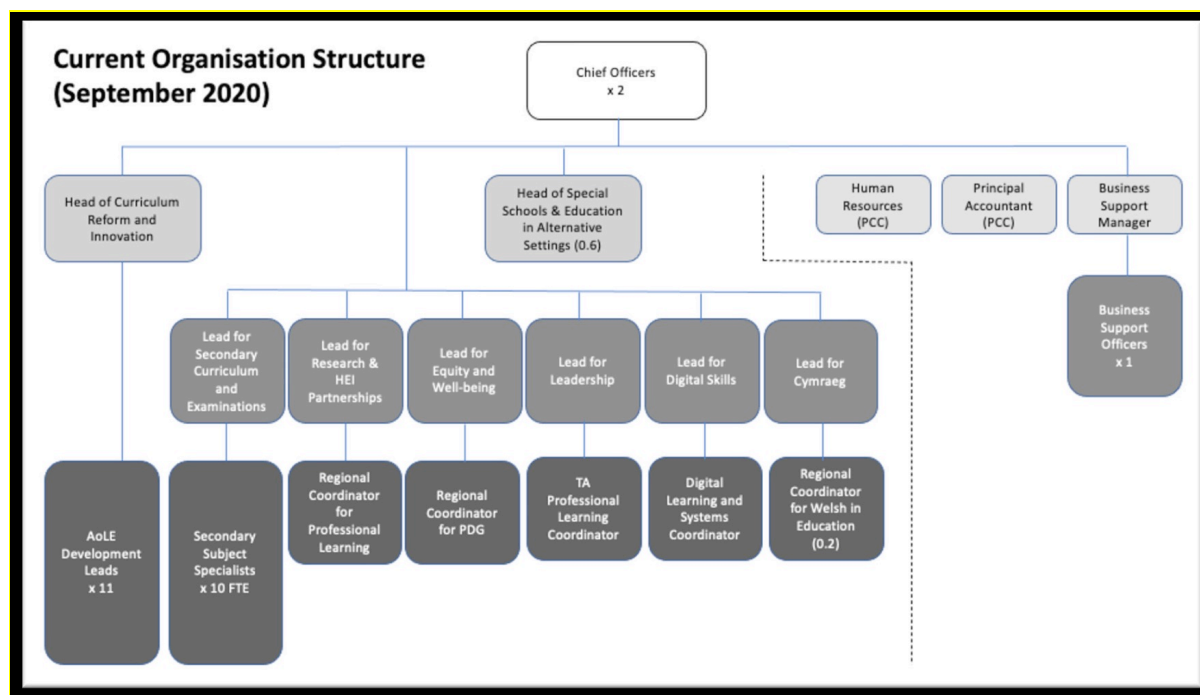
These include:

- Directors of Education
- ERW Joint Committee & Executive Board
- Staff in the ERW central team
- Headteacher Reference Board
- ERW Strategy Groups

This Business Plan will be formally agreed by the Directors of Education or Chief Education Officer of each Local Authority, the Joint Committee and the Lead Chief Executive.

This interim Business Plan is designed to meet the priorities of schools, partner local authorities and Welsh Government between April and August 2021.

Section 2: ERW Overview



Governance

ERW is governed by a legally constituted Joint Committee whose membership is made up of four of the local authority Leaders in South-West and Mid-Wales (Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Swansea). ERW's Joint Committee is advised by the Executive Board which is made up of the four local authority Directors of Education in the region along with external school improvement experts, headteacher representatives and ERW's Chief Officers.

The Executive Board is responsible for monitoring and evaluating ERW's work, in particular through the work of the ERW Strategy Groups.

The ERW Strategy Groups are a critical aspect of ERW's governance arrangements. They are the primary driver for developing ERW's work in the key areas of:

- Curriculum (including qualifications)
- Professional Learning and Research
- Equity and Well-being
- Leadership
- Digital Skills
- Welsh

NB The work to support special schools and alternative settings is reflected across the strategy groups.

Each Strategy Group is responsible for co-constructing content and monitoring the progress of the aspect of Business Plan actions for which they are responsible.

While it is accepted that the context and setting of each Local Authority in ERW is different, the purpose of collaborating on a regional level is to achieve a greater scale of economy through co-

operation. Whilst changes and innovations can be incorporated to take into account local priorities or differences, there must remain a degree of regional consistency.

The Strategy Groups are a conduit for communication between the region and peers within the constituent Local Authority, and the wider profession. Group members are tasked with communicating their work externally, by using both local and regional communications channels.

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Finance

ERW uses all available funding to support the priorities identified by schools, local authorities, regions and Welsh Government within the Business Plan. The underlying principle is that delegation to schools should be as high as possible.

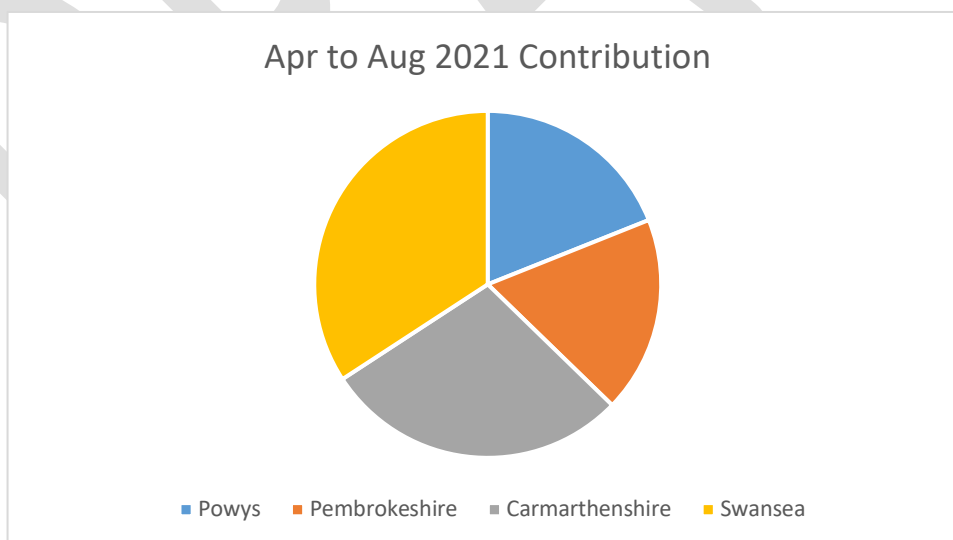
Local Authority funding for Consortium working is underpinned by the National Model for Regional Working, published by the Welsh Government in 2014. The model recommended a core funding allocation of £5.4m for the Consortium.

Financial Overview

Local Authority Contributions	Grant Funding for National Priorities	Total Funding Available
2019-20 - £0.3m*	£68.4m	£68.7m
2020-21 - £0.5m**	£58.4m	£58.9m
April 21 – August 21 - £0.2m	£1.1m	£1.3m

The interim funding between April and August 2021 has been established to ensure stability of ERW central team and to enable the realisation of the priorities in the interim Business Plan as well as supporting national and cross-regional priorities.

Interim arrangements have been implemented between April and August 2021. The contributions of each LA is outlined below and was agreed in the additional Joint Committee on 30/3/21.



Historically there were two main grants received by ERW from Welsh Government. Pupil Development Grant (PDG) and the Education Improvement Grant (EIG). In addition, consortia used to receive additional grants for specific purposes proposed by Welsh Government, usually through the Regional School Support Grant (RSSG). With the launch of the national strategy 'Education in Wales: Our National Mission', there has been a streamlining of the grant funding process.

Interim measures have been agreed between WG and Directors of Education to enable funding to go directly to the LAs and then contributions to support ERW central team staffing costs and delivery of the BP between April and August 2021. This was ratified by Joint Committee on 30th March 2021.

Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant

Historically, the main grant received by regional consortia to support national school improvement priorities is the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG). This grant now incorporates the former Education Improvement Grant (EIG) and Raising School Standards Grant.

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Pupil Development Grant

The Pupil Development Grant was launched in 2012 and provides additional funding to schools based upon the number of pupils on their roll eligible for Free School Meals or who are Looked After Children. As with the RCSIG, this funding will be disaggregated and distributed directly to the Local Authorities.

For April to August 2021, the Pupil Development Grant is split into two main elements and will be allocated as follows:

- 10% of the Looked After Children for a pro-rated 5 month period will be paid into ERW from the four Local Authorities to provide professional learning opportunities across the region to support previously looked after children;
- A further element will be paid into the Consortia to fund the position of the PDG Coordinator

The funding for the Pupil Development Grant is still to be confirmed for 2021-22.

DRAFT

Section 3: Tier 1 - Statements of Intent and What Success Will Look Like

The ERW Business Plan Tier 1 content sets out our headline 'Statements of Intent' and 'What success will look like.'

All areas of activity noted are for implementation in the interim period April-August 2021. Each element of the plan is aligned directly to our key strategy and delivery model of 'ERW Strategy Groups.'

The model is designed to ensure:

- clarity and understanding of ERW provision for all schools
- milestones for effective monitoring and evaluation
- review systems at regular intervals (undertaken by key partners)

ERW officers will continue to play a key part in delivering the national priorities through attending a full range of meetings at a national level. This includes cross-regional groups as well as regular attendance at meetings with Welsh Government and other partners. This allows ERW officers to shape the national agenda and ensure that schools continue to be well informed and supported effectively.

Officers will also support the emerging work around the post-Covid 'Learning Forward' agenda. When plans are finalised by Welsh Government, the ERW BP will be reviewed to ensure that priorities continue to be supported and delivered in each area of the BP. Particular focus will be given to sharing good practice and developing PL targeted to support those learners most impacted by the pandemic:

- **Vulnerable and disadvantaged learners**
- **Learners with ALN**
- **Early years**
- **Qualification years including post-16 learners**

Curriculum Strategy Group

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. realise the school vision and aspiration for every child to embody the four purposes
2. be designers of their own inclusive, authentic and meaningful curriculum
3. develop the effective and varied use of pedagogy using evidence-based inquiry approaches to strengthen learning, teaching and assessment
4. be informed of developments in qualifications and assessments
5. collaborate within and between settings to develop and share their thinking
6. deliver appropriate support for the 'Learning Forward' agenda post-Covid19

What Will Success Look Like?

Across the region, all schools, settings and school improvement staff will have developed a secure understanding of curriculum design as they continue to create a unique and accessible curriculum for their learners evolving needs. Leaders and practitioners will engage in informed professional learning opportunities, which enable them to use their teaching agency and creativity to help realise their school's curriculum, support learner progression towards the four purposes and ensure the wellbeing of all learners. In addition, leaders will have, in partnership, provided time and space for teachers to develop pedagogy, curriculum design and approaches to assessment. This includes opportunities to share innovative and effective practice with others, engage with experts, and collaborate in networks to support the development and understanding of a co-constructed curriculum. They actively connect with national strategies to reflect an integrated approach to wider reform and changing social priorities.

In secondary schools, all departments and schools will have a secure and up to date knowledge of qualifications and assessments. Schools will have a clear awareness of the importance of teaching and learning and its impact on provision and curriculum design. Individually identified departments will have benefitted from a bespoke package of support to develop teaching, learning and leadership. Leaders and staff will be provided with regular professional learning opportunities and will collaborate within and between other settings effectively. Schools and settings will develop meaningful, evidence informed professional learning opportunities which allow practitioners to explore pedagogical approaches, for classroom and home learning, to support progression for all their learners.

Success will also take into account the ERW response to the emerging post-Covid 19 'Learning Forward' agenda.

Professional Learning and Research Strategy Group

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. engage with a national professional learning offer, appropriate to the individual's role, to enhance their skills, improve their teaching, knowledge and career progression
2. collaborate with higher education institutions to make effective use of high- quality research as part of the National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry in order to critically evaluate approaches to recovery
3. use the professional standards to identify areas for professional learning to improve practice and develop themselves as learning organisations
4. engage with professional learning that promotes inclusivity and equity
5. engage with professional learning and research to support the 'Learning Forward' agenda
6. respond to the specific developmental needs of schools from the partner local authorities.

What will success look like?

Across the region, all schools and settings will have the opportunity to engage in a national professional learning offer appropriate to their role. Where settings engage with this offer they will be equipped to manage recovery and ready for introducing Curriculum for Wales 2022 having received support in managing change, engaging all stakeholders in developing a vision for their context as well as planning a curriculum that suits them with a workforce who have been given time and space for professional learning. Pedagogy will be a strong focus in all schools with particular emphasis given to developing the pedagogies most suited to remote asynchronous learning design. Support will be provided for schools to develop pedagogies for recovery to move them beyond Covid in readiness for Curriculum for Wales. ERW will continue to work with Welsh Government on the National Pedagogy Project. Many schools will have had the opportunity to develop links with HEI partners to develop themselves as research informed, reflective practitioners through Initial Teacher Education partnerships and as part of the National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry. All professional learning will be in line with the professional standards for teaching and leadership and many schools will be using the results of the Schools as a Learning Organisation survey to inform their planning for improvement. Professional learning programmes will consider the needs of all learners, including those with additional learning needs. Professional learning programmes will consider the needs of all learners, including those with additional learning needs. Programmes to be informed by self - evaluation priorities from partner LAs. Success will also take into account the ERW response to the emerging post-Covid 19 'Learning Forward' agenda.

Equity and Well-being Strategy Group

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. develop an understanding of why some learners find it difficult to positively engage with the social, emotional and cognitive aspects of school life in order to inform policies, processes and pedagogy which drive towards equity and well-being
2. identify and embed universal provision which promote equity and support the 'Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being'
3. Identify and embed targeted provision which promote equity and support the 'Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being'
4. design and deliver the health and well-being area of the curriculum aligning it to the 'Framework for embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being'
5. be informed and prepared for the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act in order to implement in September 2021

What will success look like?

Across the region all educational settings will have had opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of the impact of Covid 19 on the emotional and mental health of their learners and of the universal approaches which can support in this area. All schools and settings will have opportunities to engage in professional learning to deepen their understanding of how to embed a whole school approach to emotional and mental well-being. All educational settings will have had opportunities to develop an initial needs analysis methodology for designing the health and well-being area of learning and experience. Schools, settings and school improvement staff will have clear and consistent guidance on effective use of PDG and PDGLAC. All schools and settings will have been provided with relevant information and training to help them implement the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act in September 2021.

Success will also take into account the ERW response to the emerging post-Covid 19 'Learning Forward' agenda.

Leadership Strategy Group:

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. access a high-quality, extensive portfolio of leadership development opportunities at every stage of the Professional Leadership Pathway including national Coaching & Mentoring Programme
2. utilise the Professional Standards in order to develop and lead effective learning organisations
3. access a high quality, portfolio of development opportunities at each stage of the Teaching Assistant Learning Pathway (TALP) including accreditation for Higher Level Teaching Assistants

What will success look like?

National Leadership programmes accredited by the NAEL will be accessible to all leaders and delivered successfully across the region. A regional system of identification, tracking and professional learning support for aspirational leaders will be implemented enabling leaders to secure timely professional learning opportunities and experiences allowing LA to monitor effective succession planning. System leader opportunities including Facilitator and leadership Coach will be available to school leaders ensuring programmes are delivered by credible school-based personnel. Continuous quality assurance and evaluation of both resources and delivery will ensure quality of delivery and appropriate updating of resources are secured.

Professional Learning for Teaching Assistants including HLTA Assessment and opportunity for Specialised TA's will be available to all TA's across the region. Promotion, facilitation and delivery TALP programmes by school-based personnel will ensure their effective and credible delivery. An effective Aspiring HLTA programme and HLTA Assessment process will be available across the region.

Success will also take into account the ERW response to the emerging post-Covid 19 'Learning Forward' agenda.

Digital Skills Group

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. develop leadership of Digital Learning
2. ensure Online Safety, across all stakeholders is as robust as possible
3. develop digital competence as a cross-curricular skill, in line with Curriculum for Wales and DCF
4. support schools to refine and improve online/blended learning practice and develop digital skills to evaluate practice and support the 'Learning Forward' agenda
5. share effective practice in the use of digital technology, both in the classroom and as a management and collaboration tool for staff

What will success look like?

Leaders from all settings across the region will have had opportunities to receive support in developing their strategic approach to the use of digital learning both within the setting environment and also through an online/blended learning approach. This support will include the creation of a clear vision for their setting, involving, and being shared with, all relevant stakeholders – supported by the new 360 Digi Cymru and DPLJ resource. Staff will be able to access relevant and up to date information regarding Online Safety to ensure all stakeholders in their setting are as safe online as possible. Support in engaging with the 360 degrees Safe Cymru online safety framework will have been made available to all settings that require it. Support for the development of digital competence will have been identified and brokered by Challenge Advisers. This support will have been delivered by relevant ERW or LA colleagues as well as utilising the school-to-school model. A Regional Digital Learning Event, a series of ERW Digi-Meets and online training materials will have given settings the opportunity to share examples of good practice in the development of digital competence in line with Curriculum for Wales principles. Further examples of good practice will have been made available to all members of staff in ERW schools via Dolen.

