

EE24. Forth Valley and West Lothian Improvement Collaborative – Progress Report and Update on the Scottish Government “Empowering Schools” Agenda

The Education Executive considered a report by the Director of Children’s Services which provided an update on the work of the Regional Improvement Collaborative for Education involving Falkirk, Clackmannanshire, Stirling and West Lothian Councils. It also provided an update on the Scottish Government’s Empowering Schools agenda and its decision not to progress the draft Education (Scotland) Bill, at this time.

Work between the four authorities had continued to develop approaches and strategies to support schools and a Development Officer had been appointed to assist development of the Phase 2 Regional Collaborative Improvement Plan. The draft Phase 2 plan had been submitted to Education Scotland, and was circulated as Appendix 5 to the report.

Information was provided on the impact of the Scottish Government’s decision not to introduce the Education (Scotland) Bill at this time, and to an agreement that local government would deliver the Headteacher’s Charter, meaningful school empowerment, collaboration, and pupil and parent participation across Scotland.

Additional targeted funding of £46m would be available over 3 years, £10m of which would be allocated to support the six regional improvement collaboratives. A bidding approach would be developed for each regional improvement collaborative to access this funding.

It was anticipated that the pace of progress would increase once additional staffing resources were received from Education Scotland and funding was received from the Scottish Government.

The Education Executive adjourned at 9.50 a.m. to consider the contents of Appendix 5, which had been made available at the start of the meeting, and reconvened at 10.25 a.m. with all Members present as per the sederunt.

Decision

The Education Executive:-

- (1) noted the letter received from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education (attached as appendix 1 to the report) which intimated that the Scottish Government had published a draft Education (Scotland) Bill but that it would not be introduced to Parliament at this time;**
- (2) noted the Education Reform – Joint Agreement reached between the Scottish Government and COSLA (attached as appendix 2 to the report) and referenced in the letter detailed above;**

- (3) noted the joint statement made by the Scottish Government and COSLA regarding the Joint Agreement (attached as appendix 3 to the report);**
- (4) noted that the Cabinet Secretary, in his statement to Parliament on 26 June 2018, announced that up to £10m would be made available to enhance regional capacity to support schools (the full statement is attached as appendix 4 of the report);**
- (5) noted the appointment of the Regional Improvement Collaborative Development Officer;**
- (6) noted the Phase 2 Forth Valley and West Lothian (FVWL) Improvement Collaborative Plan which was submitted to Education Scotland on 3 September 2018, attached as appendix 5 to the report, and**
- (7) agreed that the Director of Children's Services provide further reports to the Education Executive which detail:-**
 - i. feedback received from Education Scotland on the Phase 2 Regional Improvement Plan;**
 - ii. the allocation of support to be received from Education Scotland officers;**
 - iii. the level of financial support the FVWL Collaborative will receive from the Scottish Government, and**
 - iv. the arrangements for evaluating progress regarding the Headteachers' Charter, Parental and Community Engagement, and Pupil Participation.**