Moving Forward

A Discussion Paper

Context

This paper was prepared to engage stakeholders in a discussion about the Central South Wales Challenge model and the work of the region more broadly.

It recognises that the context has changed and that the focus on realising the aims of the new curriculum will be a central part of the work of schools over the next several years.

This paper sets out our existing vision in terms of collaboration and school improvement strategies, our methodology for identifying and responding to support needs. It asks questions about our direction of travel and invites stakeholders views. These will then inform our strategic planning moving forward.

Introduction

1. This discussion paper was originally designed to be used with Central South Consortium (CSC) staff to check engagement with vision, barriers to achieving that vision and to identify what needs to be changed to secure that vision.

   It is evident however that as the school improvement service of five local authorities, our vision has to come from the vision of the schools and local authorities themselves. This paper has become a wider consultation tool.

Vision/Ambition

2. The published ambition of CSC remains that by 2020:
   a. Learners have the best educational outcomes in Wales, rivalling comparable parts of the UK
   b. The poverty-related attainment gap is reduced faster here than anywhere else in Wales
   c. The region is known and recognised for its high-quality school led professional learning and the impact it has on outcomes

   ➢ **This is our published ambition - do we all recognise it and own it?**
   ➢ **How is it communicated to CSC staff, schools and other partners?**
   ➢ **How do we track progress towards achieving that ambition?**
   ➢ **Does it need amending e.g. is it possible to compare with the rest of the UK given differences in systems?**

3. Since its formation in September 2012, CSC has evolved to provide a school improvement service to the 397 schools within the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff and the Vale Of Glamorgan that is underpinned by the following key principles:
   a. That sustained school improvement is most effectively developed through a move away from central control/direction to a school led system in which schools have the capacity to make decisions, take responsibility and be accountable.
   b. That resources should move from being held centrally to being used to develop system capacity.
   c. That a high-quality school workforce with access to quality continuous professional development is key. Activity should be research-based and used as a stimulus for reflection and creativity.

   ➢ **Are these still our main underpinning principles?**
   ➢ **Do they impact on our decision making?**

4. The ultimate aim is to develop a self-improving school system that:
   a. Is about effective teacher development, professional pride and status
   b. Is about developing future leaders at all levels
   c. Is about sharp accountability at all levels in schools, within and between schools
   d. Has meeting learners' need as the focus
   e. Needs to be led from school-to-school, not imposed or mandated
   f. Needs to be a learning system – sharing what's working, evaluating and changing what's not, commitment to whole system improvement
   g. Needs to be overseen and quality assured by school leaders
   h. Must include brokerage for those missing out, isolated or with poor leadership
   i. Needs authorities/regulators who hold the system to account and intervene only where needed

➢ **Do we all recognise and share this ultimate aim? Has anything changed?**
➢ **Do we agree with what a self-improving school system means? Anything missing?**

Progress Towards The Ambition

5. CSC has made significant progress in developing a school self-improving system and moving toward its ambition:
   a. There has been a significant improvement in all key performance indicators in all phases
   b. Through the Central South Wales Challenge, schools are engaged in school-to-school improvement work through hubs, school improvement groups, peer enquiry and pathfinders - the professional learning offer is provided by schools for schools
   c. Culturally there has been a huge shift in the way in which schools think about collaboration with other schools across the region

6. Despite the improved pupil outcomes, the system has not always been effective in demonstrating the link between its work and improved outcomes for learners. Recently, this has been addressed and the progress made noted by Estyn and by NFER.