Success will also take into account the ERW response to the emerging post-Covid 19 'Learning Forward' agenda.

Cymraeg – Welsh Strategy Group

ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:

1. deliver current and future curriculum to support improvement in the teaching of Welsh as a language, and of teaching through the medium of Welsh as a whole;
2. Strengthen as bilingual communities by promoting Welsh and increasing the use of Welsh in an informal context;
3. plan effectively in order to contribute to the delivery of the 'Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy'
4. develop the Welsh language proficiency of teachers and education assistants at different levels
5. deliver the 'Learning Forward' agenda with a particular focus on pupils who have less contact with the Welsh language outside of the classroom.

What will success look like?

Centrally, the region will have a high-level strategy with clearly defined priorities for the work of developing and supporting Welsh in education. Schools will be actively engaged with the aims of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy, the region's Welsh in Education Strategy and the Local Authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

Good practice will be further developed and shared to ensure effective pedagogy and methodology for teaching and learning Welsh, and through the medium of Welsh based on research and identified best practice. A full and varied programme of training courses, workshops and network meetings will be delivered and co-ordinated at a regional level, and new resources will be developed and shared across the region in response to identified needs. School to school work, and cross-regional work will also continue to be important.

All schools will be actively engaged with their own work in developing the Welsh Language Charter Framework in line with the most recent developments in the national Welsh Language Charter Framework. All schools will be ambitious in their targets, and will monitor progress internally throughout the year and will include the targets in their School Development Plans.

The region will support a programme of professional learning to develop practitioners' Welsh skills and expertise when teaching Welsh and through the medium of Welsh, in line with the criteria / principles of the National Professional Learning Model. ERW will work with external providers, including the regional Welsh Language Sabbatical Course providers, the National Centre for Learning Welsh and all Local Authorities within the region to develop the Welsh language proficiency of teachers and education assistants at different levels. ERW will support schools and LAs to identify training needs, and seek to address those needs by ensuring the profession has access to suitable high-quality professional learning opportunities to develop their Welsh language skills.

Success will also take into account the ERW response to the emerging post-Covid 19 'Learning Forward' agenda, by seeking to ensure that particular areas of need are supported.

ERW effectiveness and efficiency

ERW will:

1. review its performance management processes
2. ensure that professional learning is appropriate and develops ERW staff's knowledge and expertise
3. review and ensure coherent and well-understood process of self-evaluation and improvement
4. ensure a robust process of Business Planning monitoring underpinned by high quality first-hand evidence and high-quality research
5. ensure that the monitoring process informs high quality self-evaluation
6. ensure accountability is evidenced against the Business Plan success criteria.
7. ensure a high-quality professional learning offer is reviewed and updated for the summer term 2021 with a focus on the Learning Forward agenda

What will success look like?

Performance management cycle will be linked closely with Business Planning priorities and result in relevant, high-quality professional learning opportunities for all staff. Business Planning will be clearly lined with self-evaluation and national priorities. A robust 90-day cycle of PM reviews and Business Planning monitoring, with first-hand evidence will continue. Business Planning monitoring will be reported by exception to JC at each JC meeting and a final evaluation report produced by the end of May each year. Case studies will evidence effective practice and value for money.

Schools will be provided with a professional learning offer during the summer term and this will cover the 6 key areas of the BP.

Success will also take into account the ERW response to the emerging post-Covid 19 'Learning Forward' agenda.

Section 4: Tier 2 - Operational Plans
(Content delivery & budget costs)

Curriculum Strategy Group: Operational Plan			
Plan Owner:	Curriculum Strategy Group		
Strategy Group Members:	Aeron Rees (Chair, Carmarthenshire) Donna Caswell (Primary Head, Swansea) Daniel Owen (Secondary Head, Powys) Sian Rowles (Chad, Pembrokeshire) Anthony Jones, Anna Bolt (ERW)		
ERW Supporting Officer/s	Anna Bolt / Anthony Jones		
Budget			
Statements of Intent			
<p>ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. realise the school vision and aspiration for every child to embody the four purposes 2. be designers of their own inclusive, authentic and meaningful curriculum 3. develop the effective and varied use of pedagogy using evidence-based inquiry approaches to strengthen learning, teaching and assessment 4. be informed of developments in qualifications and assessments 5. collaborate within and between settings to develop and share their thinking 6. deliver appropriate support for the 'Learning Forward' agenda post-Covid19 			
How will we achieve this?	Responsible Officer/s	Timescale	Budget
<p>1. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to realise the school vision and aspiration for every child to embody the four purposes through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional opportunities for leaders to engage with experts • Space and time for collaboration with colleagues • Support for Challenge Advisers to develop dialogue with schools and settings • Online resources supporting schools and settings to explore and evaluate emerging practice associated with the four purposes 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with LA strategy groups, Challenge Advisers and cross-regional strategy groups to ensure consistency of expectation • Professional development offer to include cluster and school Inset, twilight sessions, meetings with key staff, departments and assistance with planning training/advice • Sharing practice from identified schools 			
<p>2. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to be designers of their own inclusive, authentic and meaningful curriculum through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops for Leaders/middle leaders/curriculum leads providing support and opportunities to collaborate • A programme of support for each aspect of curriculum design with a particular focus on moving from the vision to the classroom. • Resources to support schools in planning their own professional learning • Collaboration with LA strategy groups, Challenge Advisers and cross-region strategy groups to share practice. • Partnership working with Challenge Advisers in relation to support and evaluation and identification of strengths and needs • Support for LAs planning development programmes for all schools and settings • Professional development offer to include regional and cross-regional events, cluster and school Inset, twilight sessions, meetings with key staff and assistance with planning training/advice/evaluation • Sharing practice from identified schools • Keeping abreast of national updates and guidance • Funding external professional learning in aspects of design, programmes to support improving pedagogical approaches and school and settings to provide case studies 			
<p>3. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to develop the effective and varied use of pedagogy using inquiry approaches to strengthen learning, teaching and assessment through:</p>			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The availability of high-quality programmes, workshops and resources which support schools and settings to develop effective and inclusive approaches • The development of case studies to support school to school collaboration • A menu of support developed with professional learning sessions focused on effective learning, teaching and leadership. 			
<p>4.ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to remain abreast of qualification requirements and future reform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary Team to deliver network meetings to middle leaders. • Qualifications Wales/WJEC updates when appropriate in Network Meetings. • Support for teachers and middle leaders through bespoke support for identified departments. • Liaise with Challenge Advisers/Strategy Groups to ensure shared messages. • Support for non-specialist and new teachers through professional learning. • Menu of support developed for training/PL events 			
<p>5.ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to collaborate within and between settings to develop and share their thinking through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative events / updates regionally and locally • High quality school/setting to school/setting support to share best practice in pedagogy and assessment. • Sharing models of proven effective practice which demonstrates positive impact through a range of platforms including Dolen/Hwb. • Sharing models of schools with emerging messages and reflections on lessons learned • Providing opportunities to share/collaborate in secondary middle leader network meetings 			
<p>6.ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to deliver appropriate support for the ‘Learning Forward’ agenda post-Covid 19 through:</p>			

- Facilitating local engagement between and within schools
- Providing resources and professional learning opportunities for schools to directly support curriculum and assessment reform, including those which address diversity in curriculum reform (Diversity / Welsh histories including Black, Asian, Minority ethnic; RSE)
- Providing opportunities for collaborative working with other schools
- Providing opportunities which support the creation of time and space to design and plan.
- Providing support for the development of languages

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Professional learning and research Strategy Group : Operational Plan

Plan Owner	Professional learning & research Strategy Group		
Strategy Group Members:	Lynette Lovell (Director Powys LA) Elin Fosyth (SCA Carms) Ray McGovern (Secondary Head Pembs) Bev Phillips (Primary Head Swansea) Sally Llewellyn (ERW)		
ERW Supporting officer/s	Sally Llewellyn		
Budget			
Statements of Intent			
<p>ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> engage with a national professional learning offer, appropriate to the individual’s role, to enhance their skills, improve their teaching, knowledge and career progression promoting inclusivity and equity. collaborate with higher education institutions to make effective use of high- quality research as part of the National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry in order to critically evaluate approaches to recovery use the professional standards to identify areas for professional learning to improve practice and develop themselves as learning organisations engage with professional learning that promotes inclusivity and equity engage with professional learning and research to support the ‘Learning Forward’ agenda respond to the specific developmental needs of schools from the partner local authorities. 			
How will we achieve this?	Responsible Officer/s	Timescale	Budget
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to engage with a national professional learning offer, appropriate to the individual’s role, to enhance their skills, improve their teaching, knowledge and career progression promoting inclusivity and equity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a national PL offer for senior leaders that covers: Managing change, vision, curriculum design, making time and space for PL, leading pedagogy Write and deliver a national PL offer for middle leaders and teachers that covers: Curriculum for Wales 2022, using the planning guidance materials, long and medium term planning, cross-curricular skills, 			

<p>disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, progression, links within and across AoLEs, pedagogic content knowledge and assessment</p>			
<p>2. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to collaborate with higher education institutions to make effective use of high-quality research as part of the National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry in order to critically evaluate approaches to recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with HEI partners to deliver the National Strategy for Research and Enquiry. • Collaborate with ITE partnerships in Swansea, UWTSO and Aberystwyth to train lead ITE schools to develop research literacy in their schools and settings 			
<p>3. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to use the professional standards to identify areas for professional learning to improve practice and develop themselves as learning organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and monitor the use of the SLO survey for school improvement • Work with local authorities to develop understanding of SLO dimensions in embedded practice 			
<p>4. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are engaged with professional learning that promotes inclusivity and equity</p>			
<p>5. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to engage with professional learning and research to support the 'Learning Forward' agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver training on Remote Asynchronous Learning Design and capture practitioner reflections and assets for sharing with wider community. • As part of the Wales Collaboratory for Learning Design, to further develop practice relating to blended learning approaches. 			

<p>6. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to respond to the specific developmental needs of schools from the partner local authorities.</p>			

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Equity and Wellbeing Strategy Group – Operational Plan			
Plan Owner:	Equity and Wellbeing Strategy Group		
Team Members:	Gareth Morgans (Director, Carmarthenshire) James White (LA, Pembs) Amanda Taylor (Headteacher, Swansea) Sarah Groves (Headteacher, Powys) Cressy Morgan, Dylan Williams (ERW)		
ERW Supporting Officer/s	Cressy Morgan / Dylan Williams/ Sue Painter		
Budget			
Statements of Intent			
<p>ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. develop an understanding of the reasons why some learners may face challenges in the social, emotional and cognitive aspects of school life in order to inform policies, processes and pedagogy which drive towards equity and well-being 2. identify and embed universal provision which promote equity and support the 'Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being' 3. identify and embed targeted provision which promote equity and support the 'Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being' 4. design and deliver the health and well-being area of the curriculum ensuring that it aligns with the 'Framework for embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being' 5. be informed and prepared for the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act in order to implement in September 2021 			
How will we achieve this?	Responsible Officer/s	Timescale	Budget
1. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to develop an understanding of the reasons why some learners may face challenges in the social,			

<p>emotional and cognitive aspects of school life in order to inform policies, processes and pedagogy which drive towards equity and well-being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide professional learning opportunities and supporting materials on the impact of traumatic life experiences with a focus on the four purposes • Professional learning opportunities on how living in poverty can be a barrier to learning (RADY and Thinking Differently) • Develop and deliver professional learning opportunities to raise awareness of neurodiversity including: FASD, ADHD, sensory regulation • Design and deliver professional learning opportunities for early years practitioners on how the disruption caused by the pandemic has impacted on speech & language and physical development. (ELKLAN and SKIP) 			
<p>2. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to identify and embed universal provision which promote equity and support the 'Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop the network of Emotion Coaching accredited practitioners across the region • Continue to develop resources and networks on how to build positive peer-peer and learner-adult relationships • Continue to develop resources and networks on the benefits of being in, and learning, outdoors 			
<p>3. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to identify and embed targeted provision which promote equity and support the 'Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop and deliver attachment theory based training for practitioners working with ACE experienced learners eg relationship based play • Develop and deliver professional learning opportunities and materials to develop approaches to meet the needs of neuro diverse learners : FASD, ADHD, sensory regulation. • 			

<p>4. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to design and develop the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience making clear links to the 'Framework for embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver training, build networks and develop resources on physical literacy • Develop networks and supporting resources to offer a methodology for carrying out the initial needs analysis to identify health and wellbeing curriculum priorities and continue to collaborate with SHRN/ HAPPEN and WNHSS to do this • Continue to deliver and develop professional learning opportunities for wellbeing leads on core skills that evidence from positive psychology shows can be explicitly taught which promote : happiness, kindness, compassion, resilience and optimism (including empathy) 			
<p>5. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to be informed and prepared for the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act in order to implement in September 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to collaborate with regional ALN Transformation Lead and LA Inclusion Leads to update School Improvement Officers and ERW central team on ALN reform • Continue to collaborate with LA Inclusion services to provide updates and training for schools and settings on ALN reform and inclusive practice. 			

Leadership Strategy Group : Operational Plan			
Plan Owner:	Leadership Strategy Group		
Team Members:	Helen Morgan-Rees (Director, Swansea) Rhian Evans (HT Carwe, Carmarthenshire) Yan James (Chad, Powys) Amanda Lawrence (Headteacher Puncteston, Pembrokeshire) Tom Fanning (ERW)		
ERW Supporting Officer/s	Tom Fanning, Sarah Perdue, Heulwen Lloyd		
Budget			
Statements of Intent			
<p>ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access a high-quality, extensive portfolio of leadership development opportunities at every stage of the Professional Leadership Pathway including national Coaching & Mentoring Programme. 2. Utilise the Professional Standards in order to develop and lead effective learning organisations 3. Access a high quality, portfolio of development opportunities at each stage of the Teaching Assistant Learning Pathway (TALP) including accreditation for Higher Level Teaching Assistants 			
How will we achieve this?	Responsible Officer/s	Timescale	Budget
<p>1. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to Access a high-quality, extensive portfolio of leadership development opportunities at every stage of the Professional Leadership Pathway including national Coaching & Mentoring Programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to collaborate effectively with Cross Regional Leadership Group to ensure national programmes continue to be developed and delivered successfully across the region. • Deliver an extensive portfolio of leadership development opportunities for the regional education community at every stage of the Professional Leadership Pathway. 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Middle Leader Development Programme ○ Senior Leader Development Programme ○ Aspiring Headteacher Programme ○ NPQH Assessment Programme. ○ New and Acting Headteacher Programme. ○ Experienced Headteacher Development Programme. ○ National Coaching and Mentoring Programme. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with LAs to continue with the development and roll out of the national Coaching and Mentoring Programme. ● Work with Cross Regional Leadership Group and colleagues across regions to develop bespoke modules for Middle leader training including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Post 16 ○ special schools, PRUs and specialist settings ● Work with LAs to identify and encourage the development of future leaders across the region through tracking and engagement with Professional Leadership Pathway. ● Work with Cross Regional Leadership Group to secure endorsement by NAEL of the SLDP and any future national programmes. 			
<p>2. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to Utilise the Professional Standards in order to develop and lead effective learning organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with Cross Regional Leadership Group and LA to ensure that all professional learning opportunities support the vision of collaborative leadership and ensure participants reflection against the Professional Standards of Teaching and Leadership. 			
<p>3. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to access a high quality, portfolio of development opportunities at each stage of the Teaching Assistant Learning Pathway (TALP) including accreditation for Higher Level Teaching Assistants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to collaborate effectively with national Teaching Assistant Learning Pathway Group to ensure national programmes continue to be developed and delivered successfully across the region. 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and deliver a range of professional learning opportunities for the regional Teaching Assistant community including all national programmes at every stage of the TALP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National Teaching Assistant Induction Programme ○ National Practising Teaching Assistant Programme ○ National Aspiring HLTA Programme ○ National HLTA Assessment Programme. • Using a Train the Trainer model deliver the National Coaching and Mentoring Programme to a cohort from the ERW TALP delivery team. 			

