

Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee
29.03.2023

Report Title:	Partneriaid Addysg Canolbarth Cymru (PACC) Mid Wales Education Partners (MWEP)
Lead Officer:	Anwen Orrells

Key Issues in the report highlighted by Lead Officer

- Dealltwriaeth ac ymwybyddiaeth o waith Partneriaid Addysg Canolbarth Cymru a'r Memorandwm o Ddealltwriaeth sy'n gosod allan yr atebolrwydd ddemocrataidd ar gyfer PACC am y cyfnod 2023 – 2026. | Understanding and awareness of the work of the Mid Wales Education Partners and the Memorandum of Understanding which sets out the democratic accountability of MWEP for the period of 2023 – 2026.
- Llwyddiant y cyd weithio rhwng gwasanaethau addysg Powys a Cheredigion ar manteision mae hyn yn cynnig i'r ddau Awdurdod Lleol. | Success of the collaboration of Powys and Ceredigion schools' services and the advantages this brings to both Local Authorities.

Key Feeders (tick all that apply)

Strategic Risk		Cabinet Work Plan	
Director / Head of Service Key Issue		External / Internal Inspection	
Existing Commitment / Annual Report	✓	Performance / Finance Issue	
Suggestion from Public		Referral from Council / Committee	
Corporate Improvement Plan		Impacting Public / other services	
Service Integrated Business Plan	✓		
Suggestion from Members			
Partnerships	✓		

Scrutiny Impact (tick all that apply)

Policy Review		Performance	
Informing Policy Development		Evidence Gathering	
Risk		Corporate Improvement Plan	
Service Integrated Business Plan	✓	Partnerships	✓
Pre-Decision Scrutiny		Finance / Budget	

Other (please specify)

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Suggested scrutiny activity - Committee's Role:

- Trosolwg o waith Partneriaid Addysg Canolbarth Cymru ac effaith hynny ar ysgolion ym Mhowys a Cheredigion | Overview of the work of the Mid Wales Education Partners and the impact on Powys and Ceredigion schools.

On what specific elements of the report would scrutiny comment add value

Effaith gadarnhaol y gwaith o gyd-weithio rhwng Powys a Cheredigion ar gwasanaethau addysg ac ysgolion y ddau Awdurdod Lleol. | Positive impact of the work of the collaborative work between Powys and Ceredigion on the school services and schools of both Local Authorities.

- Dau gwasanaeth gwella ysgolion, ond cyd-weithrediad a dysgu proffesiynol ar y cyd ar:
 - ✓ trawsnewid y cwricwlwm – cymorth i holl ysgolion PACC i fabwysiadu'r Cwricwlwm i Gymru yn llwyddiannus
 - ✓ llwybrau arweinyddiaeth a datblygiad – yn edrych ar y cymorth cenedlaethol a lleol sydd ar gael i ymarferwyr fel eu bod yn cael eu cefnogi yn llawn i fod yn ymarferwyr ac arweinwyr llwyddiannus:
 - prifathrawon profiadol
 - prifathrawon newydd a dros dro
 - cymhwyster CPCP
 - darpar benaethiaid
 - uwch-arweinwyr
 - arweinwyr canol
 - rhaglen gynorthwyol i athrawon newydd eu gyrfa (blwyddyn 2 – 5 o'r gyrfa)
 - sefydlu ar gyfer athrawon newydd gymhwyso
 - llwybrau datblygiad ar gyfer cynorthwywyr addysgu
 - ✓ lleihau effaith difreintedd gwledig, lles a sicrhau ecwiti pob dysgwr
- Two school improvement services, but working in collaboration and joint professional learning on:
 - ✓ curriculum reform – support for all MWEP schools to implement the Curriculum for Wales successfully
 - ✓ leadership and development pathways – looking at the national and local bespoke support available for practitioners so that they are fully supported to be effective practitioners and leaders:
 - experienced headteachers
 - new and acting headteachers
 - NPQH qualification
 - aspiring headteachers
 - senior leaders
 - middle leaders
 - support plan for early career teachers (years 2 – 5 of their career)
 - induction for newly qualified teachers
 - development pathways for teaching assistants
 - ✓ reducing the impact of rural deprivation, well-being and ensure equity for all learners

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee Date

Report Author:	County Councillor Pete Roberts Portfolio Holder for a Learning Powys
Lead Officer:	Lynette Lovell: Director of Education and Children Anwen Orrells: Mid Wales Education Partners Strategic Lead
Report Title:	Impact of the work of the Mid Wales Education Partners
Report For:	Information / Discussion

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To establish an understanding and awareness of the work of the Mid Wales Education Partners (MWEP) and the Memorandum of Understanding which sets out the democratic accountability of MWEP for the period of 2023 – 2026.
- 1.2 To review the work and impact of the Mid Wales Education Partners' collaboration between Ceredigion and Powys Local Authorities for 2022 – 2023.
- 1.3 To provide an overview of the priorities of the Mid Wales Education Partners' for 2023 – 2024 (in line with national and local priorities).