   Taken together, activities...have increased schools leaders' confidence to lead in developing systemic school improvement...They have developed the capacity for mutual challenge and support. They have also nurtured analytical skills, e.g. in understanding the developmental needs of individual schools and groups of schools...There is also evidence that those who are participating in the work have developed deeper engagement with professional matters (pedagogy, leadership styles, curriculum development etc). It is evident that the consortium itself has changed its way of working in response to the school-led model...The consortium has developed its quality assurance work, e.g. by ensuring that schools provide appropriate challenge and support to each other. This reflected the need for school-led approaches to be

underpinned by robust quality assurance. At the same time, the system-wide intelligence held by the consortium is being used to identify beneficial collaborations and broker appropriate school-led partnerships. (NFER Report)

> ➢ **Do you agree?**
> ➢ **What more does CSC need to do?**

Barriers

7. Having recognised the significant progress, it is important to recognise the existing and emerging barriers and challenges to the consortium's continued development of a school led self-improving system.   These include:

    a. Education In Wales: Our National Mission, provides the Welsh Government's action plan for the period 2017-21. It contains clear implications for local authorities and consortia. Fortunately, a great deal of it fits with the ambition and underpinning principles of CSC. The new draft CSC business plan is closely aligned. However, the challenges arise from the fact that the direction is determined centrally by Welsh Government (WG). Secondly it is absorbing a great deal of key CSC staff time in realising the vision, potentially conflicting with local authority (LA) demands on time.

    b. Increasingly, consortia are required to work together to deliver key national priorities. This can have significant implications for the CSC business plan. Further, the monitoring and reporting arrangements for these plans are currently outside of CSC governance arrangements. The new business plan should make the links between cross-consortia improvement planning and the CSC business plan. This aims to bring greater clarity and transparency. However, the fact remains that a great deal of decision making is occurring at meetings of consortia and WG. It is not always easy to see how this is linked to elected members or to a school led system.

    c. The establishment of a national leadership academy has a number of benefits but it does have the potential to reduce the consortium's and therefore school leaders' ability to shape what is delivered and how. Further, there is an emerging pressure to consider a national professional learning offer. It will be key that the CSC vision is not compromised and that schools shape what is provided.

    d. Financial austerity is impacting at WG, LA, consortia and school level. Whilst it can be seen as an opportunity for creativity in that the status quo is not an option, it does challenge the school to school working in that schools may not have the resource capacity to lead the system as required. Further, 97% of the consortium's business plan is funded by WG grants. Each award of funding has terms and conditions that can restrict how a self-improving school system would choose to use that funding.

e. The national model provides a framework of how consortia should work. The model is currently being reviewed. There is not always agreement between LAs, consortia and WG with regard to how education in Wales should look and be monitored.

f. The statutory power for education remains with the LAs. Elected Members rightly hold to account education providers. However, they are often forced to use a narrow set of performance indicators that inadequately capture what schools deliver and can lead to undesirable behaviour at a school level that is not in the best interest of the learners. An intelligent accountability system that promotes, not hinders, a school self-improving system is required.

g. Aspects of the Central South Wales Challenge need review. For instance:

i. Hubs were initially intended to create a trading model between schools but currently are in most cases provided free of charge. Further, the link between identification of need and what is provided by hubs is not clear.

ii. School improvement groups were financially pump primed to encourage regional working but the funding has been sustained and not reduced/removed.

iii. There is a lack of clarity between the pathfinder system and the support provided to red and amber schools by hubs.

iv. In some cases, accountability for the provider is too bureaucratic and not impactful

v. Although steps have been taken recently to improve things, brokerage remains a key issue.

h. Whilst the work of the strategy group of headteachers and of the regional stakeholder group made up of headteachers has been valued, the governance arrangements are such that it is not headteachers making the decisions, as would be expected in a truly self-improving school system

➢ **Do agree that these barriers exist?**
➢ **Would you add any others?**
➢ **Have we identified appropriate actions/strategies to overcome them?**

Moving Forward

8. The following suggestions/questions are intended to provoke debate so that through consultation an agreed way forward is determined.