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Digital Skills Strategy Group : Operational Plan

Plan Owner: Rob Walters	Digital Skills Strategy Group		
Strategy Group Members:	Stephen Richards-Downes (Director, Pembrokeshire) Mark Wakeley (Chad, Powys) Helen Burgum (Secondary Headteacher, Swansea) Adam Barnett (Primary Headteacher, Carmarthenshire) Rob Walters, Alun Parry, Caryl Lloyd (ERW)		
ERW Supporting Officer/s	Rob Walters, Alun Parry, Caryl Lloyd		
Budget			
Statements of Intent			
<p>ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. develop leadership of Digital Learning 2. ensure Online Safety, across all stakeholders is as robust as possible 3. develop digital competence as a cross-curricular skill, in line with Curriculum for Wales and DCF 4. support schools to refine and improve online/blended learning practice and develop digital skills to evaluate practice and support the 'Learning Forward' agenda 5. share effective practice in the use of digital technology, both in the classroom and as a management and collaboration tool for staff 			
How will we achieve this?	Responsible Officer/s	Timescale	Budget
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to develop leadership of Digital Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the new Digital Professional Learning Journey material. • Support schools with engagement of the new Digital Learning Self-Evaluation Tool. • Create resources to support schools, these to also be added to DPLJ support area on Hwb. • Promote collaboration to assist leaders with their strategic planning for digital learning. 			

<p>2. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to ensure Online Safety, across all stakeholders is as robust as possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for schools to engage with online 360 Safe Cymru tool and create strategic plans to develop online safety. • Provide updates on current online safety trends. • Signpost schools to relevant Online Safety resources for all stakeholders, via Dolen. 			
<p>3. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to develop digital competence as a cross-curricular skill, in line with Curriculum for Wales and DCF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with schools to develop resources to support cross curricular implementation of the DCF (ensuring these resources are created considering principles of new curriculum). • Collaborate with LAs to identify local need and suitable schools to provide support, ensuring schools have the capacity to deliver. • Create resources to showcase how effective use of Hwb tools develop DCF skills. • Promote cluster digital partnerships to develop consistency of progression. 			
<p>4. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to support schools to refine and improve online/blended learning practice and develop digital skills to evaluate practice and support the ‘Learning Forward’ agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create case studies from a range of schools and settings to highlight best practice. • Create resources on effective Hwb tools to facilitate blended learning • Review online/blended learning practice and share findings. 			
<p>5. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to share effective practice in the use of digital technology, both in the classroom and as a management and collaboration tool for staff</p>			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate a series of ERW Digi Meets/Webinars providing schools with the opportunity to share effective practice. • To facilitate a Regional Digital Learning Event providing schools with the opportunity to showcase effective practice in the use of digital technology with schools across the region. • To share examples of practice worthy of sharing online, via Dolen. 			

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Welsh Strategy Group – Operational Plan

Plan Owner:	Welsh Strategy Group
Team Members:	Helen Morgan Rees (Director, Swansea) Geoff Evans (Cadeirydd, Secondary Headteacher, Carmarthenshire) Sara Davies (Headteacher, Powys) Gwennan Schiavone (ERW)
ERW Supporting Officer/s	Gwennan Schiavone, Rhodri Sion, Tina Thomas, Lowri Davies
Budget	

Statements of Intent

Statements of Intent	<p>ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. deliver current and future curriculum to support improvement in the teaching of Welsh as a language, and of teaching through the medium of Welsh as a whole; 2. Strengthen as bilingual communities by promoting Welsh and increasing the use of Welsh in an informal context; 3. plan effectively in order to contribute to the delivery of the ‘Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy’ 4. develop the Welsh language proficiency of teachers and education assistants at different levels 5. deliver the ‘Learning Forward’ agenda with a particular focus on pupils who receive their education through the medium of Welsh who come from English speaking homes
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How will we achieve this?	Responsible Officer/s	Timescale	Budget
<p>1. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to deliver current and future curriculum to support improvement in the teaching of Welsh as a language, and of teaching through the medium of Welsh as a whole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate cross county networks to share good practice and develop and share resources. • Contribute to the work of the cross-regional networks to develop educational resources across all key stages. • Secondary subject specialists to support the region’s Welsh departments by departmental support / visits, and by facilitating network meetings, regional training and school to school support where appropriate. 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop educational resources to support the teaching of Welsh as a subject in the secondary sector. • Develop educational resources and where possible, support the teaching of Welsh and through the medium of Welsh in the primary sector. • Collect and share case studies of good practice in the teaching of Welsh and through the medium of Welsh across the region. • Work in partnership with 'Talk for Writing' to co-ordinate a Welsh medium approach and bank of resources for Welsh medium settings. • Develop work around 'Geiriau Diflanedig' in collaboration with Mererid Hopwood, following the success of 'Lost for Words' to develop literacy in English. • Collaborate with the National Centre for Learning Welsh on a project to adapt and develop new resources to support the teaching of Welsh in the secondary sector. 			
<p>2. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to strengthen schools as bilingual communities by promoting Welsh and increase the use of Welsh in an informal context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the strategic development of the Siarter Iaith at a national level in collaboration with Welsh Government officers and regional Welsh in Education leads. • Facilitate the delivery of the Siarter Iaith across the region and plan the strategic use of the Siarter Iaith Grant. • Promote and support the delivery of the Siarter Iaith in primary and secondary schools across the region. • Facilitate termly Siarter Iaith meetings with county Welsh in Education officers / Siarter Iaith officers to share good practice and develop a regional approach to the development and delivery of the Siarter Iaith. • Participate in national / cross-regional meetings with Siarter Iaith officers to share best practice and to share and develop new resources. • Develop new resources to promote and support the delivery of the Siarter Iaith. • Monitor the delivery of the Siarter Iaith programme, and the use of the Siarter Iaith grant across the region. 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a regional campaign to promote Welsh language education and bilingualism as a skill, building on the Clwb Ysgol initiative. 			
<p>3. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to plan effectively in order to contribute to the delivery of the ‘Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Welsh Government officers and Leads for Welsh in Education in other regions to ensure that the region is fully engaged with the national agenda, and able to communicate national priorities at a regional level. • Regular meetings with LA officers will ensure effective communication at a regional level, and ensure that key messages from the Welsh Government are communicated effectively within the region. 			
<p>4. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to support and develop the Welsh language proficiency of teachers and education assistants at different levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Welsh Government officers on national priorities and programmes to develop the Welsh language proficiency of teachers and education assistants, and support and promote the delivery of such programmes. • Work with the Sabbatical Scheme providers in the region and collaborate on future provision. • Promote the Taster Welsh Language courses developed by ERW officers and the National Centre for Learning Welsh to teachers / teaching assistants / and headteachers. • Work with Welsh Government, the Sabbatical Scheme Provers, and LA Welsh in Education Officers to develop and deliver a support programme for those who have recently completed Sabbatical courses at different levels. 			
<p>5. ERW will ensure that all schools and settings are supported to deliver the ‘Learning Forward’ agenda with a particular focus on pupils who receive their education through the medium of Welsh who come from English speaking homes</p>			



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ERW Effectiveness and Efficiency – Operational Plan			
Plan Owner:		Ian Altman/Greg Morgan	
Team Members:		Anna Bolt, Sue Painter, Greg Morgan, Tom Fanning, Cressy Morgan, Sally Llewellyn, Gwennan Schiavone, Ian Altman, Helen Lewis, Ruth Lee, Rob Walters, Anthony Jones	
ERW Supporting Officer/s		Central Team	
Statements of Intent			
Statements of Intent	<p>ERW Chief Officers will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. review its performance management processes 2. ensure that professional learning is appropriate and develops ERW staff's knowledge and expertise 3. review and ensure coherent and well-understood process of self-evaluation and improvement 4. ensure a robust process of Business Planning monitoring underpinned by high quality first-hand evidence and high-quality research 5. ensure that the monitoring process informs high quality self-evaluation 6. ensure accountability is evidenced against the Business Plan success criteria 7. ensure a high-quality professional learning offer is reviewed and updated for the summer term 2021 with a focus on the 'Learning Forward' agenda 		
	How will we achieve this?	Responsible Officer/s	Timescale
<p>1. ERW Chief Officers will review its performance management processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim performance management cycle will be linked closely with Business Planning priorities, as well as identify individuals' professional learning needs. • The performance Management cycle will align with the Business Plan cycle – 1.4.21 – 31.8.21 • The PM cycle will include a cycle of 90-day 1:1 meetings 			

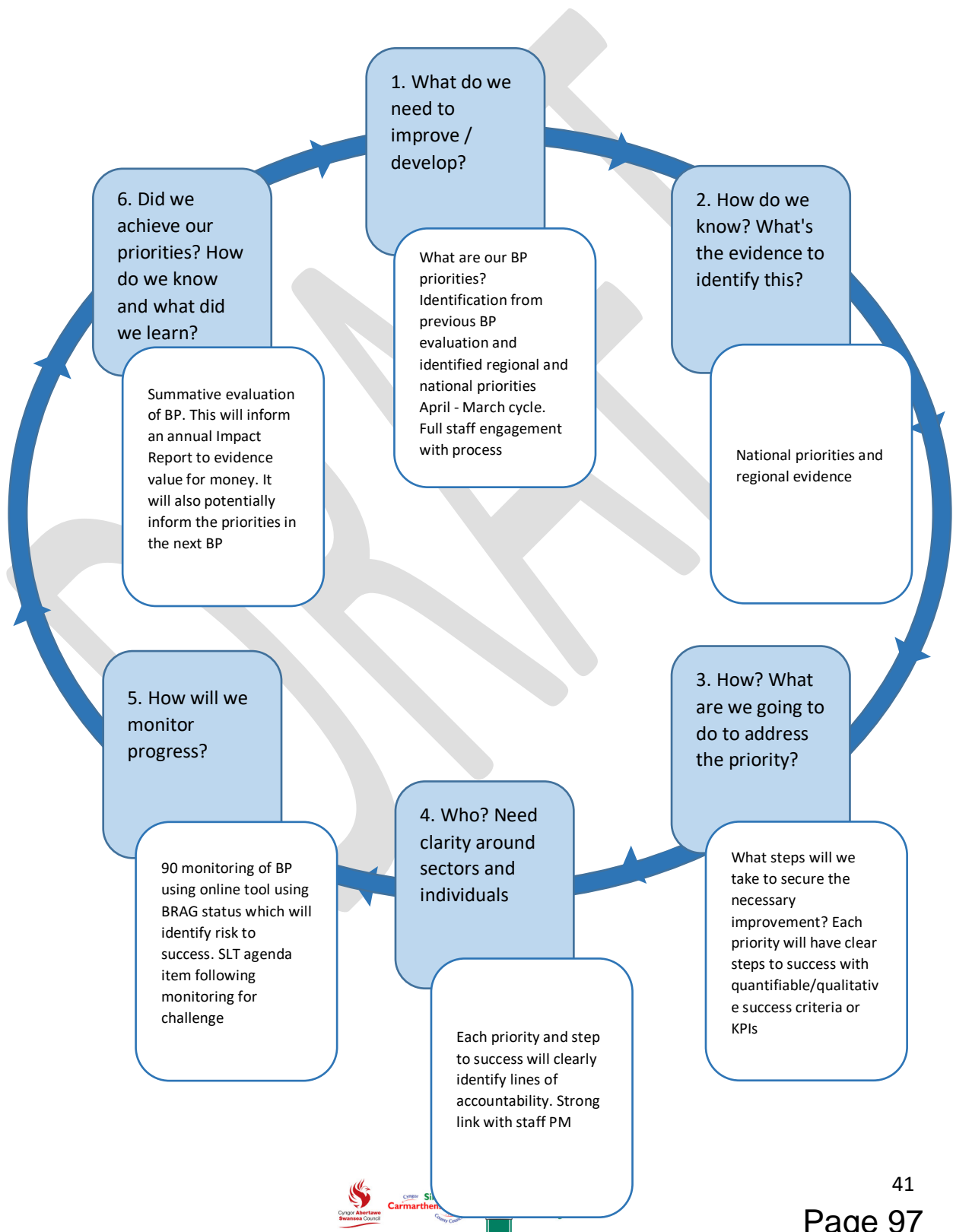
<p>2. ERW Chief Officers will ensure that professional learning is appropriate and develops ERW staff's knowledge and expertise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every member of ERW central team staff will have opportunities for regular reflection, with feedback to support improvement. Staff will be encouraged to provide regular feedback on their own professional learning opportunities through a blend of questionnaires and face to face interviews. • Central Team and Challenge Adviser training will focus on appropriate updates and learning opportunities to ensure ERW staff are well-informed and skilled to work with stakeholders. • Where appropriate, allocation within the annual budget will be made to staff to develop their professional learning based on a clear and equitable rationale to meet the PL needs of all staff. 			
<p>3. ERW Chief Officers will review and ensure a coherent and well-understood process of self-evaluation and improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cycle of self-evaluation will align with the 90-day Business Plan monitoring and PM. • Business Planning will be clearly aligned with self-evaluation and national priorities. • (Interim cycle, April-Aug 2021) 			
<p>4. ERW Chief Officers will ensure a robust process of Business Planning monitoring underpinned by high quality first-hand evidence and high quality research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A robust 90-day cycle of Business Planning monitoring, with first-hand evidence will be continued through the interim period April-August 2021 			
<p>5. ERW Chief Officers will ensure that the monitoring process informs high quality self-evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim BP will be evaluated in August 2021 			

<p>6. ERW Chief Officers will ensure accountability is evidenced against the Business Plan success criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Planning monitoring will be reported by exception to JC at each JC meeting and a final evaluation report produced by the end of August 2021 			
<p>7. ERW Chief Officers will ensure a high-quality professional learning offer is reviewed and updated for the summer term 2021 with a focus on the 'Learning Forward' agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2020-21 PL to be reviewed and offer developed for partners between April and August 2021 in line with emerging requirements from national conversations 			

DRAFT

Section 5: ERW Business Plan – monitoring, evaluation and review

The progress of the ERW Business Plan will be monitored and challenged robustly on a 90 cycle. The monitoring outcomes will be reported to all levels of the ERW governance structure.



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ERW JOINT COMMITTEE 8 JULY 2021

VERBAL UPDATE IN REGARD TO PROVISION OF CURRENT CONSORTIA SERVICES POST AUGUST 2021

PURPOSE:

To provide the Joint Committee with a brief verbal update on proposed arrangements for the delivery of Welsh Government programmes and Consortia services from 1st September 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS / KEY DECISIONS REQUIRED:

Joint Committee to note the proposed approaches post August 2021.

REASONS:

To ensure that the schools in the region are provided with the services and opportunities required to ensure improvements.

<p>Report Author: Gareth Morgans</p> <p>Lead Director on behalf of all Directors/Chief Officers</p>	<p>Designation:</p> <p>ERW's current Lead Director</p>	<p>Tel No.</p> <p>E. Mail: EDGMorgans@sirgar.gov.uk</p>
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
ERW JOINT COMMITTEE
8 JULY 2021**



**VERBAL UPDATE IN REGARD TO PROVISION OF CURRENT
CONSORTIA SERVICES POST AUGUST 2021**

Until March 31st, 2020 ERW was an alliance of six local authorities- Carmarthenshire County Council, Pembrokeshire County Council, Ceredigion County Council, Powys County Council, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and the City and County of Swansea Council.

When Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council left ERW on 31st March 2020, it became an alliance of five local authorities.

When Ceredigion County Council left ERW on 31st March 2021, it became an alliance of four local authorities-

- Carmarthenshire County Council,
- Pembrokeshire County Council,
- Powys County Council and
- the City and County of Swansea Council

Carmarthenshire County Council and the City and County of Swansea Council rescinded their notices of withdrawal from ERW with a view to leaving ERW on the 31st of August 2021. A Deed of Variation is currently being circulated amongst the 4 current partner Authorities to allow all remaining authorities to withdraw from ERW at the same time and therefore the current ERW Consortium will come to an end and the remaining partners will have to make alternative arrangements for delivering improvements in teaching and learning to secure the best outcomes for all learners.

Discussions are ongoing between the remaining local authorities in terms of the future delivery of the agreed functions.

Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Swansea have agreed to form a new partnership operational from 1st September 2021 and Powys are making their own local arrangements which includes working in partnership with Ceredigion on some aspects of school improvement.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO- a presentation will be shared with Joint Committee



IMPLICATIONS

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities NO	Legal YES	Finance YES	Risk Management Issues YES	Staffing Implications YES
<p>Legal</p> <p>Legal officers are working on a new Legal Agreement for the new partnership post August 2021. A Deed of Variation is in circulation to provide for each of the remaining authorities to give one month notice so that all authorities can serve notice to leave at the same time and bring ERW to an end.</p>				
<p>Finance</p> <p>For the 2021/22 financial year, due to the planned demise of ERW, Welsh Government have funded each Local Authority individually by disaggregating the funding that would have been passed directly to ERW. To date, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Swansea have contributed 5/12ths of the funding to ERW to meet the April-August costs. There is a concern in regard to meeting the costs for the remaining 7/12ths as the transition to the new structures will not have been complete. It could be argued that any costs above the costs of the new partnerships should be met by ERW's original partners until the new structure has been achieved.</p> <p>Two further meetings of the ERW Joint Committee are likely to be required post 31 August 2021 to consider and approve the Head of Internal Audit Annual Opinion and Report, the Annual Governance Statement, the Statement of Accounts and the Audit Wales ISA260 Report and Audit Opinion for (1) 2020-21 and (2) the five month period April to August 2021.</p>				
<p>Risk Management</p> <p>An additional risk, in regard to the costs of the transition from one model to another, has been included in ERW's risk register. A further risk identified is the new partnership's capacity to meet Welsh Government's requirements as the core team will be smaller than the current ERW team. Local Authorities may need to undertake some of these functions. This will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.</p>				
<p>Staffing Implications</p> <p>The current ERW staffing structure was created to service schools in 6 Local Authorities. Whilst some posts are vacant, others filled by secondments and some staff members have been successful in securing new posts it is probable that moving to new arrangements will still result in some redundancies however we will work to minimise these.</p>				

CONSULTATIONS

Appropriate consultations will be undertaken with staff and their trade unions in regard to moving from the current staffing model to the proposed structure.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
THERE ARE NONE

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ERW JOINT COMMITTEE 8 JULY 2021

ERW FINANCIAL UPDATE – OUTTURN 2020-21

PURPOSE:

To present the Joint Committee with the financial outturn for 2020-21.

RECOMMENDATIONS / KEY DECISIONS REQUIRED:

The Joint Committee approves the ERW financial outturn for 2020-21.

REASONS:

Approval of the ERW financial outturn for 2020-21 will enable completion of the ERW Statement of Accounts for 2020-21.

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(ERW S151 Officer)

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
ERW JOINT COMMITTEE
8 JULY 2021**

ERW FINANCIAL UPDATE – OUTTURN 2020-21

BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the Joint Committee with the financial outturn for 2020-21:

- Central Team Budget
- Service Level Agreements
- Local Authority Contributions
- Grant Allocations
- Pupil Development Grant (PDG)
- Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG)
- Grants – Curriculum, Digital, Welsh, Leadership, Professional Learning, and Equity and Wellbeing
- Risks
- Reserves

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications
NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE

1. Finance

The detailed report highlights financial risks for ERW.

CONSULTATIONS

N/A

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
THERE ARE NONE**



ERW Financial Update Outturn 2020-21

4 June 2021

ERW S151 Officer

1. Introduction

This report presents the Joint Committee with the financial outturn at 31 March 2021.

2. 2020-21 Central Team Budget

The 2020-21 Central Team budget was approved by the Joint Committee on 21 July 2020.

It has been noted that grant dependency has risks but these were accepted by the Joint Committee.

Service Level Agreements (SLA's)

For 2020-21, the SLA breakdown was as follows:

SLA's	Budgeted Cost
Committee Services (Carmarthenshire)	£5,000
Scrutiny (Swansea)	£5,000
Finance (Pembrokeshire)	£40,000
Internal Audit (Pembrokeshire)	£25,000
Human Resources (Pembrokeshire)	£20,000
Information Technology (Pembrokeshire)	£24,000
Procurement (Pembrokeshire)	£20,000
Total Budgeted SLA's	£139,000

Local Authority Contributions

The agreed Local Authority Contributions for 2020-21 was as follows.

Local Authority	2020-21 Contribution £
Powys	81,934
Ceredigion	43,741
Pembrokeshire	79,898
Carmarthenshire	123,998
Swansea	150,785
Total	480,356

All contributions have been paid.

Core Budgeted Expenditure	2020-21 Approved Budget £000's	Core Funded £000's	Grant Funded £'000s	2020-21 Actual Income / Expenditure £000's
Staffing Costs				
Salaries, Secondments, Specialists	845	209	439	648
Travel, Subsistence, Training and Development	3	1	-	1
IT Hardware & Mobiles	-	-	-	-
	848	210	439	649
Development and Running Costs				
Rent and Accommodation	59	63	-	63
General Office Expenses	2	2	-	2
Stationary, Telephone, Photocopying	8	6	-	6
Translation	2	6	-	6
Software, Marketing, R&E,	33	21	-	21
Service Level Agreements	125	53	61	114
External Audit	14	18	-	18
Legal	-	9	-	9
	243	178	61	239
Total Estimated Expenditure	1,091	388	500	888
Core Budgeted Income				
Local Authority Contributions	480	480	-	480
Grant Funding	313	-	500	500
2019-20 Funding Utilised	298	-	-	-
Other Funding*	-	208	-	208
Total Estimated Income	1,091	688	500	1188
Core Net Expenditure / (Income)	0	(300)	0	(300)
Appropriation to Reserve	0	300	0	300

*Other Funding relates to reimbursement from Welsh Government for secondments.

- Grant flexibility of £500,000 has been provided by Welsh Government and has been maximised for the year.
- The SLA's are £139,000 as outlined above with £61,000 funded by grant within the terms and conditions. £25,000 is shown within Equity and Wellbeing (4.8).
- The salaries, secondments and specialists includes the cost of the Head of Human Resources/HR Lead seconded to ERW.
- £9,000 of expenses for legal costs in relation to the forthcoming changes to ERW has been incurred.
- The Joint Committee approved Local Authority contributions of £480,356 are based on PLASC 19 pupil numbers for the five Local Authorities.
- £300k will be appropriated to Reserve.

3. 2020-21 Grant Allocations

	Total Grant Income Received 2020-21* £000's
Curriculum and Assessment	1,495
Developing the Profession	32,341
Leadership	453
Supporting Self Improving System	298
RCSIG Total	34,587
PDG	20,135
LAC PDG	913
PDG Coordinator	78
Consortia Led Funding	157
PDG Total	21,283
EWC	418
Other Total	418
Total Grant Income	56,288

*Note: £607,063 RCSIG and £14,384 PDG funding has not been spent during 2020-21 and has been carried forward to 2021-22.

3.1 Pupil Development Grant (PDG)

As outlined in the last financial update, the PDG grant invitation letter was received from Welsh Government on 29 July 2020 with the grant offer letter received on 26 August 2020. Please refer to Table 3 for the breakdown. All instalments were received during the year and paid out to each Local Authority following completed claim forms.

3.2 PDG Grant Allocation 2020-21

As outlined in the last financial update, the PDG Grant has been allocated as follows:

	Local Authority £'000's	ERW Retained £'000's	Total* £'000's
PDG	20,135	-	20,135
PDG LAC	822	91	913
PDG Co-ordinator	-	78	78
Consortia Led Funding	-	157	157
Total	20,957	326	21,283

*Note: £14,384 PDG funding has not been spent during 2020-21 and have been carried forward to 2021-22.

3.3 Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG)

As outlined in the last financial update, the RCSIG was distributed on a quarterly basis. The 2020-21 grant offer letter was received from Welsh Government on 29 July 2020 and was formally reviewed and accepted by the Joint Committee on 13 November 2020. All instalments were received during the year and paid out to each Local Authority following completed claim forms.

3.4 Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG) – EIG Grant Allocation 2020-21

As outlined in the last financial update, the RCSIG EIG Grant allocation was as follows:

	Total Grant Funding £'000's	Match Funding £'000's	Total Funding * £'000's
ERW	911	-	911
Powys	4,648	540	5,188
Ceredigion	2,584	290	2,874
Pembrokeshire	4,411	496	4,907
Carmarthenshire	7,110	669	7,779
Swansea	9,017	714	9,731
Totals	28,681	2,709	31,390

*Note: £607,063 RCSIG funding has not been spent during 2020-21 and have been carried forward to 2021-22.

4. 2020-21 Grants

4.1 A breakdown of the funding for the ERW staffing structure (grant funding and core funding) is shown at Appendix A.

4.2 RCSIG

The RCSIG is allocated according to the National Ministerial Priorities. Grants received are allocated according to the ERW Business Plan 2020-21 priorities in line with the strategy groups created in 2019-20:

- Curriculum (4.3)
- Digital (4.4)
- Welsh (4.5)
- Leadership (4.6)
- Professional Learning (4.7)
- Equity & Wellbeing (4.8)

The terms and conditions of the grant are carefully adhered to, and wherever possible clear links are made between grants to enable greater value for money when planning expenditure.

This report and the financial information contained within it should be considered alongside the ERW Business Plan 2020-21.

4.3 Curriculum

Income	2020-21 Projected Income £000's	2020-21 Actual Income £000's
RCSIG School Improvement 2020-21	1,096	679
RCSIG 3% Savings	(191)	
Total Income	905	
School Improvement Budgeted Expenditure	2020-21 Projected Expenditure £000's	2020-21 Actual Expenditure £000's
Staffing Costs		
Salaries, Secondments, Specialists	505	505
Core Central Staff	12	12
Travel, Subsistence, Training and Development	5	2
IT Hardware & Mobiles	1	-
	523	519
Development and Running Costs		
Accommodation & Venue Hire	-	-
Stationary, Telephone, Photocopying	-	-
Translation	16	18
Software, Marketing, R&E,	-	-
	16	18
Delegated to Schools		13
Passported on WG Instruction	-	-
Regional Support & Development Work	366	129
Delegated to Local Authorities		-
Total Expenditure	905	679
Curriculum RCSIG grant income carried forward to 2021-22	0	226

4.4 Digital

Income	2020-21 Projected Income £000's	2020-21 Actual Income £000's
RCSIG School Improvement 2020-21	287	200
RCSIG 3% Savings	(58)	
Total Income	229	
School Improvement Budgeted Expenditure	2020-21 Projected Expenditure £000's	2020-21 Actual Expenditure £000's
Staffing Costs		
Salaries, Secondments, Specialists	174	126
Travel, Subsistence, Training and Development	2	-
IT Hardware & Mobiles	1	-
	177	126
Development and Running Costs		
Accommodation & Venue Hire	-	-
Stationary, Telephone, Photocopying	-	-
Translation	-	4
Software, Marketing, R&E,	-	-
	-	4
Regional Support & Development Work	51	16
Delegated to Schools	1	54
Passported on WG Instruction	-	-
Delegated to Local Authorities	-	-
Unallocated Funds		-
Total Expenditure	229	200
Digital RCSIG grant income carried forward to 2021-22	0	29

4.5 Welsh

Income	2020-21 Projected Income £000's	2020-21 Actual Income £000's
RCSIG School Improvement 2020-21	858	620
RCSIG 3% Savings	(172)	
Total Income	686	
School Improvement Budgeted Expenditure	2020-21 Projected Expenditure £000's	2020-21 Actual Expenditure £000's
Staffing Costs		
Salaries, Secondments, Specialists	245	247
Core Central Staff	3	3
Travel, Subsistence, Training and Development	2	2
IT Hardware & Mobiles	1	-
	251	252
Development and Running Costs		
Accommodation & Venue Hire	-	-
Stationary, Telephone, Photocopying	-	-
Translation	-	-
Software, Marketing, R&E,	-	-
	-	-
Regional Support & Development Work	196	-
Delegated to Schools		90
Passported on WG Instruction	-	-
Delegated to Local Authorities	239	278
Total Expenditure	686	620
Welsh RCSIG grant income carried forward to 2021-22	0	66

4.6 Leadership

Income	2020-21 Projected Income £000's	2020-21 Actual Income £000's
RCSIG School Improvement 2020-21	654	308
RCSIG 3% Savings	(231)	
EWC 2020-21	418	418
Total Income	841	726
School Improvement Budgeted Expenditure	2020-21 Projected Expenditure £000's	2020-21 Actual Expenditure £000's
Staffing Costs		
Salaries, Secondments, Specialists	200	200
Core Central Staff	5	5
External Verifiers NQT	68	83
Travel, Subsistence, Training and Development	3	1
IT Hardware & Mobiles	1	-
	277	289
Development and Running Costs		
Accommodation & Venue Hire	-	-
Stationary, Telephone, Photocopying	-	-
Translation	6	4
Software, Marketing, R&E,	-	-
	6	4
Regional Support & Development Work	544	16
Delegated to Schools	14	345
Passported on WG Instruction	-	-
Delegated to Local Authorities	-	72
Total Estimated Expenditure	841	726
Leadership RCSIG grant income carried forward to 2021-22	0	115

4.7 Professional Learning

Income	2020-21 Projected Income £000's	2020-21 Actual Income £000's
RCSIG School Improvement 2020-21	2,366	3,428
RCSIG 3% Savings	(459)	
RCSIG Professional Learning Grant	1,600	
Total Income	3,507	
School Improvement Budgeted Expenditure	2020-21 Projected Expenditure £000's	2020-21 Actual Expenditure £000's
Staffing Costs		
Salaries, Secondments, Specialists	639	639
Core Central Staff	3	3
Travel, Subsistence, Training and Development	3	-
IT Hardware & Mobiles	1	1
	646	643
Development and Running Costs		
Accommodation & Venue Hire	-	-
Stationary, Telephone, Photocopying	-	-
Translation	3	1
Software, Marketing, R&E,	-	-
	3	1
Regional Support & Development Work	298	3
Delegated to Schools	960	1,181
Passported on WG Instruction	1,600	1,600
Delegated to Local Authorities	-	-
Total Estimated Expenditure	3,507	3,428
Professional Learning RCSIG grant income carried forward to 2021-22	0	79

4.8 Equity and Wellbeing

Income	2020-21 Projected Income £000's	2020-21 Actual Income £000's
RCSIG School Improvement 2020-21 (EIG)	28,837	28,745
RCSIG 3% Savings	-	
PDG 2020-21	21,283	21,269
Total Income	50,120	50,014
School Improvement Budgeted Expenditure	2020-21 Projected Expenditure £000's	2020-21 Actual Expenditure £000's
Staffing Costs		
Salaries, Secondments, Specialists	395	570
Core Central Staff	4	4
Travel, Subsistence, Training and Development	3	2
IT Hardware & Mobiles	1	-
Grant Flexibility RCSIG 2020-21	500	500
	903	1,076
Development and Running Costs		
Accommodation & Venue Hire	-	-
Stationary, Telephone, Photocopying	-	-
Translation	5	1
SLA's	61	25
Software, Marketing, R&E,	20	-
	86	26
Regional Support & Development Work	248	29
Delegated to Schools	-	-
Passported on WG Instruction	47,905	47,905
Delegated to Local Authorities	978	978
Total Estimated Expenditure	50,120	50,014
Equity and Wellbeing RCSIG grant income carried forward to 2021-22	0	92
Equity and Wellbeing PDG grant income carried forward to 2021-22	0	14

5. Risks

Previous Budget and Financial Update reports have highlighted risks for ERW.

The financial implications of the anticipated changes to ERW will need to be clearly thought through and discussed with the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to ensure no Local Authority suffers any financial detriment.

The ERW Reserves will increase at the end of 2020-21, as outlined below, with total reserves of £139k following the annual adjustment to the Pensions Reserve.

Continued reliance upon grant funding remains a risk and there is no grant flexibility (RCSIG) available for 2021-22.

6. Reserves

The table below shows the implications on ERW Reserves from 2019-20 to 2020-21.

Useable Reserves	Earmarked Joint Committee Reserves £000's	General Working Reserve £000's	Pensions Reserve £000's	Total Reserves £000's
Balance 31 March 2019	322	100	(316)	106
2019-20	30		(91)	(61)
Balance 31 March 2020	352	100	(407)	45
2020-21	300	-	(206)	94
Balance 31 March 2021	652	100	(613)	139

7. Recommendations

- The Joint Committee approves the ERW financial outturn for 2020-21.

