



# **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:** 17 September 2019  
**Submitted By:** Director of Children's Services

**1. Purpose of Report**

The report provides an update on the work of the Regional Improvement Collaborative.

**2. Recommendations**

**2.1 The Education, Children and Young People Executive is asked to:**

- (1) note the contents of this report; and**
- (2) agree that a further progress report is presented to the Education, Children and Young People Executive in January 2020.**

**3. Background**

**3.1** At its meeting of 29 January 2019 the Education Executive noted the progress of the Phase 2 Forth Valley and West Lothian (FVWL) Regional Improvement Plan to Education Scotland and the development of the Governance Plan to accompany the Phase 2 Plan. It was agreed that the Director of Children's Services would provide further reports which would detail:

- the offer received from Education Scotland to support the Phase 2 Regional Improvement Plan;
- the use of funds to support the delivery of the Phase 2 Plan, received from the Scottish Government;
- the level of support the FVWL Collaborative will receive from the Scottish Government.

**3.2** This report provides information regarding the offer from Education Scotland to support the Phase 2 Regional Improvement Plan; the level of support the FVWL Collaborative will receive from the Scottish Government including progress with recruitment to support the plan's delivery and progress with delivery of the plan and information about next steps.

### Progress of the offer from Education Scotland

- 3.3 The Lead Officer and the Directors from each Local Authority within the Regional Collaborative met with the new Senior Regional Advisor (Forth Valley and West Lothian) from Education Scotland in May 2019. An outline was provided of the team who will support the Regional Collaborative and this will include specialist Curriculum support, attainment advisors (one for each Local Authority), Community Learning and Development (CLD) officer, Parental Engagement officer and Digital Learning officers.
- 3.4 The Lead Development Officer (FVWL) has met with the individual team members from Education Scotland to outline progress of the work-streams and discuss future plans and proposals for Education Scotland colleagues to engage with the work of the Improvement Collaborative.
- 3.5 As an outcome of this process, a full planning day is being arranged for September 2019 with lead colleagues in the Improvement Collaborative and the Education Scotland team.
- 3.6 A number of key 'asks' of Education Scotland will be requested by FVWL Improvement Collaborative including:
  - Support with developing the Curriculum- Broad General Education and Senior Phase;
  - Support with addressing recommendations in key Scottish Government reviews for example, the Personal and Social Education (PSE) curriculum; and
  - Developing digital technology to support a virtual online campus for pupils across the Regional Collaborative, and also to support the development of a Continuous Lifelong Professional Learning (CLPL) programme for teachers, support workers and partners in CLD and the Education Psychology team.

### Scottish Government Funding Support

- 3.7 The Forth Valley and West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative received an offer of grant for £899,270 from the Scottish Government on 1 November 2018. This grant covers the period from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019.
- 3.8 A grant return on use of funds was submitted to the Scottish Government in August 2019.
- 3.9 The main use of the grant was to recruit a full time team of lead people to develop and progress the aims of the Phase 2 plan. The lead Director and lead Development Officer for the Improvement Collaborative have both been funded from the grant, and from February 2019 the following posts have been appointed to support the work stream priorities:

Lead Quality Improvement Officers – Numeracy (2), Literacy (1), Continuous Lifelong Professional Learning (1); Performance Officer (Data Analysis); Support Officers (4, one for each Local Authority); Data Coaches (4, one for each Local Authority); Numeracy Pedagogues (2); Business Management Support (0.5); Admin Support (to be recruited-September 2019).

- 3.10 The appointment of full time lead people to each of the work streams has led to an increased pace in development and delivery of objectives. This is evidenced in the work of the Numeracy work stream where a full Numeracy Academy has been developed and will be launched in August 2019. This will support the aims to close poverty related attainment gaps in numeracy from early years through to secondary level. Specific schools have been targeted with bespoke programmes to develop teachers and supporting staff in using intervention strategies to improve numeracy.

#### Progress with the Phase 2 Plan

- 3.11 A key element of the Phase 2 Plan was to devise and deliver a Communication and Engagement Strategy. This has been successfully developed and Implemented. The phase 2 plan was shared with schools along with regular news bulletins, power-point presentations for inset meetings, and the lead teams regularly attending Head Teacher and Local Authority meetings.
- 3.12 The new FVWL Digital Platform was launched in February 2019 and provides information and updates about the work of the Improvement Collaborative. This is supported by a RIC twitter feed and new You Tube Channel. A FVWL Consultation on the 'Ask and Offer' of the RIC was carried out in January 2019 with a full analysis and Summary paper produced to highlight key outcomes, and inform further planning.
- 3.13 Primary and Secondary Head Teachers Reference Groups have been established and are useful sounding boards and advisers to the work streams and Directors group.
- 3.14 A range of engagement events have been undertaken to provide practitioners with the opportunity to become more involved with the work of the Improvement Collaborative, network and develop relationships across the four local authorities. Events have included an Early Years Practitioners Conference in February 2019 attended by 250 people, and a middle leaders conference, 'It's a Good Time to Collaborate' in May 2019 attended by 300 colleagues. The first set of termly meetings took place in May and June 2019 where all the Primary/Early Years Head Teachers and Heads of Establishments met, followed by all the Secondary Head Teachers. It has been agreed to hold these events four times a year with each Local Authority hosting and leading a meeting. A further development will be to hold themed conferences in Session 2019-20 led by each work stream, and so for example, there will be a FVWL Numeracy Conference in November 2019.