a. Putting it simply, the 'consortium' needs to effectively:
i. Identifying need
ii. Determining and coordinating how that need is best met
iii. Evaluate how effectively the identified need has been met

b. Consideration needs to be given to who is best placed to do these three things. Headteachers for instance know what schools need but won't always know regional or national need. Thought could be given to establishing a panel to:
   i. Identifying need
   ii. Determining and coordinating how that need is best met
   iii. Evaluate how effectively the identified need has been met

c. The composition of the panel needs discussion but the following possible members would have something to contribute:
   i. Strategic lead
   ii. Headteachers- Associate HT, RSG HT, Strategy Group
   iii. Hub leads
   iv. Senior challenge adviser/Challenge adviser
   v. AOLE member
   vi. Expert member eg NNEM, leadership academy
   vii. HEI member
   viii. Pupil
   ix. Governor

d. The task could be broken down into specific areas, with a panel for each. Possibly:
   i. Leadership
   ii. Professional learning
   iii. The six areas of learning within The national curriculum for Wales

e. Initially, it would be for the strategic lead to establish the panel and coordinate its working. The presence of the senior challenge adviser or possibly a challenge adviser would help improve brokerage and bring intelligence about what schools need. In the longer term as the capacity in the system developed, it is possible to envisage how the need for a strategic lead and senior challenge adviser could be reduced/removed, thus providing a strategy for the further development of school led self-improving system.

f. It will be important to consider initially how the panel would evaluate the impact of the provision. The Research And Evaluation Board is currently exploring options, including an electronic system completed by participants at the start, end and six months after the programme. This should reduce the bureaucratic burden and collect only information that can be used effectively. This should link with EWC's learning passport if possible.

g. A simple survey, issued at the correct time, could effectively gather from all headteachers the provision they feel is needed the following year, so increasing schools' shaping of the system.

h. Would any impact be gathered from challenge adviser (CA) interaction with schools?

> ➤ **What are your views on panels, their composition and purpose?**
> ➤ **Alternative suggestions?**

9. **Hubs**
   a. Consider commissioning hubs to address the need identified by each panel.
   b. Consider separating the training provision from red /amber support and only use specialised schools with the capacity for such support. Such schools should not be prevented from providing training if they have the capacity. Ensure CAs know the provision and have confidence in it, so reducing barriers to effective brokerage.
   c. Consider making the pathfinder system part of the red/amber support so providing clarity and potentially improving efficiency.
   d. Distinguish between what pioneers schools deliver and what hubs provide. Use funding accordingly.
   e. Determine what professional learning needs remain after having considered pioneer provision.
   f. Consider temporary arrangements for the summer term so that a high quality, new learning offer can be developed.
   g. It would be important to recognise the urgency and the impact this potentially has for some schools. Need to avoid destroying capacity built up over years. Phasing seems necessary, moving from current system to new system over two to three years.
   h. Consider a hub being made up of more than one school.
   i. Should everything hubs offer be provided free of charge? They were initially set up to develop trading between schools. Is a core 'free' provision important with other provision available at a cost or should a charge be made for all training?

> ➤ **What are your views on how hubs should contribute going forward?**

10. **School Improvement Groups (SIGs)**
    a. These play an important role in ensuring cross-authority school collaboration. However, there is a need to discuss if the level of what was initially pump prime funding is sustainable/required.

> ➤ **How much do we want to protect SIGs? Essential to our culture or an exercise that has successfully broken down barriers and now schools should be left to network as they consider best?**

11. **Peer Enquiry**

    a. The model has been evaluated and reviewed. Consideration should be given to if the system could now work outside of CSC, so becoming a pure school to school model.

➢ **Have we reached a point where we are happy with school improvement strategies lying outside of consortium and local authority control?**
➢ **Are there other strategies for which schools could now take responsibility?**

12. **Clusters**

    a. There is a clear need for schools to work together to develop a curriculum for its learners so that the national curriculum for Wales is realised. Consideration should, therefore, be given to outlining models of cluster working that would facilitate this

    b. Funding for cluster work would need to be identified and allocated fairly.

➢ **Do you recognise the need for cluster work in realising Successful Futures?**
➢ **Do you agree that clusters can be different organisations of schools?**
➢ **If so, how should this fit with our existing strategies?**

13. **New Models Of Working**

    a. Welsh medium schools and special schools have been considering new models of working that have increased responsibility/accountability for school systems and a lesser role for challenge advisers.

    b. The benefits of such models should be considered, risks identified and if managed, pilots established. These could be evaluated to determine the next steps.