2. Background

- 2.1 In 2013, Welsh Government introduced and agreed the National Model for regional working for school improvement. Four regions were established across Wales, which included ERW, EAS, Central South and GWE. The prime mission and purpose of regional consortia was to help schools and local authorities to educate our children and young people and to:
 - improve learner outcomes for all young people;
 - ensure the delivery of high quality teaching and learning; and
 - support and empower school leaders to better lead their schools.The statutory responsibility for school improvement remains with the Local Authority.
- 2.2 The Welsh Education system is based on a three tier model. Tier one is Welsh Government; tier two consists of regional consortia, local authorities, diocesan authorities, Estyn, Qualifications Wales, Education Workforce Council (EWC), examination boards and higher education; and tier three is schools.
- 2.3 Originally Powys and Ceredigion were part of the education region known as ERW, which was an alliance of six local authorities (Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Pembroke, Powys and Swansea) delivering school improvement services. In March 2020 Neath Port Talbot withdrew from ERW followed by the withdrawal of Ceredigion in March 2021. Four local authorities (including Powys) remained in ERW until it was ceased in August 2021. At that time the Local Authorities of Carmarthenshire, Pembroke and Swansea came together to form a new arrangement for regional working known as Partneriaeth.

- 2.4 Following this demise of ERW in 2020 / 2021, an opportunity for Mid Wales to have a voice as part of the Welsh Government's regional working was provided and the ability to create a different model, fit for purpose. Powys and Ceredigion have worked in collaboration to support all learners, practitioners, and schools by working collectively on a local and national level and to ensure Mid Wales is fully represented at national level to inform national policy such as the National Mission and curriculum reform.
- 2.5 In September 2021, Ceredigion and Powys Local Authorities agreed a Memorandum of Understanding to work collectively and collaboratively on some aspects of school support under a partnership known as Mid Wales Education Partners. The agreed areas of collaboration and joint professional learning include:
- Support for curriculum reform
 - Middle, Senior and Headteacher leadership pathways
 - Induction for newly qualified teachers (NQTs)
 - Support for early career teachers (years 2 – 5 of their career) – pilot for Welsh Government
 - Development pathways for teaching assistants
 - Reducing the impact of rural deprivation, ensure equity for all learners and improved well-being.
- 2.6 Both Local Authorities maintain their own school improvement services, however, the areas of collaboration outlined in 2.5 above, add significant value, breadth and depth of support for Powys and Ceredigion school services and schools such as access to Welsh medium provision and subject specialism. There are also areas of work such as the support for early career teachers and the impact of rural deprivation that are key priorities within the work of the partnership that can be quite specific to Mid Wales.
- 2.7 Universal national and bespoke support for schools and their clusters is provided to support schools in the implementation of curriculum reform. In September 2022 across the Mid Wales Education Partners, all primary schools / phases and six secondaries, all age and special schools (one in Ceredigion and five in Powys) adopted the Curriculum for Wales.
- 2.8 Universal national and bespoke support for all MWEP practitioners (regardless of their stage in career) is provided to improve their practice and develop as future leaders. For example, essential regular support, guidance and networking for new and acting headteachers in their roles in leading and managing a school such as health and safety, property aspects, finance and HR or support for early career teachers in years 2 to 5 of their teaching careers through the pilot MWEP are running for Welsh Government.
- 2.9 This work is governed by an annual Memorandum of Understanding (appendix A) to be agreed and signed by both Local Authorities.
- 2.10 Working collaboratively as a Partnership has ensured that officers from Powys and Ceredigion have been able to fully contribute to key policy development and professional learning development at a national level.
- 2.11 Annually a Business Plan is submitted to the Welsh Government for approval. This is followed by a robust and rigorous annual review and challenge meeting with the Minister for Education and senior officers at Welsh Government. Estyn Inspectors also monitor the progress of the business plan at least annually.

2.12 Although MEWP is still in its infancy, there are some clear indications of positive impact for learners in Powys. For example, following successful completion of the National Aspiring Headteacher development programme, 14 leaders from the MWEP succeeded in gaining the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH) in 2023 (13 from Powys and 1 from Ceredigion). A further 21 practitioners from the MWEP have successfully completed the middle leadership development programme and 12 the senior leaders development programme allowing them to contribute positively to their school improvement and provision.

