



Agenda Item 8

Forth Valley and West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative Progress Report

Falkirk Council

Title: Forth Valley and West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative Progress Report
Meeting: Education, Children and Young People Executive
Date: 23 March 2021
Submitted By: Director of Children's Services

1. Purpose of Report

The report provides an update on the work of the Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) in building a collaborative culture to close the socio-economic gap and improve the outcomes for every learner.

2. Recommendation

2.1 Education, Children & Young People Executive is asked to note the contents of:-

- (1) The approved Regional Improvement Collaborative Recovery Plan**
- (2) The updated Regional Improvement Collaborative Governance Plan**

3. Background

- 3.1 As a result of the impact of the global pandemic, a review of ongoing RIC provision was carried out by Education Scotland.
- 3.2 As a result of the recommendations of the review officers from across the four Councils in the six themed Work Streams, have focussed their efforts in supporting colleagues and children and young people in educational recovery. Work Stream plans have been modified and the strategic Recovery Plan has been produced and approved in December 2020 (See Appendix 1). All plans have a Health and Wellbeing element included in their application.
- 3.3 A second national closure of schools took place from the 6th of January. To meet the further demand for support from schools and practitioners, supplementary specifically designed programmes to support practitioners and learners in both Literacy and Numeracy have been introduced. These are in line with aims and objectives set out in the Recovery Plan.
- 3.4 The review also recommended that the RIC's Governance become more inclusive and, as a result, a new RIC Governance model has been put in place. Key elements of this involve the inclusion of pupil voice, parents and partners from Further and Higher Education in determining future RIC actions and policies (see Appendix 2).

- 3.5 There is an ongoing review of the role and function of the RICs being carried out by the Scottish Government.

4. Considerations

- 4.1 There are no major considerations arising from this report.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Both the Recovery Plan and updated Governance Structure have been developed in consultation with both the four Local Authorities participating in the FVWL RIC and with Education Scotland.

6. Implications

Financial

- 6.1 The Forth Valley and West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative received a grant of £573 090 for the period 01/08/2020 – 31/1/2021 from the Scottish Government. Funding has been sought at the same level for session 2021 – 2022 and this is awaiting confirmation.

Resources

- 6.2 The staff resources of the four Local Authorities which make up the FVWL RIC have been allocated by the Senior Education Officers of each Council to ensure that the objectives set out in both the Recovery Plan and phase 2 of the Regional Improvement Plan can be met.

Legal

- 6.3 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risk

- 6.4 No risk implications have been identified.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 6.5 There are no implications for sustainability or environmental impact arising from this report.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The work of the FVWL RIC is ongoing despite the challenges faced by operating during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 7.2 The work carried out by the FVWL RIC continues to focus on raising attainment and reducing the poverty related attainment gap.

Director of Children's Service

Author: Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services; 01324 504686;
robert.naylor@falkirk.gov.uk

Date: 24 February 2021

Appendices

Appendix 1 - The approved Regional Improvement Collaborative Recovery Plan

Appendix 2 - The updated Regional Improvement Collaborative Governance Plan

List of Background Papers:

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:

- None



**Forth Valley & West Lothian
Regional Improvement Collaborative
Recovery Plan
for 2020-2021**

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The Forth Valley and West Lothian (FV&WL) Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) is entering the second year of its 3 year plan, and has undertaken a review of priorities in light of the COVID-19 situation that has impacted on education of children and young people in the region and throughout Scotland. In response to the situation, a recovery plan has been produced which supports the existing plan as well as introducing a focus on recovery of learning for children and young people. The vision for the RIC remains to:

Drive excellence through raising attainment: ensuring that every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy set out within Curriculum for Excellence levels, and the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed; and

Achieving equity: ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

(Please refer to the full 3 year plan: [Forth Valley & West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative Plan 2019-2022](#) and the [Work stream plans 2019- 2022](#), for full details). The Plan will be updated in 2021 to take account of recovery planning and any adjustments to plans.