➢ **Are we ready to consider these models and pilot them?**

14. **Challenge Advisers**

The following action could be considered:

    a. Continue the move to headteachers working as partner CAs so increasing credibility and developing capacity within the school system.

    b. Embed the new deployment of CAs so as to develop ways of working that increase capacity within the system.

    c. Sustain the improvements recognised by Estyn in regards to recruitment, training and high expectations.

    d. Consider CA/SCA involvement in panels so using their knowledge of what schools need and ensuring that they know the quality of what support is available so as to facilitate brokerage.

    e. Consider developing the model whereby CAs have a strategic lead role with an associated reduction in the number of schools. This would improve brokerage as well as ensuring that the system benefits from their expertise.

➢ **Your views on the suggestions made? Any further suggestions?**

15. **Summary:** CSC has achieved a great deal towards delivering its ambition and a school led self-improving system. However, a number of barriers and challenges threaten both the ambition and the school improvement model. This paper is intended to start the process of consultation so that we establish an agreed vision for what our consortium should look like as we move forward.

Mike Glavin
January 2018

➢ **Your views on the suggestions made? Any further suggestions?**

Collated Responses to Moving Forward – 7th March 2018
Staff, Strategy Group & Advisory Board

Vision and Ambition – Section 2

The published ambition of CSC remains that by 2020:
- *Learners have the best educational outcomes in Wales, rivalling comparable parts of the UK*
- *The poverty-related attainment gap is reduced faster here than anywhere else in Wales*
- *The region is known and recognised for its high-quality school led professional learning and the impact it has on outcomes*

1. This is our published ambition – do we all recognise it and own it?

- Recognise it
- Yes – it permeates through training events
- Welsh is central to my role and visit of CSC and therefore is not truly reflected.
- Best educational outcomes, enriched opportunities putting standards, wellbeing and Welsh at the heart of our vision.
- We should be aiming to be the best
- Best of "world" class education system
- Are we in competition with rest of Wales or in partnership
- Definitely recognise it! Yes we own it.
- This is recognised in CSC.
- Ongoing challenges are evident to raise standards in Welsh due to lack of teacher training.
- Learning establishments need to recognise the challenge of Welsh Government ambitions for the Welsh Language
- Welsh is central to our role – this is missing
- To some extent, however we need <u>greater</u> consideration of the Welsh Language and ethos.
- To consider MAT as more than literacy/numeracy i.e. Art, Humanities, Welsh
- Many CSC employees would recognise this
- In essence we recognise these 3 statements as a key focus of our work and is by and large reflected in our Performance Management.

<u>Comments of the Advisory Board</u> (extracted from the Minutes 25.1.18)
- It was the consensus of the Board that what was written in the paper was still relevant.
- It was noted that in addition to the partners listed in the paper reference should be made to external partners.

2. How is it communicated to CSC staff, schools and other partners?

- Not sure how much it is recognised by school as the ambition of the region, and, as a consequence an ambition that all schools should share.
- Staff training days, bulletins, agendas, CA Performance Management, Governor Training.
- It should be at the heart of and central to every document.
- Briefings, seminars, CRONFA (practical)
- Discussion around parents – aspiration (how is vision communicated to them?)

- By staff visiting schools (e.g. focus on CA visits related to the above)
- In all documentation – e.g. business plan, strategic documents etc.
- Some members of the group felt it would be reiterated more frequently (bulletins, HT meetings)
- Meetings, Briefings, CRONFA, Bulletin, Network meetings
- In regards to Welsh it is insufficient
- As staff we are aware of the CSC ambition
- It is the chosen schools who are given the opportunity to take part in initiatives – it is inconsistent across the rest of the consortium.
- Throughout documentation – to some extent this has to be sought.
- Through practice of CA, SA etc through day to day contact/discussions etc.
- Vision and business planning underpinning our work streams

- **How do we track progress towards achieving that ambition?**

- Goal posts for measures change year on year
- Online tests will be comparable
- CSC Business Plan
- CA school monitoring visits
- Performance Management
- Currently probably only tracked through data
- How well do we track pupils' wellbeing
- Outside validation e.g. Estyn
- Internal moderation and quality assurance processes
- Data analysis
- Business plan monitoring and review
- School data
- End of key stage data
- Whole school audits e.g. L2L, book scrutiny, L2R, pupil profile tracking system, stakeholder feedback and reporting
- Ensure that all schools/members of staff are involved in the process – ensure clarity.
- Regular data drops
- EFIs
- Systems for tracking school led professional need improvement. There are still many aspects that require developing.
- Basically; all firsthand evidence that is gathered to inform the self-evaluation process

Comments from the Advisory Board (Extracted from the Minutes 25.01.18)
- It was noted that this section should be listed as Number 1. It was also thought that the ambition outlined process and should have more of a focus on learners.