Breakdown of Funding for the ERW Staffing Structure							
CENTRAL TEAM			C&A	Dev Prof	Lead	Self Imp	Strong Inc
	Core	Grant	% Total	% total	% total	% total	% total
Chief Officer							
Chief Officer	100%	0%					
Chief Officer	100%	0%					
Areas of Specialism (Tier 2)							
Head of Secondary Sector - (vacant post)	20%	80%		40%		40%	
Head of Special Schools and Education in Alternative Settings (0.6 appointment)	20%	80%		40%		40%	
Head Curriculum Reform and Innovation (Secondment)	20%	80%		80%			
Lead for Research and HEI Partnerships	0%	100%		36%		64%	
Lead for Leadership	0%	100%			100%		
Lead for Secondary and Curriculum and Examinations	0%	100%		100%			
Lead for Welsh in Education	0%	100%		100%			
Lead for Digital Learning and Systems	0%	100%		100%			
Lead for Health and Wellbeing	0%	100%		100%			
STRATEGIC TEAM							
Secondary Curriculum Leads (Tier 3)							
Science Lead	0%	100%		100%			
Science Lead	0%	100%		100%			
Maths Lead	0%	100%		100%			
Maths Lead	0%	100%		100%			
English Lead (Vacant Post)	0%	100%		100%			
English Lead 0.8	0%	100%		100%			
English Lead 0.6	0%	100%		100%			
Welsh Lead	0%	100%		100%			
Welsh Lead	0%	100%		100%			
Post 16	0%	100%		100%			
Humanities	0%	100%	100%				
AoLEs Secondary / AoLEs Primary (Tier 3)							
12 AoLEs	0%	100%	100%				
12 AoLEs	0%	100%	100%				
12 AoLEs	0%	100%		100%			
12 AoLEs	0%	100%		100%			
12 AoLEs	0%	100%		100%			
12 AoLEs	0%	100%		100%			
12 AoLEs	0%	100%		100%			
12 AoLEs	0%	100%		100%			
12 AoLEs (Vacant Post)	0%	100%		100%			
12 AoLEs	0%	100%				100%	
12 AoLEs	0%	100%				100%	
Service Area Coordinators							
Induction & Alternative Routes Coordinator (Including NQT) (Fixed term)	0%	100%		100%			
Startier Iaith Coordinator	0%	100%	100%				
HLTA Professional Learning Coordinator (Fixed Term)	0%	100%		100%			
PDG Coordinator (Fixed term)	0%	100%					100%
Digital Learning & Systems Coordinator	50%	50%		50%			
Office Organisation							
Business Support Manager	90%	10%			10%		
Business Support to Professional lead	90%	10%			10%		
Business Support to Professional lead	90%	10%			10%		
Business Support to Professional lead (vacant post)	90%	10%			10%		
Business Support to Professional lead (vacant post)	90%	10%				10%	
HR Lead	100%	0%					
HR Manager	90%	10%		10%			
Policy, Information & Communications Officer (vacant post)	90%	10%		10%			
Principal Accountant	90%	10%		10%			
Senior Accountant (vacant post)	90%	10%	10%				
Accounting Technician (vacant post)	90%	10%			10%		

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ERW JOINT COMMITTEE 8 JULY 2021

ERW CONSORTIUM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2020-21

PURPOSE:

To provide the Joint Committee with the findings from the Internal Audit review of the ERW Consortium 2020-21.

RECOMMENDATIONS / KEY DECISIONS REQUIRED:

To note the Internal Audit Report 2020-21.

REASONS:

To provide assurance and highlight areas for improvement to the Joint Committee on the effectiveness of governance, internal control, risk management and financial management arrangements in place for the ERW Consortium.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ERW JOINT COMMITTEE

8 JULY 2021

ERW CONSORTIUM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2020-21

BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT

To give assurance to the Joint Committee on the effectiveness of governance, internal control, risk management and financial management arrangements in place for the ERW Consortium.

The Internal Audit review for 2020-21 resulted in a limited assurance opinion. The following provides a key summary of weaknesses identified:

- There has been limited progress in implementing recommendations from the previous Internal Audit review and the Significant Governance Issues and Priorities for Improvement that were contained within the 2019-20 Annual Governance Statement. There is a lack of oversight by the Joint Committee to ensure previously identified matters arising are addressed and resolved.
- Commissioning arrangements have been entered into with Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and Ceredigion County Council, enabling the authorities to continue to receive elements of service provision through to 31 August 2021. The detail of the service provision had not been finalised at the time of the audit review, resulting in the provision not being costed.
- Decisions required to move forward with the cessation of ERW in its current format have not been undertaken within the required timeframes with key milestones being missed, resulting in a risk that statutory processes will not be completed before 31 August 2021 and placing a greater financial burden upon the new arrangement from 1 September 2021.
- There is a risk that as liability estimations have not included all relevant costs, and modelled against different scenarios, current and former partners may not be aware of the full financial implications of any decisions relating to the cessation of ERW in its current format.

The factual accuracy of the draft Internal Audit Report has been agreed. Management responses have been received, with the report being finalised on 8 June 2021.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications
NONE	YES	YES	YES	NONE
<p>1. Legal The report details the risks arising from the pace of decision making relating to the cessation of ERW in its current format, and impact of statutory processes not being completed within required timeframes.</p>				
<p>2. Finance The report highlights that to provide current and former partners with an indication of the financial costs they would be liable for on the cessation of ERW in its current format, liabilities must be calculated in full and modelled against potential scenarios. The report also highlights that the commissioning arrangements with Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and Ceredigion County Council have not been costed, as the detail of the provision had not been agreed in totality.</p>				
<p>3. Risk Management The report highlights the risks surrounding the cessation of ERW in its current format, and the impact of these upon the new arrangement.</p>				

CONSULTATIONS

N/A

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
THERE ARE NONE

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EDUCATION THROUGH REGIONAL WORKING CONSORITUM

<u>Report Issued to:</u> Ian Altman, Interim ERW Chief Officer
<u>Report Issued to:</u> Greg Morgan, Interim ERW Chief Officer
<u>Report Issued to:</u> Jon Haswell, ERW Section 151 Officer
<u>Report Issued to:</u> Gareth Morgans, ERW Lead Director of Education
<u>Report Copied to:</u> ERW Joint Committee (Final Only)
<u>Auditor:</u> Charlotte Hodges, Principal Auditor
<u>Rationale for Audit:</u> Annual Risk Based Review

Internal Audit Report No:	20032 (2020-21)
Assurance Rating:	Limited
Progress To Date (↑, ↓ or →):	↓
Fieldwork Completed:	30 April 2021
Draft Report:	21 May 2021
Management Comments:	08 June 2021
Final Report Issued:	08 June 2021

Introduction and Objectives

An audit review of the Education Through Regional Working (ERW) Consortium has been carried out as part of the 2020-2021 Internal Audit Plan, as agreed with the Joint Committee, the ERW Section 151 Officer and the ERW Interim Chief Officers. The objective of the audit was to provide assurance to the Joint Committee, the ERW Section 151 Officer and the ERW Interim Chief Officers that the Consortium has adequate governance, internal control, risk management and financial management arrangements in place, which are operating effectively, and that the recommendations arising from the previous Internal Audit reviews and actions contained within the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) have been implemented.

Audit Scope

Governance: Internal Control: Risk Management:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow Up of Previous Internal Audit Recommendations and AGS Actions• Arrangements for the cessation of ERW and preparations for future education through regional working• ERW Business Plan• Risk Register
Financial Management:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budgetary Management and Control• Compliance with Contract Procedure Rules• Grant Schedules & Returns from Authorities

Methodology

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interviews with relevant Officers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examination of systems and relevant documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluation of the adequacy of internal controls
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sample testing

Executive Summary

There has been limited progress in implementing recommendations from the previous internal audit review, or the Significant Governance Issues and Priorities for Improvement that were contained within the 2019-2020 Annual Governance Statement. There continues to be lack of oversight/scrutiny by the Joint Committee to ensure previously identified matters arising are resolved. Recommendations made in the 2019-2020 audit to address this have not been implemented.

Neath Port Talbot County Borough and Ceredigion County Councils have formally withdrawn from the Consortium. The Joint Committee has approved commissioning arrangements enabling both Local Authorities to continue to receive elements of provision until August 2021. The detail of the service provision under the commissioning arrangement has not been finalised, resulting in the provision not being appropriately costed. There is a risk that if service provision is not clearly defined, the commissioning arrangements could result in a financial burden upon the ERW Consortium.

The focus of 2020-2021 has been the development of the new ERW Footprint. It has been agreed that ERW will cease as a partnership on 31 August 2021, with 3 Local Authorities forming a new partnership from 1 September 2021. Two further Local Authorities are discussing the possible benefits of informal partnership working. Decisions required to move forward with the cessation of ERW in its current format have not been undertaken within the required timeframes, resulting in a risk that statutory processes cannot be completed before 31 August 2021. This will result in a greater financial burden upon the new partnership, due to the staffing structure not being aligned to the size of the new partnership. There are also risks that as liability estimations have not included all relevant costs, current and former partners may not be aware of the financial implications of any decisions relating to the cessation of ERW in its current format, and that the ongoing uncertainty over the structure required for the new partnership could have a detrimental impact upon the morale and wellbeing of staff.

A timeline was presented to Joint Committee to advise of key milestones that were required to be met to enable an orderly cessation of ERW. Updates against the timeline were not provided to the Joint Committee, and milestones were not met. A revised timeline had not been established at the time of the audit review.

PREVIOUS INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS AND AGS ACTIONS

There has been limited action to address the recommendations arising from the previous internal audit reviews, or the matters arising in the 2019-2020 Annual Governance Statement. It has been confirmed that:

In relation to 2019-20:

- 1 of 7 recommendations have been actioned, with 4 further recommendations currently in progress;
- Action to address the Significant Governance Issue is in progress;
- Action to address 1 of the 5 Priorities for Improvement is currently in progress. The remaining actions are outstanding.

In relation to prior years, of the 23 outstanding recommendations and AGS items:

- 6 have been superseded; 6 have been actioned, with 4 further recommendations and AGS items currently in progress; 7 are outstanding.

(Full details are provided in Appendix 1)

Following the previous internal audit review a process for monitoring the implementation of recommendations and Annual Governance Statement actions was not devised by ERW. Had such a process been implemented, and progress updates provided to the Joint Committee, there would have been greater oversight to ensure the required improvements were made and actions undertaken within a suitable timeframe.

RECOMMENDATION

To ensure the sustainability of future arrangements, all outstanding recommendations and Annual Governance Statement actions must be considered, and should be incorporated into the development of a robust Governance framework, and internal control arrangements, for the new partnerships.

Grade: Critical

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Due to the demise of ERW and proposed new partnerships post September 2021, and the fact that discussions are ongoing, we will only implement in the short term any outstanding recommendations and Annual Governance Statement actions which are critical to the effective governance and system of internal control of ERW. All remaining outstanding recommendations and Annual Governance Statement actions will be used to inform the new governance framework and system of internal control for the new partnership post September 2021. They will be shared with the Local Authorities who will not be part of the new partnership.

Responsible Officers

Lead Director/Chief
Officers/Statutory Officers

Timescale for Action

November 2021

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CESSATION OF ERW AND PREPARATIONS FOR FUTURE EDUCATION THROUGH REGIONAL WORKING

Two Local Authorities have formally withdrawn from the ERW Consortium, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (CBC) and Ceredigion County Council (CC) (with effect from 1 April 2020 and 1 April 2021 respectively). Both Swansea and Carmarthenshire County Councils submitted notices to withdraw, but temporarily rescinded the notices in line with the agreed continuation of ERW until 31 August 2021. Powys and Pembrokeshire County Councils have not submitted notices to withdraw. A further variation to the Legal Agreement will be needed to facilitate this withdrawal within the remaining timescale, which would require approval by each partner authority.

A paper submitted to Joint Committee in November 2020 advised Members of the required timeline and milestones that needed to be achieved to allow the cessation of ERW from 31 March 2021, and noted there was an intention to produce a full and detailed project plan by 18 December 2020. This project plan was not developed. Since November 2020, the Joint Committee have not been appraised of the progress made against the reported milestones. As a consequence of this, and competing priorities, decisions were not made at the required pace, which resulted in the Joint Committee agreeing to continue ERW until 31 August 2021. A project plan, and revised timeline, with clear milestones is now urgently needed, which should be communicated to all partners to provide transparency over what is required to be completed, and allow early notification of when key decisions must be made to facilitate the cessation of ERW in an orderly fashion and ensure all actions remain on track.

Agreement on the footprint of the new partnership has been reached, and the Lead Director of Education advised that the Directors Group have agreed upon the functions of the new partnership. However, the footprint and functions have not been formally communicated to future partner authorities to obtain their approval, and Statutory Officers for the new partnership have not been formally appointed.

(continued)

RECOMMENDATION

To facilitate the orderly and timely cessation of the ERW Consortium in its current format, a project plan, including a detailed timeline and key milestones, is urgently required. The project plan, timeline and key milestones must be communicated to partner authorities to provide transparency over what is required to be completed, and allow early notification of any decisions that may be required. The risk of not achieving key dates or milestones must be articulated within the project plan. Regular updates against the project plan, timeline and key milestones must be provided to Stakeholders.

Grade: Critical

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Agreed.

Responsible Officer

Lead Director

Timescale for Action

June 2021

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CESSATION OF ERW

The number of staff required to deliver the functions of the new partnership has not yet been determined, nor have the associated costs. Consequently, the new partnership will initially have to maintain a larger staffing structure than required, resulting in increased costs for the new partnership. Timescales to ensure compliance with statutory obligations for any redundancy process have been missed, with the consequence that any required redundancies will now not occur before 31 August 2021. The delay in progressing the redundancy process could also impact upon current and former partners of ERW, as liabilities could increase due to matters such as annual pay increases, which may not have been factored into original calculations.

A redundancy Worst Case Scenario model was produced to support the production of the Statement of Accounts, however this did not include any potential liabilities relating to pension payments, so does not reflect the true financial risk involved. At the time of the audit formal consultations relating to any potential redundancies had not commenced, therefore redundancies (if any) will not materialise within the required timeframe.

Internal Audit were informed that progress is being made to identify all non-HR liabilities that require resolution. Notice has not yet been given by ERW for any Service Level Agreement (SLA) arrangements, and a formal decision on the continuation of SLAs from 1 September 2021 has not been made. This matter should now be progressed by ERW to determine whether any additional liabilities need to be considered upon cessation of the ERW Consortium.

There remain a number of risks to the cessation of ERW on 31 August 2021, including a structure not yet being agreed, not all partners have submitted withdrawal notices, a shadow Joint Committee has not been established to allow decisions about the new partnership to be formally made, and the Legal Agreement has not been revised. Each aspect has the potential to hinder the introduction of the new partnership from 1 September 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

To provide current and former partners an indication of the financial costs they would be liable for on the cessation of ERW in its current format, liabilities must be calculated in full, modelled against potential scenarios, and a decision made as to which liabilities will be funded by the new partnership. These costings should include, but not be limited to, redundancy costs; pension liabilities; contractual liabilities; Service Level Agreement liabilities. The ERW Section 151 Officer must be kept fully abreast of all financial discussions and decisions.

Grade: Critical

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Agreed, noting the proposed changes to the Consortium post September 2021 and the fact that discussions are ongoing.

Responsible Officer

Lead Director/S151 Officer

Timescale for Action

August 2021

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Following the departure of Neath Port Talbot CBC from the partnership on 31 March 2020, ERW entered into a commissioning arrangement with Neath Port Talbot CBC to allow them to continue to engage in key national initiatives during 2020-2021. An extension to this commissioning arrangement was approved by the Joint Committee on 30 March 2021. Following the departure of Ceredigion CC from the partnership on 31 March 2021, Joint Committee also approved a commissioning arrangement to be entered into for the period April – August 2021. The details of the commissioning arrangement and provision of service delivery had not been formalised at the time of the audit, resulting in the contributions required from Neath Port Talbot CBC and Ceredigion CC not being calculated. Without these agreements being formalised on a full cost recovery basis, there is a risk that ERW may incur financial costs as a result of the arrangements.

The 2020-2021 budget was approved by Joint Committee on 21 July 2020, with the 2021-2022 budget (up until the end of August 2021) approved by Joint Committee on 30 March 2021, covering core costs for the Central Team. Due to the methodology for distribution of grant funding being amended by Welsh Government for the ERW Consortium for 2021-2022, grant funding was paid directly to Local Authorities. Local Authorities were notified of the contribution that would be required to be made to ERW for the period April – August 2021 at the Joint Committee meeting, and this was approved by Members. It was confirmed by the Principal Accountant that regular budget monitoring takes place, with financial updates provided to each meeting of the Joint Committee.

The Principal Accountant advised that Business Plan Lead Officers are advised of the Contract Procedure Rules during discussions regarding planned expenditure, and that monitoring is regularly carried out to ensure Contract Procedure Rules are complied with. Sample testing confirmed that exceptions to tendering were sought where expenditure had exceeded £25,000.

RECOMMENDATION

The detail of the commissioning arrangements with Neath Port Talbot CBC and Ceredigion CC must be clarified as a matter of urgency, to provide certainty to the required provision and allow for costings for service delivery to be calculated, at full costing recovery rate. The commissioning arrangements must not result in a financial burden upon the ERW Consortium or remaining partners.