Work streams

To support the recovery of learning for children and young people, the following work streams will continue, and have revised their plans:

- Numeracy – focus on learning loss and biggest gaps (draft outline plan attached)
- Literacy – focus on learning loss and biggest gaps (draft outline plan attached)
- Health & Well Being - a review of this workstream is underway to provide clarity and meet needs of children, staff and families as a result of COVID -19
- Curriculum will now have renewed focus on Digital Learning

A new RIC Development officer has been appointed in October 2020. A revised programme and monitoring of all the workstreams will be established, supported by Project Plans, clear outcomes and milestones. Performance monitoring and improvement planning will be embedded into all plans with the lead for Performance Information work supporting the Development Officer in this role with support from Education Scotland as required.

The appointment of a Digital Officer is underway. The post will lead on the development of digital learning across the four authorities, linking with national and other developments. In particular furthering opportunities with the national e-learning offer and the RIC offer and curriculum transformation.

The STEM work stream will reconnect leads from the local authorities and build partnerships with Forth Valley & West Lothian colleges. The RAISE Science officers from each local authority will work with each other to develop the programme in primary schools supported by Education Scotland.

Other areas of collaboration and focus will continue to develop and respond to needs identified across the four authorities as the FVWL RIC matures and evolves. In particular:

- The **STEM** work stream will connect leads from the local authorities and build partnerships with Forth Valley & West Lothian colleges. The RAISE Science officers from each local authority will work with each other to develop the programme in primary schools and in response to national developments.
- **Career Long Professional learning (CLPL):** This group will continue to work together to co-ordinate and develop CLPL across the RIC supported by the RIC CPD Manager system which enables practitioners to participate in learning from any of the local authorities. Access to national CLPL programmes provided by ES will continue to be available and bespoke RIC CLPL will continue to be accessible from ES as appropriate.
- **Data Analysis** - The data coaches (one from each local authority) will continue to support schools and workstream leads in the use of data for numeracy and literacy with a key role in informing learning and

teaching strategy for improvement. They will work together collaboratively to share their learning and expertise, and with the Attainment advisor from Education Scotland. **The data coaches will also support the Performance Lead and the Development Officer with performance information.**

- Early Learning and Childcare will continue with established networks, sharing and collaborative practice.
- Community Learning and Development, Parental and Family Engagement and Educational Psychology continue to work together.
- There will be a new strand of engagement around Youth Voice and how this can be reflected more explicitly and meaningfully across the FVWL RIC.

Education Scotland staff are involved in all the workstreams, working alongside colleagues, building capacity and providing support.

Governance

The structure for the FVWL RIC is well established with a model that effectively reflects the principle of leading from the middle, collaboration and bottom up. The RIC lead officer reports on the progress of the Collaborative to respective Chief Executives and to local elected members via the relevant education committees of each council. Centre colleagues are also updated on the work of the RIC. Following the uncertainty and challenges during COVID-19, communication, engagement and governance will be revisited and strengthened to reflect new circumstances and ways of working.

The existing governance arrangements will continue, however it has been agreed that lead roles (Chief Executive Officer and RIC Lead Officer) will be aligned to provide coherence to the work that is being undertaken on a regional basis and will sit with one local authority for an 18 month period which will then be open to review. This took effect on 30th September 2020. The RIC Lead Officer will work closely with the Senior Regional Advisor for Forth Valley and West Lothian at Education Scotland and with the other RIC Leads across Scotland.

In addition, a new strategic group entitled, 'Health & Well Being Strategic Group' is being considered. The rationale and proposal for how this may be developed is set out in a consultation paper. This is currently undergoing a consultation phase with stakeholders (details within the draft proposal).

FVWL RIC Numeracy Recovery Plan summary 2020 (DRAFT)

This short-term RIC numeracy plan has been shared and discussed with LA leads, with a positive response from all LAs across the RIC. It is built on the original Numeracy plan and is adaptable to the current circumstances.