---

3. **Does it need amending e.g. it is possible to compare with the rest of the UK given differences in systems?**

- Higher education are not recognising GCSE Lit/Num
- Comparing different things – Given the differences between the Welsh system and the rest of UK it is no longer appropriate to compare
- The reference to being the best in Wales implies that we are in competition with the other consortia and not that we work together. It also risks making us complicit in a system whereby it is in our interests that teacher assessment is not as robust as it should be as everything depends upon an end of phase/stage performance that is currently reliant

upon teacher assessment until end of KS4.

- Yes – irresponsible to compare with UK. Doesn't reflect we are Welsh and part of Wales and its culture.
- Needs to closely align the national mission *Remove the competitive element.
- Teaching and learning must feature more strongly!
- A comparison with the UK is beneficial however the Welsh Language and culture must be central for us.
- Not within the Welsh Language/Curriculum for Wales
- Difficult. Maybe we should look at different measures. For example, if effective high-quality professional learning is to be a system seeking point, could we look at comparing recruitment and retention data? And measure career satisfaction in some way?
- The language is competitive and does not reflect our commitment to work in partnership with other regions/a range of stakeholders.
- It is highly unlikely that we can compare our performance (like for like) with other parts of the UK in many aspects.
- With current changes in education and society, do we need to reflect wellbeing more strongly?

Vision and Ambition – Section 3

Since its formation in September 2012, CSC has evolved to provide a school improvement service to the 397 schools within the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff and the Vale Of Glamorgan that is underpinned by the following key principles:

- *That sustained school improvement is most effectively developed through a move away from central control/direction to a school led system in which schools have the capacity to make decisions, take responsibility and be accountable.*
- *That resources should move from being held centrally to being used to develop system capacity.*
- *That a high-quality school workforce with access to quality continuous professional development is key. Activity should be research-based and used as a stimulus for reflection and creativity.*

1. Are these still our main underpinning principles

- Still work to do in terms of schools feeling accountable for other schools within the system.
- Quality continuous professional development and that this should be action research-based remains key, however, there is still some way to go to ensure that teachers usually understand action research.
- I feel there is a risk moving away from centrally held support for schools in significant need. For the above to succeed – we need to know/understand our schools really well. I don't believe the current system of support and challenge allows us to do this (see notes later).
- They remain as our principles however WG guidance and direction does not always make this possible.
- I am concerned that the lack of awareness within the ambition for the Welsh Language in our region.

2. Do they impact on our decision making?

- Yes, based upon looking at the proportion of funding that we delegate to schools and the funding that we provide for school-to-school work. However, the extent to which we hold schools accountable and the extent to which the work we have funded is resulting in developing system capacity is still open to further investigation.
- Yes however again a reference is required to CPD within a Welsh context.
- We also need to be aware of WG direction e.g. aim to have 31% of WM schools by 2031.

Vision and Ambition – Section 4

The ultimate aim is to develop a self-improving school system that:
- *Is about effective teacher development, professional pride and status*
- *Is about developing future leaders at all levels*
- *Is about sharp accountability at all levels in schools, within and between schools*
- *Has meeting learners' need as the focus*
- *Needs to be led from school-to-school, not imposed or mandated*
- *Needs to be a learning system – sharing what's working, evaluating and changing what's not, commitment to whole system improvement*
- *Needs to be overseen and quality assured by school leaders*
- *Must include brokerage for those missing out, isolated or with poor leadership*
- *Needs authorities/regulators who hold the system to account and intervene only where needed*