Grade: Critical

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Agreed, noting the proposed changes to the Consortium post September 2021 and the fact that discussions are ongoing.

Responsible Officer

Lead Director/S151 Officer

Timescale for Action

June 2021 (for period to August)
August 2021 (post September)

ERW BUSINESS PLAN

The 2020-2021 Business Plan was approved by the Joint Committee in November 2020, and was developed prior to the Interim Chief Officers' appointments in September 2020.

The 2020-2021 Business Plan included high level costings and success criteria for each of the themes within the Plan. The costings of specific actions within the Plan were not detailed, and milestones or performance metrics against which the success criteria could be measured were not developed. Activity updates to the Joint Committee remain in the same format as during 2019-2020, and whilst they provide the Joint Committee with a comprehensive overview of activity undertaken by the Central Team, there is not a direct link to actions contained within the Business Plan to allow oversight and scrutiny of the progress made towards implementation of the Business Plan. The Joint Committee have not requested any additional information to scrutinise the delivery of the actions contained within the Business Plan, and ensure the Business Plan objectives are being achieved. Updates on the progression of the Business Plan were provided to the Directors Group.

It was recommended during the 2019-2020 Internal Audit review that an Integrated Report be developed, and presented to each meeting of the Joint Committee to provide clear and concise management information relating to the delivery of the Business Plan. This recommendation was not actioned, and shortcomings remain in the information presented to the Joint Committee to allow them to effectively scrutinise the activity of the ERW Central Team against the actions outlined in the Business Plan and financial framework within which the Strategy Groups work.

The Interim Chief Officers developed a monitoring tool, whereby Lead Officers are required to provide a termly RAG rated update on progress against the actions included within the Business Plan, as well as providing narrative to support the rating provided. This has provided an enhanced level of oversight on the completion of the Business Plan, when compared to previous years. The monitoring updates are not, however, submitted to the Joint Committee to supplement the Activity updates that are provided. *(continued)*

RECOMMENDATION

A Lessons Learned review of shortcomings with the process for development, monitoring, review and scrutiny of the Business Plan should be undertaken to assist with the development and governance framework for any future Business Plan.

Grade: Critical

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Agreed, this will be incorporated into the new governance framework and system of internal control for the Consortium post September 2021.

Responsible Officer

Lead Director/Chief Officers

Timescale for Action

August 2021

ERW BUSINESS PLAN (Continued)

The Strategy Group Structure has enabled a greater oversight at an Officer level on activity undertaken by the Team, and progress of actions required. Membership of each of the Strategy Groups includes representation from each of the partner Authorities.

An assessment on the impact of the 2019-2020 Business Plan was not completed. The Interim Chief Officers indicated that a full evaluation of the 2020-2021 Business Plan will be undertaken early 2021-2022, which will feed into a Self-Evaluation report, which will include an assessment on impact and value for money. Data sources such as attendance on courses, feedback received etc. will be used to support judgements as to whether the success criteria has been achieved. This review was in the early stages of commencement at the time of the audit.

The Chief Officers advised that due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, there was a requirement to be agile and amend programmes that were offered to Schools, particularly in the initial stages of the Pandemic when the focus shifted to developing resources to support schools in their delivery of online learning. A number of programmes and training courses were re-written to allow them to be delivered in a virtual environment, and meetings and seminars were moved to online provision. The move to virtual training has allowed ERW to continue to deliver upon actions contained within the Business Plan, albeit in a different format to what was originally intended. The Interim Chief Officers advised that this has allowed their provision to be more effective, by removing lost time driving to locations and condensing the learning, and this will have a positive lasting impact on delivery of training and meetings moving forward.

Welsh Government have announced that any unused RCSIG funding can be rolled forward to be used by 31 August 2021, which has allowed ERW to ensure projects can still be completed (such as the Coding project) where delays were incurred due to schools not being open for face to face learning.

RECOMMENDATION

The Self-Evaluation report should be presented to the Joint Committee, and actively publicised, to provide openness and transparency on the impact and value for money of the ERW Consortium.

Grade: Important

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Agreed.

Responsible Officer

Lead Director/Chief Officers

Timescale for Action

July 2021

RISK REGISTER

Following the departure of the Policy, Data and Communications Officer, responsibility for maintaining the ERW Risk Register was transferred to the Interim Chief Officers. The Interim Chief Officers advised that they have been supported by the Lead Director of Education in this role.

The Interim Chief Officers advised that the Risk Register is subject to termly review by themselves and Directors of Education during Directors meetings, prior to submission to the Executive Board and Joint Committee. However, it was noted that Risk Owners are not always contacted as part of this review process to ratify or recommend amendments to the risk control measures or risk score.

It is good practice for Risk Owners to be involved in the Risk Register review process, thereby ensuring the Risk Register contains accurate scoring and up to date information on risk control measures in place.

RECOMMENDATION

Not applicable

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Not applicable

Responsible Officer

Not applicable

Timescale for Action

Not applicable

Outstanding Internal Audit Recommendations, Significant Governance Issues and Priorities for Improvement

Reference	Recommendation	Progress
IAR 2019-20 1	Action must be taken to implement the recommendations outstanding from previous internal audit reviews, and Annual Governance Statement actions. Progress reports on the implementation of internal audit recommendations and Annual Governance Statement Significant Governance Issues and Priorities for Improvement should be submitted to each meeting of the Joint Committee, and could be incorporated into an Integrated Report. This will allow effective oversight, monitoring and scrutiny of the implementation of recommendations and assist in ensuring improvements are made at the required pace.	In Progress. Of the recommendations and Annual Governance Statement items recorded as outstanding in the previous internal audit report, 6 are complete and 5 are partially complete. There are 6 recommendations and Annual Governance Statement items still outstanding.
IAR 2019-20 2	The process to agree the future Footprint of ERW should be expedited to ensure a swift resolution, enabling the Consortium and partner Local Authorities to move forward on an agreed agenda, and to provide stability to the future partnership arrangements. Following resolution, Local Authorities should reconfirm their commitment to partnership working, and the vision and objectives of the Consortium to ensure there is a clear strategic focus and all are working towards a collective goal. A robust governance structure must also be put in place.	In Progress. The footprint of the new partnership has now been agreed. The Mission Statement and Key Principles for the new model have been drafted and agreed by Directors, along with the aims and values of the new model, and was presented to the Joint Committee in February 2021. The governance structure for the new model has not yet been developed.
IAR 2019-20 3	ERW must ensure it operates within the governance structure of the Legal Agreement, with the Executive Board being responsible for recommending action on matters to the Joint Committee and undertaking the operational decision making, as opposed to the Education Directors group (section 9 of the Legal Agreement refers).	In Progress. Meetings of the Executive Board have recommenced during 2020-21. However, the Executive Board has primarily met to receive papers for noting prior to a Joint Committee meeting, rather than undertaking the operational decision making role as outlined within the Legal Agreement.
IAR 2019-20	Following confirmation of the future Footprint of ERW, discussions should be held with partner Authorities regarding the level of core contributions required to fund the agreed Central team over the medium term, to ensure the level of funding provided is suitable in order to provide sustainability and stability for the Consortium moving forward.	Outstanding. Agreement has now been reached on the footprint of the new model. The staffing structure of the new model had not been developed at the time of the audit, and consequently financial modelling had not been undertaken.

Reference	Recommendation	Progress
IAR 2019-20 5	An Integrated Report, evidencing how the objectives of ERW are being achieved, should be standing agenda item to each meeting of the Joint Committee. The Integrated Report would provide a holistic overview of the effectiveness and added value of the Consortium by providing clear and concise management information, enabling effective scrutiny, openness and transparency over the activity of the Consortium. The Integrated Report should include progress against the delivery of the Business Plan, performance measures and outcomes, updates on the risks to the achievement of the objectives, financial information and any outstanding governance actions.	Outstanding. An Integrated Report has not been produced for presentation to the Joint Committee.
IAR 2019-20 6	A methodology must be devised for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Business Plan, utilising a combination of qualitative and quantitative evidence, showing how the implementation of the Business Plan has impacted upon the Region and provided Value for Money. An end of year report on the effectiveness of the 2019-20 should be presented to the Joint Committee, to enable effective oversight, monitoring and scrutiny of activities undertaken.	In Progress. An end of year report was not produced for 2019-20. The Interim Chief Officers have developed a tool for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Business Plan. This monitoring continues to be based upon qualitative rather than quantitative evidence. The Interim Chief Officers have begun preparing an end of year Self-Evaluation for 2020-21, reporting on the effectiveness of ERW and the delivery of the Business Plan.
AGS SGI 2019-20	The intended withdrawal of Partner Authorities by the end of March 2021 will lead to the end of ERW in its current form. A meeting has been held with Leaders, Chief Executives and the Minister for Local Government to discuss options for a revised future footprint. The decision to progress on the basis of the Swansea Bay City Deal and Growing Mid Wales respective footprints will need to be formally approved as a matter of urgency to provide certainty for all Partner Authorities. Preparations are required to establish staffing and financial implications, and to allow for new arrangements to be developed to provide a robust governance framework for the new consortia.	In Progress. The footprint of the new partnership has been agreed. Staffing and consequently financial implications have not been established at the time of the audit review.
AGS PFI 2019-20	Consideration should be given to undertaking a Lessons Learned review to establish the failings of ERW to ensure sustainability of the future consortia.	Outstanding. A Lessons Learned review has not been undertaken.

Reference	Recommendation	Progress
AGS PFI 2019-20	New Legal Agreements will need to be in place to support the two new consortia when they come into effect, which is anticipated to be 1 April 2021. This should include reference to a revised Governance Structures and Codes of Governance, aligned to best practice, which must be adhered to.	Outstanding. New/revised Legal Agreements have not yet been drafted to support the new model.
AGS PFI 2019-20	The Business Plan should include clear milestones, outcomes, supported by performance measures so that delivery and effectiveness can be monitored throughout the year. The Business Plan needs to be fully costed to ensure that it is deliverable within available resources and ensure for Value for Money.	Outstanding. The Business Plan included Success Criteria to determine whether actions had been completed. This was not supported by clear milestones and performance measures to support the monitoring and delivery of the plan throughout the year.
AGS PFI 2019-20	The Governance Structure & Central Team should have clear roles and responsibilities with defined outcomes linked to the delivery of the National Mission. In order to ensure accountability and value for money can be evidenced, forward work plans for Committee's and Working Groups should be in place which include a structure for measuring performance and delivery across the consortia. There should be clear reporting lines and mechanisms to enhance accountability while avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy. The Business Plan should include clear milestones, outcomes, supported by performance measures so that delivery and effectiveness can be monitored throughout the year. The Business Plan needs to be fully costed to ensure that it is deliverable within available resources and ensure for Value for Money.	In Progress. Forward work programmes for Committee's and Working Groups have not been developed. The Strategy Groups report and are accountable to the Chief Officers, with regular updates provided. The Business Plan does not include clear milestones, and is not supported by performance measures. Delivery is now monitored during this year, with narrative provided detailing progress. The Business Plan includes high level costings for priority areas, however, the cost of delivering specific activities outline within are not recorded within the Business Plan.
AGS PFI 2019-20	The future consortia will need to be supported by a Medium Term Financial Plan to enable longer-term Business Planning. The revised Core Funding Agreement will need to ensure that core funded posts are sustainable and continue to deliver value for money.	Outstanding. Core funding requirements for the new Consortia have not yet been determined.
AGS Pfi PAR 8.2a	There needs to be greater transparency of meetings of the Executive Board through publishing minutes of meetings. This should also provide evidence to the Joint Committee that robust challenge is undertaken by the Executive Board, including delivery of outcomes, financial challenge and value for money scrutiny.	Outstanding. Minutes arising from meetings of the Executive Board are not published.

Reference	Recommendation	Progress
AGS Pfl IAR 6.3a IAR 6.3b LOL R2	Delegation arrangements should be clarified and formally approved by the Joint Committee. Records should be published of delegated decisions to improve transparency and accountability.	In Progress. Delegation arrangements have been formalised, and a revised Delegation Schedule approved by the Joint Committee. Records of delegated decisions are not published.
AGS Pfl IAR 6.6	Arrangements to ensure compliance with Data Protection legislation need to be put in place.	Outstanding. There has been no progress in respect of this recommendation.
IAR 6.2b	The number of journals carried out should be monitored to ensure they decrease as expected. If numbers do not decrease, the reasons why they continue to be high should be established.	In Progress. The number of journals processed by ERW has decreased during 2020-21, when compared to previous years. Efforts should be made to continue to reduce the number of journals processed further.
IAR 6.4	An ERW Impact Report should be produced annually to help evidence the impact of the Consortium's work and the value for money achieved. This should include quantitative data, be aligned to funding, and should be publicised to raise awareness and increase public perception.	Outstanding. An ERW Impact Report has not been produced.
IAR 6.7b	Orders should be placed on the Commitments System at the time of ordering rather than when the invoice is received.	Outstanding. Testing confirmed that orders continue to be placed on the Commitments System when the invoice is received, rather than when the order is raised.
IAR 6.7d	Care should be taken to ensure VAT is recorded correctly for purchase card transactions. Where VAT is applicable, VAT invoices should be requested from suppliers in order that the VAT can be appropriately accounted for. This should also be checked as part of the supervisor review.	In Progress. Testing identified a small number of errors in the recording of VAT for purchase card transactions.
IAR 8.2b	A Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme should be documented as soon as possible. Guidance is available on the Information Commissioner's Office website.	Outstanding. A Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme has not been documented.
IAR 8.5	The type of data shared between the Consortium and Local Authorities should be investigated to determine if a data sharing agreement is required. If necessary, a Data Sharing Agreement should then be documented and signed by all parties.	Outstanding. Data shared between the Consortium and Local Authorities has not been investigated to determine if data sharing agreements are required.

Reference	Recommendation	Progress
LOL R8	The accounting structure of ERW should be reviewed so that each grant is allocated a specific main code, with each Business Plan priority having a separate cost centre so that financial reporting is both strengthened and easier to analyse. The introduction of the new Financial Information Management System within Pembrokeshire should provide an opportunity to do this.	Outstanding. It was intended that a new accounting structure would be developed to coincide with the implementation of the new Financial Information Management System (FIMS) in April 2020. The implementation of the new FIMS has been delayed.
LOL R10	The Joint Committee should be informed where all secondments are funded from and the National Priorities which are being worked on to ensure improved accountability and greater scrutiny on working arrangements.	In Progress. The Joint Committee are notified of secondments as part of the financial updates provided. It was noted that the update in February 2021 did not include all secondments into ERW.

Reference Key:

AGS SGI- Annual Governance Statement 2018-19 Significant Governance Issue

AGS PFI – Annual Governance Statement 2018-19 Priority for Improvement

IAR 2019-20 – Internal Audit Report, 2019-20

IAR – Internal Audit Report, 2018-19 (IAR recommendations starting with a 6. are outstanding from the 2017-18 Internal Audit Report)

LOLR – Internal Audit Investigation into the Leader of Learning Programme 2019-20

ASSURANCE RATINGS

Level of Assurance	Description
Substantial	There are no or few weaknesses in the adequacy and/or effectiveness of the governance, internal control, risk management and financial management arrangements, which could impair the ability of the Consortium to achieve its objectives. However, they would either be unlikely to occur or their impact would not affect the achievement of the Consortium's Business Plan.
Moderate	There are weaknesses in the adequacy and/or effectiveness of the governance, internal control, risk management and financial management arrangements, which could have a significant impact on the ability of the Consortium to achieve its objectives but is unlikely to have a significant effect on the achievement of the Consortium's Business Plan.
Limited	There are weaknesses in the adequacy and/or effectiveness of the governance, internal control, risk management and financial management arrangements, which, in aggregate, have a significant impact on the ability of the Consortium to achieve its objectives and could have a significant effect on the achievement of the Consortium's Business Plan.

RECOMMENDATION GRADING

Seriousness	Action Required
Critical	High risk that requires prompt strategic or operational action.
Important	Medium risk that requires strategic or operational action.
Opportunistic	Potential to strengthen the service by taking advantage of a situation

Low level findings will be reported to the Interim Managing Director during the exit interview.

LIMITATIONS IN ASSURANCE

It should be noted that full testing was not undertaken as part of this audit review, therefore the results should be considered in this context.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff involved for their co-operation during the audit review.