- 3.15 To fully support the implementation of the Phase 2 Plan and deliver on the key 'asks' conveyed by respondents in the FVWL Consultation (January 2019), a substantial Continuous Lifelong Professional Learning (CLPL) programme has been developed and will be launched in September 2019. This involves approximately 40 facilitators partnering with the Improvement Collaborative's Continuous Lifelong Professional Learning (CLPL) Team and engaged from a wide range of areas such as Universities, Police Scotland, Unions (Teaching and Non), schools, Community Learning and Development (CLD), 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector.
- 3.16 The plan has been further progressed by building and widening partnerships that are supporting a range of projects being undertaken to support the Collaborative's priorities (from May 2019). Some of the partners are:
- Winning Scotland Foundation – Numeracy and Literacy Mindsets (75 practitioners);
  - Forth Valley and West Lothian Colleges - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Strategy;
  - Stirling University- 2 Professional Learning programmes (school senior leaders), Consultation role and supporting self –evaluation;
  - Scottish College for Educational Leadership- Columba 1400 programme for Head Teachers, Officers and Education Scotland Colleagues (20 x 3 cohorts);
  - Scottish Coaching for Leadership Improvement Programme- Scottish Government initiative to support Improvement Methodology, bespoke FVWL Collaborative engagement (30);
  - Scottish Book Trust- National pilot of Reading accreditation programme with 40 schools; and
  - Gateway –Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Manager- to support the co-ordination of, access to and evaluation of FVWL Continuous Lifelong Professional Learning (CLPL) programmes.
- 3.17 The next step for the FVWL Improvement Collaborative is to create the Phase 3 plan (September 2019). This will be informed by an interim report (March 2019), School Improvement Plans for Session 2019-20, Education Scotland input and evaluation from key engagement events.
- 3.18 The Phase 3 plan and progress report will be shared with the Regional Board (Chief Executive Officers and Lead Spokespeople of each Local Authority) within the FVWL Regional Improvement Collaborative at their bi-annual meeting in October 2019.

#### **4. Considerations**

##### **Readiness for Empowerment**

- 4.1 The FVWL Regional Improvement Collaborative and Falkirk Council Children's Services will consider the recommendations within the Education Scotland report in the coming months and ensure that our practice and

engagement continues to reflect the aspirations of an empowered school system.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 The Phase 1, 2 and Phase 3 Plans have been developed in collaboration across all four local authority areas.
- 5.2 The Lead Officer and Senior Officers from across the Collaborative continue to engage with wider stakeholders from each Council's Community Planning Partnership and with trade unions and parent representatives to ensure that they are included in the developing work of the collaborative.
- 5.3 Further consultation is ongoing through the implementation of the Phase 3 Plan and are outlined in the Communication and Engagement Strategy within the plan.

## **6. Implications**

### **Financial**

- 6.1 As outlined at paragraph 3.7 above the FVWL Regional Improvement Collaborative has received a grant from the Scottish Government of £899,270 for all expenditure incurred between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019. A new bid will be placed in September 2019 for Session 2019-20.

### **Resources**

- 6.2 The staff resources of the four participating councils have been allocated as appropriate by the senior education officers of each council to achieve the necessary progress to develop the Phase 1, 2 and 3 Regional Improvement Plans. The new lead quality improvement officers for each work stream will further develop the work of the Regional Improvement Collaborative in partnership with senior teams across FVWL and the Education Scotland team.

### **Legal**

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

### **Risk**

- 6.4 No risk implications have been identified.

### **Equalities**

- 6.5 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

## **Sustainability/Environmental Impact**

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

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 The work of the FVWL Regional Improvement Collaborative is ongoing and it is acknowledged that the pace of progress is increasing with the appointment of seconded staff to various development roles.
- 7.2 The various themed groups, are working effectively and have identified approaches to engage with front line staff to exemplify and improve practice in our classrooms. A programme of professional learning will support the skills development of staff (teaching and non) and build collaborative networks that will work towards improving the quality of learning and teaching in a cohesive manner with the aim to improve attainment outcomes for children and young people.
- 7.3 Further reports will be presented to future meetings of the Education, Children and Young People Executive to provide updates on the work of the collaborative and progress with the “Empowering Schools” agenda.

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## **Appendices**

None

## **List of Background Papers:**

None