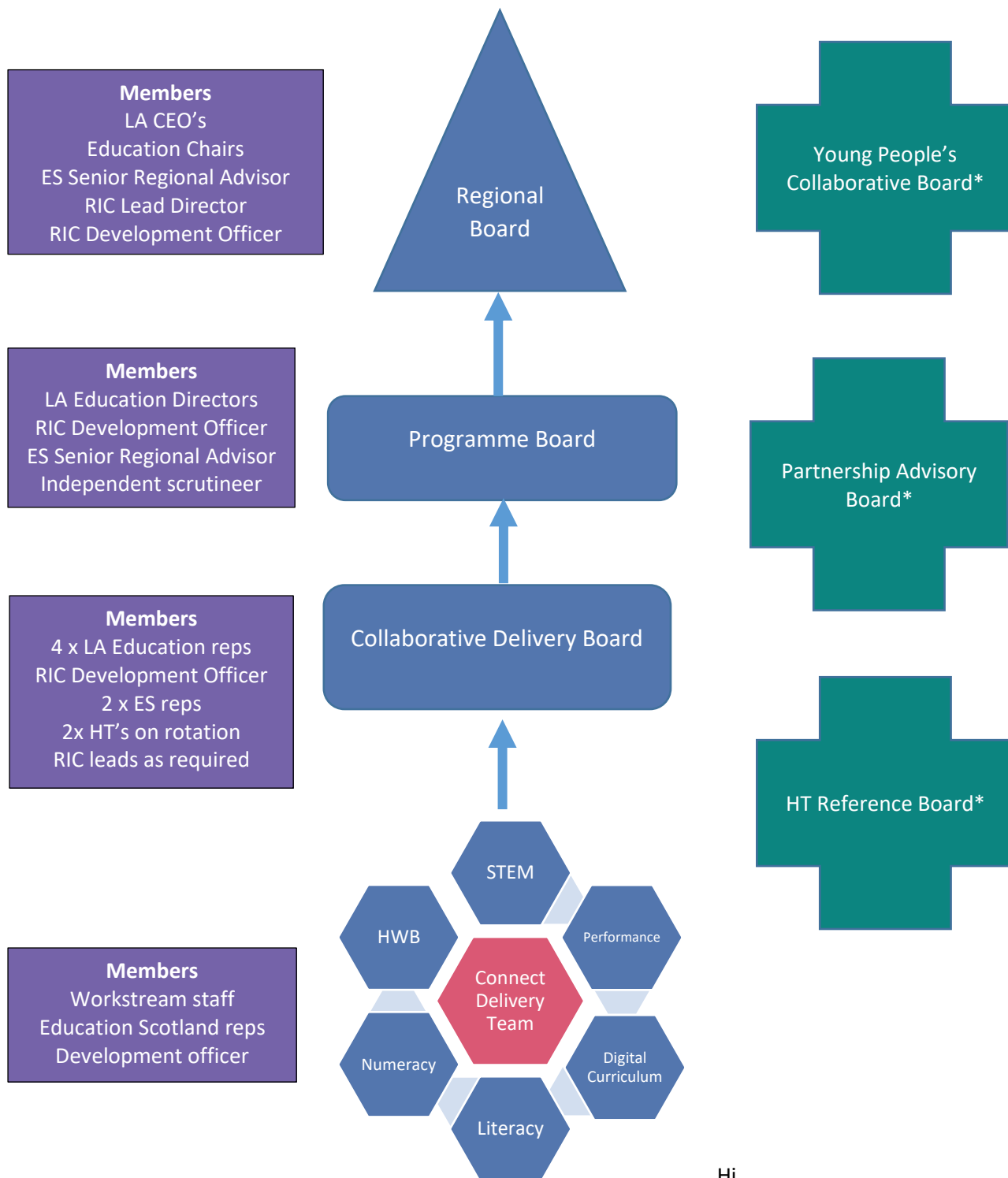
Programme/Activity	Target Audience	Rationale
Recovery interventions	Practitioners - first, second and third level learners	Create a series of recovery lessons/ diagnostic materials for first, second and third level learners. Materials can be used by teachers to reinforce and supplement learning in the classroom, and will link to key pressure points at each level. Online support will be provided for practitioners through the use of webinar sessions.
Video tutorials	Practitioners	A number of tutorial videos have been created to introduce teachers to effective lessons formats in how to further develop number sense. Lessons and activities are effective practice promoting pupil led learning. Tutorials further enhance teacher's pedagogy in creating rich learning experiences for learners. Provide opportunity for teachers to engage in online webinars with the numeracy team. Webinar participants will access video tutorials, which will provide a basic knowledge of these activities, before embarking on webinars. Lesson starter pack materials will be created for teachers. Many of the lessons and activities can be introduced in class with little financial outlay, and are based on enhancing pedagogy and teacher subject knowledge. Create video tutorials to show teachers 'the what and the how' in why manipulatives are important to use during numeracy/maths lessons. Again, webinars will be created to further enhance teacher understanding.
Early/first level training, first/second level training, second/third level training	Practitioners	The numeracy academy training in the short term will be delivered through webinars, rather than attending the numeracy academy. Although the lesson study model cannot be used in its ideal format, teachers will still be supported by the RIC numeracy team online. The team will provide support learning materials and resources, and regular online support. They will continue to facilitate a mid-training collaboration session to share effective practice.