CONTACT DETAILS

If the Internal Audit Service can be of any further assistance please contact:

- Matthew Holder, Audit, Risk & Counter Fraud Manager
- Jo Hendy, ERW Head of Internal Audit

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ERW JOINT COMMITTEE 8 JULY 2021

RISK REGISTER

PURPOSE:

To inform the Joint Committee of the updated regional Risk profile

RECOMMENDATIONS / KEY DECISIONS REQUIRED:

That the Joint Committee note the changes in risk profile, and accept the report

REASONS:

Governance Arrangements, Risk Management

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
ERW JOINT COMMITTEE
8 JULY 2021**

RISK REGISTER

BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report outlines the overall risk profile of the regions. The heat map indicates the following risks as High Scoring:

Very High Probability + High Impact

Cuts to School Budgets

High Probability + Very High Impact

ERW Governance

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications
NONE	NONE	YES	YES	NONE

1. Finance

There is a section on the register dedicated to Financial Risks

2. Risk Management

The Risk Register is the primary risk analysis mechanism in ERW's governance system.

CONSULTATIONS

N/A

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
N/A	N/A	N/A



ERW

Ein Rhanbarth ar Waith
Education through Regional Working
www.erw.cymru
www.erw.wales

Corporate Risk Register (Threats)

April-August 2021

For Joint Committee June 2021

Introduction

ERW's Corporate Risk Register contains the strategic business risks (threats) to the achievement of the ERW's Vision and Aims as outlined within the ERW Business Plan.

ERW's Vision: "Improving Learning Together"

ERW's Objectives:

- Improve the quality of leadership and its impact on outcomes
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning experiences and its impact on outcomes
- Reduce the impact of poverty on attainment, support vulnerable learners and ensure all learners reach their potential
- Deliver high quality and bespoke support, challenge, and intervention to schools
- Communicate effectively with all stakeholders

Corporate business risks (threats) are scored against the risk (threats) evaluation matrix shown on page 4, using the probability and impact criteria shown on pages 5 and 6.

The Corporate Risk Register is a live document which is subject to regular review by the ERW Chief Officers. New business risks identified or escalated via Local Authority risk registers are captured as proposed business risks and considered for inclusion on the Corporate Risk Register by the Lead Chief Executive. The updated Corporate Risk Register is then formally reviewed by the ERW Executive Board. The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed regularly by the ERW Joint Committee.

Business risks are scored at inherent level (before any control measures are applied) and at residual level (after control measures have been applied).

Although control measures are applied, they may not be sufficient to reduce the residual score if external factors (outside of officer control) still have a high influence on the probability of the risk occurring or the impact should it occur, e.g. Review and Reform Programme. The heat map on page 7 shows the highest residual risks on the Corporate Risk Register.

Each risk has its own table showing the inherent and residual risk score along with the tolerance for the risk. Tolerance levels and responsible officers should ultimately be decided by the Joint Committee, who will be advised by the ERW Central Team.

To assist with the monitoring of changes to the Corporate Risk Register between reviews, the risk score table for each risk includes a movement column which shows if the residual risk has increased↑, decreased↓, or stayed the same↔. Where there

is no arrow icon, this process will commence from the report presented to the next Joint Committee.

The Corporate Risk Register for March-August 2021 contains 16 business risks (threats), each of which is indexed at page 8 and 9, and shown in detail on pages 10 to 32.

Risks are categorised under one of the four following groupings, with each grouping requiring an agreed tolerance level.

1. Financial Risks - Tolerance Level 6
2. Infrastructure Risks – Tolerance Level 8
3. People and Knowledge Risks – Tolerance Level 9
4. Governance and Compliance – Tolerance Level 4

Every risk is explained in three steps:

1. Event
2. Consequence
3. Impact

Risk Evaluation Matrix

Threats					
Probability	Very High	Low (4)	Medium (8)	High (12)	High (16)
	High	Low (3)	Medium (6)	Medium (9)	High (12)
	Medium	Low (2)	Low (4)	Medium (6)	Medium (8)
	Low	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)
		Low	Medium	High	Very High
		Impact			

Impact assessment criteria

(Review the risk against the following criteria, chose the one that best describes the impact and rate accordingly from 1 – 4)

Rating	Description	Financial Capital / Revenue	Political	Service / Operations
4	Very High	>40% to <100% budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political intervention required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catastrophic fall in service quality and statutory service standards are not met. Long term interruption to service provision. Report from regulator or inspectorate requiring major project for corrective action.
3	High	>15% to <40% budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major adverse political reaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major impact to service quality, statutory service standards are not met, long term disruption to operations, multiple partnerships affected. Report of breach to regulator with immediate correction to be implemented.
2	Medium	>5 % to < 15 % budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant adverse regional political reaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant fall in service quality, major partnership relationships strained, serious disruption to statutory service standards. Reportable incident to regulator(s).
1	Low	< 5% budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor adverse political reaction and complaints which are quickly remedied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor impact to service quality, minor statutory service standards are not met.

< = Less than

> =More than

Probability assessment criteria

(Select one of the ratings from the definitions below)

Rating	Annual Frequency			Probability	
	Description	Definition		Description	Definition
4	Very High	More than once in last 12 months		Very High	>85 % chance of occurrence
3	High	Once in last 2 years		High	>45% to <85 % chance of occurrence
2	Medium	Once in 3 years up to 10 years		Medium	>15% to < 45 % chance of occurrence
1	Low	Once in 10 years		Low	<15 % chance of occurrence

< = Less than

> =More than

Corporate Business Risks

The heat map below summarises the highest residual risks contained on the Corporate Risk Register.

Very High Probability	<p style="text-align: center;">12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuts to School Budgets 	
High Probability		<p style="text-align: center;">12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERW Governance
	<p style="text-align: center;">High Impact</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Very High Impact</p>

Index and Summary of Residual Business Risk Scores

Central

No.	Risk	Probability	Impact	Residual Risk	Movement	Page
1.1	Powys Estyn Monitoring results in continued follow up	2	4	8	↔	13
1.2	Pembrokeshire Estyn Monitoring result in follow up	2	4	8	↔	14
1.3	Carmarthenshire Estyn Monitoring result in follow up	1	4	4	↔	15
1.4	Swansea Estyn Monitoring result in follow up	1	4	4	↔	16
2	Failure to comply with Estyn Action Plan	2	4	8	↔	17
3	Failure to deliver Business Plan	2	2	4	↔	18
4	ERW Governance	3	4	12	↔	19
5	Data Protection	3	2	6	↔	20
6	ERW found not to provide Value for Money	2	3	6	↔	21
7	LA Failure to comply with Grant Regulations	2	3	6	↔	22
8	Failure to respond to qualifications 2021	2	3	6	↔	23

Financial

No.	Risk	Probability	Impact	Residual Risk	Movement	Page
1	Timeliness of Welsh Government Funding	2	3	6	↔	24
2	Delivery of National Mission	2	3	6	↔	25
3	Cost Savings Required by Welsh Government	1	4	4	↔	26
4	Funding current or future costs resulting from partners leaving the ERW consortium	2	4	8	New risk	27

Review and Reform

No.	Risk	Probability	Impact	Residual Risk	Movement	Page
1.	Lack of Clarity on functions	2	2	4	↔	28
2.	Lack of Communication	2	2	4	↔	29
3.	Transparency of Governance	2	3	6	↔	30

Impact of Covid-19

No.	Risk	Probability	Impact	Residual Risk	Movement	Page
1.	Failure to respond to impact of Covid-19	2	3	6	↔	31

Contextualisation

ERW (Education through Regional Working) is one of 4 regional education consortia in Wales. It is an alliance of four local authorities - Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Powys and the City and County of Swansea. The purpose of ERW is to deliver a single, consistent and integrated professional school improvement service for children and young people across the South-West and Mid-Wales region.

ERW works closely with Welsh Government and with the other three regional consortia to deliver national priorities and policies in Wales, such as literacy, numeracy and digital competence and improving learner outcomes.

The regional education consortia were formally established following the publication of the National Model for School Improvement by Welsh Government in 2014. The National Model is based on a vision of regional school improvement consortia working with and on behalf of local authorities to lead, orchestrate and co-ordinate the improvement in the performance of schools and education of young people. This would be achieved by allowing local authorities to work collaboratively to share good practice, knowledge and skills, build capacity and increase opportunities for constructive challenge and targeted support.

ERW works to communicate, broker and support the development of high performing school networks in order to identify the challenges and establish improvement pathways that lead to success. It seeks to ensure that every school is a good school offering high standards of teaching and good leadership resulting in all learners achieving their maximum potential. This can only be achieved by building school capacity through support, challenge and intervention so that they become self-improving, resilient organisations which continually improve outcomes for learners.

Our Objectives:

- 1. Developing a high-quality education profession**
- 2. Inspirational Leaders working collaboratively to raise standards**
- 3. Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being**
- 4. Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system**

ERW's VALUES:

To achieve our vision, we have defined values to guide all we do at ERW. These include:

- *Effectiveness*
- *Commitment*
- *Integrity*
- *Innovation*
- *Collaboration*

ERW utilises a wide range of flexible approaches so that bespoke solutions can be used to support schools at their point of need. We support teachers through the provision and brokering of professional learning programmes to support individuals in their leadership journey whilst building expertise and capacity where and when it is needed in schools across the region.

3.0 ERW Governance, Scrutiny and Accountability:

ERW is governed by a legally constituted Joint Committee whose membership is made up of the local authority Leaders in South-West and Mid-Wales.

ERW's Joint Committee is advised by the Executive Board which is made up of the five local authority Directors of Education in the region along with external school improvement experts, head teacher representatives and ERW's Chief Officers.

The Executive Board is responsible for monitoring and evaluating ERW's work, in particular through the work of the ERW Strategy Groups.

The ERW Strategy Groups are a critical aspect of ERW's governance arrangements. They are the primary driver for developing ERW's work in the key areas of:

- *Professional Learning and Research*
- *Leadership*
- *Curriculum*
- *Digital Skills*
- *Equity and Wellbeing*
- *Welsh*

Each Strategy Group will be responsible for monitoring the progress of the aspect of Business Plan actions for which they are responsible. They will also be responsible for co-constructing content in the following year's Business Plan.

While it is accepted that the context and setting of each Local Authority in ERW is different, the purpose of collaborating on a regional level is to achieve a greater scale of economy through co-operation. Whilst changes and innovations can be incorporated to take into account local priorities or differences, there must remain a degree of regional consistency.

The ERW Strategy Groups are a conduit for communication between the region and peers within the constituent Local Authority, and the wider profession. Group members are tasked with communicating their work externally, by using both local and regional communications channels.

The ERW Scrutiny Councillor Group meets with ERW officers on a quarterly basis and provides written feedback on its findings to the Joint-Committee. ERW officers attend local authority scrutiny sessions on a regular basis, providing updates and reports on the progress of the ERW Business Plan.

Central Risks

1.1 Estyn Monitoring activity results in continued follow up for Powys later than November 2021.(Governance and Compliance)

Description of Risk

Estyn follow up visits result in Powys continuing to be placed in category or requiring further attention.

Background

Powys was subject to an Estyn improvement conference in 2016 and 2017 primarily because the Authority had too many secondary schools in Estyn follow up

Powys received notice that they were to be inspected in July 2019. They were judged to be causing significant concern and requiring follow-up activity. The local authority has updated its improvement plans to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn have reviewed the authority's progress through a post-inspection improvement conference and progress conferences on Nov 28th. Estyn were reassured that all 4 progress criteria were being met sufficiently.

As Powys has developed their response and action plan following the inspection the scoring of this risk can manifest.

Objectives at Risk: All

Risk Control Measures

Collaboration with numerous regional programmes surrounding Leadership – Secondary Support Team being a good example

Local Mitigation – PIAP agreed, WG Improvement and Assurance Board, Scrutiny arrangements. Monthly meeting with all Political party leaders in the authority. Transformation Board established. Transformation Delivery Board established. Regular updates for Cabinet to ensure sufficient progress.

Risk Scores:

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	4	4	16	↔
Residual	2	4	8	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Lynette Lovell (Powys)

1.2 [Estyn Monitoring activity results in follow up for Pembrokeshire lasting longer than July 2022.](#)

Description of Risk

Estyn visits result in Pembrokeshire being placed in follow up / special measures or requiring further attention.

Background

Pembrokeshire has had two improvement conferences undertaken by Estyn. Pembrokeshire has received notice that they will be inspected by Estyn on the 2nd of December.

Pembrokeshire’s inspection report was published on the 12th of February. Following publication, Pembrokeshire local government education services have been deemed as causing significant concern, and requiring follow up activity. Pembrokeshire

Objectives at Risk : All

Risk Control Measures

The Local Authority will update its improvement plan, to show how it is going to address the 4 recommendations made. The Local Authority will have a Post Inspection Action Plan Improvement Conference, and progress conferences. Monitoring visit will take place July 2022.

Local Mitigation – PIAP agreed, WG Improvement and Assurance Board, Scrutiny arrangements. Monthly meeting with all Political party leaders in the authority. Transformation Board established. Transformation Delivery Board established. Regular updates for Cabinet to ensure sufficient progress.

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	4	4	16	↔
Residual	2	4	8	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Steven Richards Downes (Pembrokeshire)

1.3 Estyn Monitoring activity results in follow up for Carmarthenshire (Governance and Compliance)

Description of Risk

Estyn visits result in Carmarthenshire being placed in follow up / special measures or requiring further attention.

Background

Objectives at Risk : All

Risk Control Measures

- Ensure that there is clarity in terms of vision and staff role and remit in their work towards achieving this vision.
- Effective appointments and support and training provided to provide a high quality, skilled team of Senior Managers and officers.
- A regular review of core services, to determine whether outcomes are being achieved and where potential issues may be arising.
- Effective business function evaluation and monitoring in place as part of regular Directorate Team meetings with overview of risk register, financial planning, outcomes measurement etc.
- Effective and constructive partnership working with schools, Council Services, the regional Consortium and other partners who contribute to delivering school improvement and education services.
- Robust and honest self-evaluation, incorporating the views of a range of stakeholders and partners, leading to clear Business Plans identifying successes and challenges/areas to develop.
- Service and Business Plan development put in place in order to ensure most effective use of resources across services and with partners in order to achieve excellent outcomes for our children and young people.
- Effective Performance Management and performance reporting in place throughout the directorate.

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	2	4	8	↔
Residual	1	4	4	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Gareth Morgans (Carmarthenshire)

1.4 Estyn Monitoring activity results in follow up for Swansea (Governance and Compliance)

Description of Risk

Estyn visits result in Swansea being placed in follow up / special measures or requiring further attention.

Background

Objectives at Risk : All

Risk Control Measures

- The local authority benefits from strong leadership at all levels, strong partnership with schools and other key agencies and has a good track record of delivering strong outcomes for children and young people.
- Self-evaluation processes are robust and clear priorities are identified in operational plans. Areas of underperformance are identified as early as possible and support and challenge put in place to secure improvements.
- Existing monitoring processes will be further developed to ensure that key strategic priorities, eg foundation phase, wellbeing post 16 provision, school leadership, are addressed.
- Through our ERW partnership, the local authority will continue to secure good standards and overall progress of learners, including specifically raising standards in primary schools and provision for pupils in key stage 4.

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	2	4	8	↔
Residual	1	4	4	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Helen Morgan-Rees (Swansea)

2. Failure to comply with Estyn Action Plan (Governance and Compliance)

Description of Risk

Inspection/ Visit of Region finds less than adequate progress on any recommendation thus resulting in further follow up activity for ERW.

Background

ERW received a judgement of limited progress (Nov 2017) against Recommendation 1 (improvement in Schools Causing Concern, most notably secondaries), from its June 2016 inspection.

Following positive feedback from the Estyn team in 2019 over 2 visits, and the re-structure of the ERW Central Team to include a regional resource for secondary leadership, there was sufficient cause to de-escalate the probability of this risk.

However, as of the 2020-21 Academic Year the future of a regionally deployed support resource for Secondary school leadership is uncertain. Should this capacity be removed from the system, this risk will require re-evaluation.

Objectives at Risk : All

Risk Control Measures

- Schools Performance Team now meets regularly with each Principal Challenge Adviser individually to discuss early warning signs for schools, increasing chances of prevention and administering additional support where needed
- Renewed capacity within the ERW Secondary Subject Specialist Team
- ERW officers to support LA staff in targeted schools/departments

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	3	4	12	↔
Residual	2	4	8	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Interim Chief Officers, Lead Director and Lead Chief Executive

3. Failure to deliver Business Plan (Governance and Compliance)

Description of Risk

Delivery of Business Plan fails to meet the satisfaction of Welsh Government/WAO/Estyn.

