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CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM – ESTYN INSPECTION REPORT RESPONSE  
UPDATE

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**Reason for the Report**

1. To enable the Committee to receive a briefing on the Central South Education Consortium's Estyn Inspection report, published in May 2016, together with the progress being made in responding the inspection's recommendations.
2. To brief the Committee on the Consortium's plans for the future and to further develop a self-improving system for schools across the Consortium's area.

**Background**

3. Estyn inspected the Consortium in February / March 2016, under their new framework for Consortia published the previous autumn. It was the first of Wales' four education consortia to be inspected. The inspection took two weeks and involved nine inspectors. More than 50 head teachers and governors were interviewed as were all Council Leaders and Cabinet Members, chief executives, directors, Section 151 Officers, the senior team of the Consortium and many staff. The inspection was supported by a survey, undertaken in January, of all head teachers and governors, to which more than 50% of schools responded.
4. The Estyn report, copy attached at **Appendix A**, was published on 26 May 2016 and copied to all Committee Members on 27 May 2016. The report made five judgements within its framework with a context section on performance and outcomes. The judgements were:
  - Quality of school improvement service Adequate
  - Leadership Good

- Improving Quality Good
- Strategic Partnerships Good
- Resource management Adequate

5. The report recognised a number of areas of strength, in particular the increased consistency and quality of challenge advisers and categorization processes, the clarity of vision and strategy within the self-improving school system strategy work, the strength of engagement with head teachers and authorities, and the effective use of resources. The report also made four recommendations:

- Ensure that school improvement services address the variability of performance across schools and local authorities, particularly at key stage 4;
- Improve the accuracy of the evaluation of schools by challenge advisers in order to ensure a greater focus on improving teaching and leadership;
- Strengthen the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of school improvement work;
- Evaluate progress against the regional consortium's operational plans more effectively.

## Issues

6. The Consortium developed a summary of the actions against each of the recommendations in its 2016/17 business plan. The plan is being used to evaluate and demonstrate progress against the recommendations in a future Estyn revisit. Progress would also be monitored monthly with reports to the Advisory Board and Joint Committee each term.

7. The Central South Consortium Joint Committee received an update against recommendations by Estyn at its meeting on 20 September 2016, copy attached at **Appendix B**. This report provided a progress narrative against each recommendation, together with details of what is being planned as well as the key actions and progress to September 2016.

8. Hannah Woodhouse, Managing Director of the Central South Consortium, has been invited to attend the meeting to provide a verbal update on the Consortium's

progress in addressing the recommendations as well as an overview of the Consortium's ambitions for the region and some details on further developing a self-improving system.

### **Scope of Scrutiny**

9. This report will provide the Committee with an opportunity to review and respond to the progress being made by the Consortium, in addressing Estyn's recommendations.
  
9. This report will also provide the Committee with an opportunity to gain an understanding of the plans for this year and the development of a self-improving system for schools across the Consortium.

### **Way Forward**

11. At the meeting, Hannah Woodhouse, managing director of the Central South Consortium will be in attendance to present the verbal progress report on Estyn's recommendations and answer any questions Members may have.
  
13. Members may also wish to note the information contained in the report and presentation and determine whether there are any issues or comments which they would like to pass on to the managing director of the Consortium.

### **Legal Implications**

10. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement

imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

## **Financial Implications**

11. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

## **Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- I. Consider the information provided in the verbal briefing from the managing director of the Central South Consortium and associated documents;
- II. Consider whether they have any observations, comments or recommendations they wish to make to the managing director of the Consortium, the chairman of the Joint Committee, the Cabinet Member for Education and the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning.

**Davina Fiore**

**Director of Governance and Legal Services**

**30 November 2016**