FVWL RIC Literacy Recovery Plan summary 2020 (DRAFT)

Programme/Activity	Target Audience	Rationale
Support and liaison		
Regular sharing of resources and research via Twitter, blog & email	All FVWL practitioners	To ensure that all FVWL practitioners have easy access to current literacy research and CLPL offers.
English PTs' Network	English PTs	To bring together subject specific practitioners from the 4 LAs for support, collaboration and to share good practice.
Secondary Support for Learning PTs' Network	SfL PTs	As above.
EAL Teachers' Network	EAL Practitioners	As above.
"Let's talk about..." sessions on request	All practitioners	To bring together practitioners to discuss specific areas of concern and/or interest.
Programme - Literacy Tutoring (pilot project)	BGE English practitioners & pupils	There is extensive evidence showing the impact of tutoring to support pupils who have fallen behind but an estimated 80% of disadvantaged pupils currently do not have access to quality individual tuition (EEF & Sutton Trust).
Outdoor Learning for Literacy	Early Years, primary & secondary practitioners	Outdoor learning will be an important component of recovery plans so sharing good practice in this area will be of value.
Reading		
Working Group - Developing teachers' professional judgement of achievement of a level in reading	Early – 4 th Level practitioners & Literacy QAMSOs	Recognition of the need for "systematic, widespread and effective collaboration" (OECD) and increased practitioner confidence in the judgement of achieving a level.
Working Group - Reading Accreditation Partnership with Scottish Book Trust	Primary & secondary practitioners	Building a Reading Culture (Working Group) has been an integral component of the FVWL RIC plan for several years; this now dovetails with the SBT Reading Accreditation (the pilot programme was successful and is now being rolled out to all FVWL schools).
Programme - Reciprocal Reading (8 weeks)	Upper primary & BGE English teachers	Reciprocal Reading is rated as high impact on the EEF Toolkit and highlighted as having *FVWL RIC Literacy Academy RR programme now has Education Scotland endorsement.
Programme - Disciplinary Literacy (8 weeks).	Non-English teachers of BGE pupils	Disciplinary Literacy is identified as a priority by EEF for "struggling students" ("Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools").
Programme - Reading Recovery: CPD for 2 practitioners who started training in 2019; IPD for 4 other FVWL practitioners	Early Years & primary practitioners	Reading Recovery is an early intervention that targets children with the most complex problems in reading and writing and enables them to reach age expected levels within 20 weeks (Reading Recovery Europe).

Programme - Paired Reading for learning assistants & parent/carer groups	Learning assistants; parents/carers	EEF “Working with Parents to Support Children’s Learning” recommends providing practical strategies to support learning at home. EEF “Closing The Gap: Key Lessons” highlights that teaching assistants can be used more effectively when properly trained and supported.
Writing		
Webinars - Stephen Graham recordings to be shared with all practitioners with accompanying “challenge questions”	Primary & BGE English teachers	RIC and national data reveal a clear writing gap for learners at risk of missing out. The Stephen Graham “Reading into Writing” webinars (May 2020) engaged 231 FWVL practitioners & many expressed interest in further sessions.
Webinars – Building a Writing Culture & Moderating Writing	Primary & secondary practitioners	As above. These webinars will build on the work done in May 2020.
Other		
Programme - Winning Scotland Foundation Literacy Growth Mindsets	Primary & secondary practitioners	WSF evidence shows that pupils participating in growth mindset programmes become more confident, engaged and achieve more as a result of this work. The course has been tailored to the current situation.