Background

Monitoring systems and exception reporting were in place for the 2019-20 Business Plan. All Strategic Groups have supported the formation of 2020-21 Business Plan in an effective manner.

Indicative funding has been received for 2020-21 and budget setting exercises have been implemented working towards a costed Business Plan.

Objectives at Risk : All

Risk Control Measures

- Ongoing dialogue with Welsh Government and other monitoring bodies
- BP aligned to National Mission document
- Established Strategy Groups will continue to support and monitor progress of the 2020-21 Business Plan

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	2	3	6	↔
Residual	2	2	4	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Interim Chief Officers, Lead Director

4. ERW Governance (Governance and Compliance)

Description of Risk

Organisational Design, Governance or Legal footing of ERW found to be ineffective at securing consistent improvement across all LAs by Estyn / WAO / WG / Self-Evaluation, or to not be fit for organisational purpose. This then resulting in action by the inspectorate, or clawback of funds from WG.

Background

Estyn follow up report note that the governance structure has hindered progress. December 2017. Paper submitted to Autumn, 2019 Joint Committee surrounding revised Governance of ERW to support the new structure. Paper deferred, and requires clarification of financial delegation arrangements at all levels of the structure.

Notable factor: The Executive Board did not meet regularly in the 19-20 Academic Year. This can present significant risks with the Board containing several key stakeholders including – WG, Estyn, and Headteacher Board representatives.

Several Internal Audit Recommendations around changes to ERW's Governance, and updating of the Legal Agreement, remain outstanding and have been highlighted within the most recent audit report.

Objectives at Risk: All

Risk Control Measures

- Ian Altman and Greg Morgan appointed as Joint Chief Officers, September 2020 and will remain in post until end August 2021
- Revised Governance document is a current agenda item for Executive Board and Joint Committee

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	3	4	12	↔
Residual	3	4	12	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owners: Lead Chief Exec, Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, Lead Director, Interim Chief Officers

5.Data Protection (Governance and Compliance)

Description of Risk

ERW fails to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, resulting in action from the ICO.

Background

Currently ERW does not have a clearly designated Data Protection Officer which is a requirement of General Data Protection Regulations as of May 2018.

Objectives at Risk: All

Risk Control Measures

ERW has taken pro-active steps to prepare staff for GDPR, including awareness seminars at ERW Central Team Training. However, the absence of a dedicated DPO remains a concern.

Some of this risk is mitigated by the Local Authorities employing their own DPOs for schools respectively.

Executive Board 21.9.18 agreed an interim measure of the Managing Director being named DPO, with a view of appointing a Business and Finance Manager for ERW and naming them DPO once appointed and sufficiently trained.

This responsibility has been transferred to the Interim Chief Officers.

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	3	4	12	↔
Residual	2	3	6	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Interim Chief Officers, Lead Chief Executive, Lead Director

6. ERW is judged to not provide Value for Money (Governance and Compliance)

Description of Risk

ERW is judged to not provide Value for Money (Governance and Compliance)

Background

In ERW's 2017 Estyn Report, it is stated:

“Senior leaders understand that the current organisational design constrains ERW's ability to deliver value for money”

The revised ERW model is now in place, however efficiencies and full increase of funding to frontline services were not implemented until the 2020-2021 business year. Should this structure change further, the scoring of this risk will need to be revisited.

Objectives at Risk: All

Risk Control Measures

- Comprehensive VFM Framework in place.
- In house monitoring of effectiveness; support in any identified areas of concern.
- VFM monitoring and recommendations from Internal Audit undertaken.
- Annual Governance Statement
- Proposed financial efficiencies in the revised ERW Model.

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	3	4	12	↔
Residual	2	3	6	↔
Tolerance			6	

Risk Owner

Interim Chief Officers, Section 151 Officer, Principal Accountant, Lead Director

7. Local Authority failure to comply with Grant Regulations (Governance and Compliance)

Description of Risk

Individual LAs fail to comply with Grant Regulations and limited assurance given from other LA's to PCC, resulting in clawback of funding,

Objectives at Risk: All

Risk Control Measures

- Correspondence from Section 151 Officer and Internal Audit to all LAs.
- Assurance for PCC from each LA.
- Improved communication and understanding of roles, responsibilities and risks.
- Training and termly finance officers meeting.
- LA Local Delivery Plans sent to ERW Finance Team as costed documents

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	3	4	12	↔
Residual	2	3	6	↔
Tolerance			6	

Risk Owner

LA Section 151 Officers, Head of Internal Audit

8. Failure to respond to changes in process of awarding qualifications in summer 2021

Description of Risk

That the changes to arrangements for awarding qualifications in summer 2021 will not be responded to effectively by ERW officers in the Secondary Team.

Background

Due to Covid-19 and the external examinations were not sat in summer 2020 and centres were asked to develop Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) as well as complete a rank order for all WJEC qualifications. ERW central team had dialogue with a limited number of middle leaders regarding the range of appropriate evidence to complete this process. They did not, however, advise on any individual learner or take part in the process itself.

A standardisation process was developed by WJEC based on a range of criteria. However, eventually all learners in Wales were awarded their CAG or standardised grade, whichever was the higher.

Adaptations in specifications were initially put in place for learners in examination years and the Design and Delivery Group developed further changes to assessment in 2021. These were announced in December 2020. However, in the light of further lost face to face learning time in December and January, further adaptations have been announced in January 2021 and Centre-Determined Grades will be awarded for learners in 2021. ERW Secondary team will support schools with specific courses/qualifications as required.

Impact of Risk:

- Negative impact on learner outcomes across the region
- Lack of consistency in approach across the LAs
- Challenges regarding subjects with no secondary officer employed centrally

Risk Control Measures

- Network meetings and additional training to support most recent adaptations
- Agendas developed to ensure consistent approach across the LAs
- Facilitation of collaborative working between schools where appropriate
- Improved communication between WJEC and Headteacher groups
- Challenge Adviser training where appropriate
- Lead schools developed in key subject areas where appropriate

Risk Scores:

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	4	4	16	↔
Residual	2	3	6	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Interim Chief Officers, Directors of Education

Financial Risks

1. Timeliness of WG Funding (Financial Risk)

Description of Risk

WG funding may not be timely, resulting in underspend, lateness of planning, or an inability to spend at the end of the financial year.

Background

Financial forward planning with contingency arrangements so that essential implementation is not hindered.

Due to a significant dependence on grants and the use of ERW's reserves, timely receipt of WG funding is a key cash flow issue. In previous years, this issue was largely resolved through a WG quarterly payment profile of the RCSIG and PDG. For the current financial year, funding has gone direct to Local Authorities, with an element paid to ERW by the Local Authorities.

The key issue for ERW regarding this risk, is the need to receive indicative grant funding before the beginning of the financial year, so that Business Planning can take funding streams into account at the beginning of the process. Due to ongoing conversations around the future footprint of ERW, or any replacement, meant that funding for the 2021-22 financial year has gone direct to Local Authorities. It is unlikely that any indicative funding for future years will be advised until the future of ERW, or any replacement, is resolved and only at that point will we know whether it will be paid direct to ERW.

In-year variation funding from WG does occasionally materialise. This late arrival of funding is a contributing factor to this risk.

Objectives at Risk: All

Risk Control Measures

- A quarterly payment profile was established with Welsh Government in previous years.
- Financial forward planning with contingency arrangements so that essential implementation is not hindered.
- Constant communication with WG to improve expectation, and to improve timeliness of in-year funding.

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	3	3	9	↔
Residual	3	3	9	↔
Tolerance			6	

Risk Owner

Section 151 Officer, Lead Banker Authority and Principal Accountant

2. ERW unable to deliver National Mission (Financial Risk)

Description of Risk

ERW fails to deliver their elements of Welsh Government's National Mission. Subsequently, WG could tie funding conditions to this delivery, risking grant clawback.

Background

With the ERW Review and Reform programme having delivered a new regional structure with increased capacity, this risk can be scored lower as ERW can now better work towards the aim of the National Mission. Once the impact of this model can be measured, a case can be made for the removal of this risk. However, further changes to model may lead to a rescoring.

Changes made to the model in 2019-20 and the decision not to recruit for a number of posts in 2020-21 has the potential to increase the risk in this area where resource and capacity becomes an issue. This is still the case in the first part of the 2021-22 BP April-August.

Objectives at Risk: All

Risk Control Measures

- ERW Review and Reform Programme has delivered new structure, positively received by Estyn. (Meilyr Rowlands letter 28.06.2019)
- Aligning of ERW Business Plan to National Mission document

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	3	3	9	↔
Residual	2	3	6	↔
Tolerance			6	

Risk Owner

LA Directors, Joint Committee, Interim Chief Officers

3. Cost Savings Required by Welsh Government (Financial Risk)

Description of Risk

WG imposed a 3% savings target on the Consortia based on the total value of the RCSIG which equates to £1.06m in order to assist with funding the WG response to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the commitment to 'Renew and Recover' agenda ensures a funding stream of £150m nationally.

Background

£1.06m of savings were made in 2020-21 from the budgets of the strategy groups. Salaries and funding to schools was protected. The PDG was also protected. The EIG has been allocated and budgets communicated with ERW Officers for the year.

The Business Plan for the period April-August 2021 has benefitted from the decision to extend the grant conditions from 2020-21 through to August 2021.

Objectives at Risk: All

Risk Control Measures

- Ongoing dialogue with Welsh Government
- Monthly budget meetings to ensure any over/under spends are addressed timely.

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	1	4	4	↔
Residual	1	4	4	↔
Tolerance			6	

Risk Owner

Lead Director, Interim Chief Officers, Lead Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer and Principal Accountant

4. Funding current or future costs resulting from partners leaving the ERW consortium

Description of Risk

Former partners in the ERW Consortium do not fund their share of current or future costs resulting from them leaving, resulting in the costs having to be funded by the remaining partners in the ERW Consortium.

Background

- ERW Joint Agreement includes clauses to ensure that former partners in the ERW Consortium are required to fund their share of current or future costs resulting from them leaving.
- Difficulty in evidencing that current or future costs are as a result of a former partner leaving the ERW Consortium, e.g. When NPT left the ERW Consortium they still required the provision of services, therefore the ERW Consortium was unable to reduce its staffing numbers as they were required to provide the services for NPT. If NPT decided not to continue with the provision of services from the ERW Consortium in the future, resulting in a requirement for a reduction in staffing numbers at the ERW Consortium, the ERW Consortium would need to be able to attribute this cost to NPT as a result of them leaving the ERW Consortium.

Objectives at Risk: All

Risk Control Measures

- ERW Joint Agreement clauses to be invoked.
- Former partners reminded of their obligations under the ERW Joint Agreement having left the ERW Consortium.
- Current partners reminded of their obligations under the ERW Joint Agreement should they leave the ERW Consortium.
- Calculation and invoicing of any costs resulting from the former partners leaving the ERW Consortium to be undertaken at the earliest possible opportunity.

Risk Scores

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	3	4	12	New Risk
Residual	2	4	8	New Risk
Tolerance			6	

Risk Owner

Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, Chief Executive, Lead Director

Review and Reform

1. Lack of clarity on ERW's functions

Description of Risk

That the revised ERW structure does not bring sufficient clarity on the function of ERW and its central team. Ongoing discussions with regard to the future ERW Footprint impact on the ability to clarify functions and services.

Background

Despite thorough stakeholder engagement during the creation of the revised ERW structure (2018-2019 academic year) and work undertaken during the Autumn Term, 2019 to communicate and clarify the ERW's function to all stakeholders, recent developments with regard to the future ERW footprint could cause a significant impact on the perception of ERW within the education sector moving forward.

Impact of Risk:

- Unwillingness of schools to engage with ERW as a result of legacy perceptions
- Lack of clarity on the difference between the role of the LA, and the role of the region, among the teaching community
- Lack of confidence in the revised structure along with loss of trust within the profession

Risk Control Measures

- Ongoing and effective communications provided by the ERW Team on a weekly basis
- Communications Strategy group established centrally with membership linked to all areas of the BP.
- Consistent and ongoing dialogue is being undertaken with LA partners to ensure consistency of communication through both regional and local channels

Risk Scores:

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	2	3	6	↔
Residual	2	2	4	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Joint Committee, Lead Director, Interim Chief Officers

2. Lack of communication and clarity of roles between LA and ERW staff

Description of Risk

Insufficient communication and clarity between LA and ERW staff leads to conflicting messages reaching schools

Background

Addition curriculum support or other roles according to their need and priority areas may need to be employed e.g. with less than 2fte staff members for Secondary English support across the region, a LA may wish to 'top up' locally. The linguistic needs and nature of each LA are different. The current ERW specialist capacity is unable to guarantee that the linguistic needs of all Local Authorities can be met.

With clarity, LA and ERW staff could complement each other and add value but it is imperative that communication channels are robust and that clear protocols are in place.

Impact of Risk:

- Reinforcement of the narrative that there are "too many layers"
- Raising questions surrounding value for money
- Lack of clarity for schools on what advice to follow
- Local Authorities being perceived as "not buying in" to the new ERW function

Risk Control Measures

- Consistent two-way communication between local resources supporting the new curriculum, and the regional body
- Join-up of work and personnel wherever possible
- Use of local arrangements to cascade the regional message
- Membership of Regional Strategy Groups to contain all 5 constituent LAs
- Brokerage pathway protocol has been agreed at Director Level

Risk Scores:

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	3	3	9	↔
Residual	2	2	4	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Lead Chief Executive, Interim Chief Officers, Directors of Education, Lead Director

3. Failure to improve transparency through governance arrangements

Description of Risk

That the changes to ERW's operational governance arrangements do not increase transparency / confidence of the profession.

Background

ERW has adopted some enhanced strategic meetings which include a variety of key stakeholders in the decision making process. The main aim of this change is that there is increased transparency around decision making and allocation of funding. Should these strategic meetings fail to improve transparency, there will be significant adverse effects.

The revised Governance Structure document was deferred by the Joint Committee. Strategy Groups were signed off by the Joint Committee in December 2019 Joint Committee. Further elements of the structure are now impacted upon by the ERW Footprint agenda.

The Executive Board has not met regularly during the 19-20 Academic Year with stakeholders including WG, Estyn and Headteacher Board representatives.

All budget holders meet regularly with Principal Accountant and have an allocated budget to discuss in conjunction with the strategy groups. These groups will be reconvened in autumn 2020 and monitor the BP using the monitoring and evaluation spreadsheet and have continued during the first quarter of 2021-22.

Impact of Risk:

- Loss of confidence from regulatory bodies
- Loss of trust with the teaching profession and constituent LAs
- Increased tensions within the context of funding for education
- Challenges regarding value for money

Risk Control Measures

- Consistent Terms of Reference for all Strategy Groups
- Clear lines of reporting for all groups
- Director Group oversight of decisions made and approval of any decisions that require it
- Potential publishing of delegated decisions on ERW website.
- Directors receive monthly updates of ERW funding to schools

Risk Scores:

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	4	4	16	↔
Residual	2	3	6	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Lead Chief Executive, Interim Chief Officers, Directors of Education, Principal Accountant

Impact of Covid-19

1. Failure to respond to the impact of Covid-19

Description of Risk

That ERW will not respond in an agile and appropriate manner to the impact of Covid-19 on the organisation and school support.

Background

Covid-19 has impacted on the way the organisation has worked since March 2020. Initially, there was a focus on supporting the national Continuity of Learning plan and developing a response linked to distance and then blended learning.

Schools and settings reopened fully from Sept 14th onwards. However, the impact of Covid-19 meant that there were partial closures as well as staff and pupils self-isolating in the autumn term.

Further loss of learning at the end of the autumn term and January has required a focus, once again, on remote learning and the Blended Learning agenda and support for synchronous and asynchronous learning has continued during summer term 2021,

Impact of Risk:

- Failure to deliver all aspects of the Business Plan
- Lack of effective support for distance and blended learning in schools
- Loss of trust with the teaching profession and constituent LAs

Risk Control Measures:

- Teams repurposed to ensure focus on key areas at risk
- Agile response when planning and delivering support for schools e.g. amending PL offer to ensure high quality delivery online
- Engage with all stakeholders to align key messages and share strong practice
- Playlists and resources to support remote synchronous and asynchronous learning.
- Engagement with the 'Learning Forward'/'Renew and Recover' agenda to ensure continuity.

Risk Scores:

Risk Stage	Probability	Impact	Risk Score	Movement
	(a)	(b)	(a) X (b)	↑↓↔
Inherent	4	4	16	↔
Residual	2	3	6	↔
Tolerance			4	

Risk Owner

Interim Chief Officers, SLT, Central Team

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