In 2022 – 2023 all MWEP schools had access to ‘Raising the Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters’ (RADY) resources and support which focuses on realising the potential of all young people. There is a tiered approach to support, that aligns with school needs, school priorities and local authority recommendations. Phase 1 rollout (2022 – 2023):

	Ceredigion	Powys
In-School RADY	2	2
Keep in Touch RADY	1	-
Remote Coached RADY	4	4
Supported Recorded RADY	10	22 (2 groups)
Recorded RADY	26	20

Many schools engaging with In-School, Remote Coached and Supported Recorded are carefully considering all aspects of the programme and are beginning to realise the ‘untapped potential’ of disadvantaged young people. There is successful initial work around proportional representation and having a ‘Golden Thread’ through their development plans in relation to effective academic and pastoral support. The work of schools to improve equity in provision and to reduce the impact of poverty and deprivation on learners has been identified in recent Estyn inspections. For example, at Ysgol Calon Cymru (Oct 2022) the inspectorate noted that *“Leaders have successfully implemented actions for reducing the impact of poverty on education attainment. This is mainly through careful use of the pupil deprivation grant for pastoral care, supplying free breakfast, funding educational visits, securing bursaries from local business and providing school uniform”, and at Welshpool Church in Wales (March 2022) leaders were recognised for having “..successfully led many improvements in the school, particularly to improve pupils’ welfare. For example, the very good provision for pastoral care ensures that vulnerable pupils attend school regularly and that the school meets their emotional needs effectively”.*

Bespoke support and professional learning opportunities is brokered through the School Improvement Advisers, with the individual school priorities shared with officers to inform their support plan. In 2022 – 2023, 66 schools across the MWEP had identified the Curriculum for Wales as a whole school priority and 37 assessment and progression. For these schools, bespoke support has been provided to allow for individual conversations and progress on whole school and cluster curriculum planning, progression and assessment. In September 2022 across the Mid Wales Education Partners, all primary schools / phases and six secondaries, all age and special school / phases (one in Ceredigion and five in Powys) adopted the Curriculum for Wales. In line with the mandatory requirements, with the support and guidance from the MWEP, all of the schools which have adopted the curriculum have developed a purposeful school vision. In many MWEP schools, the vision has been developed collaboratively with key stakeholders to successfully incorporate valuable opportunities for learners to explore the historic, cultural, and social features of their cynefin and Wales. In the most effective schools, the school vision has also successfully incorporated opportunities to learn about the diversity of society in Wales and the wider world. For example, the vision of schools such as Trefonnen CiW are noted for

their inclusivity and have been shared nationally and locally across the partnership with their recent Estyn report stating “*The preparation for the new curriculum is thorough and inclusive and takes account of the school’s vision and values*” (Estyn July 2022).

2.13 In line with national and local priorities the following five priorities have been identified in the business plan for 2023 – 2024 financial year:

1. Support all MWEP schools to develop effective approaches to learning and teaching to ensure all learners make progress in line with expectations.
2. Support all MWEP schools in ensuring high quality curriculum design and implementation, building effective practices in pedagogy, progression and assessment with a particular focus on literacy, numeracy and digital competence skills.
3. Develop further support for schools to establish a whole school approach that supports the well-being of learners and practitioners and ensures equity of experiences to alleviate the impact of poverty and deprivation on learner progress.
4. Support MWEP practitioners to follow national and local leadership and development pathways so that the practices of all MWEP practitioners are strong and effective with a positive influence on learners’ well-being and progress.
5. Further develop strong communications, stakeholder engagement and governance arrangements of the MWEP.

3 Advice

3.1 It is officer recommendation that the work of the Mid Wales Education Partners and the democratic accountability set out in the Memorandum of Understanding for 2023 – 2026 is noted.

4. Resource Implications

4.1 The collaborative work of the Mid Wales Education Partners is funded by the annual Regional Consortia Grant (RCG) from Welsh Government with the Terms and Conditions. Each Local Authority has its own RCG funding to support the collaborative work.

4.2 Powys’ indicative RCG funding for 2023 – 2024 is set at £1,107,064 and Ceredigion at £708,330. Distribution is based primarily on PLASC figures for each Local Authority.

4.3 By working collaboratively under the agreement of the Memorandum of Understanding it provides both Local Authorities access to the Welsh Government funding and adds valuable additional capacity to the school services of both Powys and Ceredigion.

5. Legal implications

5.1 The collaborative work of the Mid Wales Education Partners is governed by the Memorandum of Understanding.

5.2 The Head of Legal Services and the Monitoring Officer has commented as follows: “I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report”.

6. Data Protection

6.1 As part of the Memorandum of Understanding and work of the Mid Wales Education Partners, no learner or staff individual data is shared.

7. Impact Assessment

7.1 N/A

8. Recommendation

8.1 It is officer recommendation that the work of the Mid Wales Education Partners is noted.

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