Forth Valley & West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative Structure



Hi

**Core membership of Parent Councils, Colleges with invited partners included as required. Partners could include Health, Social Work, Chambers of Commerce etc.*

*** Membership to be determined by Young People at the RIC participation event in April*

	Members	Meet	Purpose
Connect Delivery Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RIC workstream staff Education Scotland reps RIC Development officer 	Monthly	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To add value to the work of each LA. To bring coherence across the priority workstreams and work collaboratively to plan and develop themes for improvement. To use information from the RIC Performance Profile to inform the direction of focus and to identify areas requiring improvement to support achieving excellence and equity aims. To further develop the Communication and Engagement strategy in collaboration with the Communication Team. To inform practitioners, leaders and partners about the work of each workstream. To support and develop a culture that empowers practitioners and develops systems leadership capacity by delivering quality professional learning programmes and providing opportunities to lead the growing range of projects supporting the RIC priorities.
Collaborative Delivery Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 x LA Education reps RIC Development Officer 2 x ES reps 2x HT's on rotation RIC leads as required 	Monthly	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To provide advice and support to the Connect Delivery Team in shaping and delivering outcomes for each priority. To ensure that workstream actions are in accordance with the overall vision and strategic direction of the RIC. To share key developments in LAs and to identify and consider opportunities for collaborative working that will support improvement outcomes. To scrutinise performance of the Workstreams. To evaluate progress with development plans. To oversee the consultations carried out with Advisory Boards. To present papers for decision at the Programme Board.
Programme Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA Education Directors RIC Development Officer ES Senior Regional Adviser Independent Scrutineer 	Quarterly	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To provide strategic direction for the vision and aims of the RIC. To approve ongoing Finance on a quarterly basis. To ensure that all partners and stakeholders are fully consulted and engaged in the development of the RIC. To evaluate the overall performance of the RIC and support a robust measurement plan. To provide strategic support to facilitate clear communication between the key groups leading the work of the RIC. To review and report on the impact of the grant on progress in achieving outcomes.
Regional Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA Chief Executive Officers Education elected members ES Senior Regional Advisor RIC Lead Director RIC Development Officer 	Bi-annually	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To share the vision of the Collaborative. To drive the success of the FV&WL RIC plan. To support and facilitate collaborative projects and working together. To oversee the RIC grant allocation from the Scottish Government.
HT Reference Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RIC Development Officer Primary & Secondary HT reps 	Quarterly	
Partnership Advisory Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA Parent Councils reps College reps Invited partners as required <p>Could include Health, Social Work, Chambers of Commerce etc - tbc</p>	Tbc	
Young People's Collaborative Board	Tbc – April 2021. CLD taking forward in the meantime	Tbc	

FV&WL RIC Governance timetable - 2021

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
HT Reference Board		Tuesday 2nd			Tuesday 4th			Thursday 19th			Tuesday 2nd	
Connect Delivery Group	Wednesday 13th	Wednesday 10th	Wednesday 10th	Second week	Second week	Second week	Second week	Second week	Second week	Second week	Second week	Second week
Collaborative Delivery Board	Tuesday 26th	Wednesday 24th	Wednesday 24th	Thursday 29th	Thursday 27th	Wednesday 23rd	Thursday 29th	Wednesday 25th	Wednesday 22nd	Wednesday 27th	Wednesday 24th	Wednesday 22nd
Programme Board			Friday 5th			Friday 4th			Friday 3rd			Friday 3rd
Regional Board						Thursday 17th					Tuesday 9th	
Partnership Advisory Board												
Young People's Collaborative Board												