1. Do we all recognise and share this ultimate aim? Has anything changed?

- Is there capacity in the system to lead?
- Agree with the above, however, I don't feel all schools are strong enough to know accurately where they are and the support they need e.g. schools presenting themselves as green but following Estyn visit falling to amber/red and in a follow up category. Therefore role of regulators key to hold the system to account and intervene where needed.
- It is very difficult to see this as the ultimate aim when many decisions are taken centrally (WG) i.e. the leadership academy and also local authority needs (focus).
- Does school to school always work? It tends to need guidance and support from external providers and often schools are not given the "bigger picture".
- Mixed economy. Some excellent SIG/Cluster initiative and collaborative steering however hubs maybe not so effective as a current model.

2. Do we agree with what a self improving school system means? Anything missing?

- Schools need a structure to look outwards – regionally/nationally/wider
- How are we ensuring that the system is building capacity for itself?
- Needs to reflect continuous need to develop as a learner not just a leader i.e. reflective approach to pedagogy.

Strategy Group Comments
- The paper does not place sufficient emphasis on a truly school-to-school led system
- The document represents a return to a more top-down LA type model
- Schools do not seem to be trusted to make decisions
- Associate HT need to be engaging with WG; not just officers etc.

Progress Towards The Ambition – Sections 5 & 6

1. Do you agree?

- We have begun to create a self-improving system and there has been a cultural shift away from schools as independent silos.
- I think the current system of supporting and accessing schools is flawed through the categorisation process with CAs not active in green and yellow schools until spring term
- Yes

2. What more does CSC need to do?

- Assist schools in building capacity across the system. Many hub schools would no longer be able to run their programmes/provide support if the person leading the initiative were no longer in the school. (This is true also of pioneer schools).
- Develop more rigorous programme design and evaluations and research how schools who have taken part in programmes of development – particularly leadership programmes – have implemented this in their school. How much of an impact are the hubs making?
- I think the model of what a green, yellow, amber, red school is needs better clarifying, regulating and moderating (suggestion attached)
- Understand the need of developing Welsh Cultural and Welsh in all schools and should be an ambition.
- Collaboration is **key**.

Strategy Group Comments
- 14 CAs - improve CAs input into business planning process, earlier more systematic.
- Need to go back to governance structure and revisit the purpose/function of the strategy group.
- Stabilise - have more forward looking, blue sky thinking around where a more collaborative school-to-school way of working?

Barriers – Section 7

1. Do you agree that these barriers exist?

- Definitely. Many aspects led centrally by WG
- Terms and conditions of grants and National Academy endorsement in itself does not support a self improving system.
- Why do we not have a better intelligence system? As we were asking for this 12 months ago?

2. Would you add any others?

- To express with more clarity the barriers of schools budgets!!!! Arguably this is the greatest barrier

3. Have we identified appropriate actions/strategies to overcome them?

- Not really. Brokerage still needs further development and all support models.

Panels – Section 8

1. What are your views on panels, their composition and purpose?

- Will help to set the medium to long term direction
- Could the panel include teachers at some level?
- Needs a rotation of the members of the panel to ensure wider range of voices
- I think the panel is a sound way to introduce some kind of regulation and voice to the system.
- No teacher voice!!!
- The same HT's on every panel – need a greater representation
- No guaranteed WM voice
- Lead Practitioners?
- Teachers – in the classroom doing the job 50 hours a fortnight!
- What does on underneath the panel to support a school in dire need?
- Flexibility and fluidity
- Whatever their role they need to come with an evidence base
- Would the panel be similar to Governing Body format?
- What priorities are we looking at? (National, local, school based etc)
- Leadership is the key issue
- Could the panel be too big or to disparate?
- Some heads have acknowledged too many groups e.g. SIGs, LA, CSC, Cluster – would then be another layer?
- The vision for cluster working may be a model.
- Need to be regularly refreshed
- More teacher voice on panels
- Bias and dominance?
- How is the regional need identified? It is the role of the panel to do this?
- Is the panel a decision making body? Will they have the power to do this – how does governance fit in?
- Must ensure that it's all joined up
- Quality assurance of provision to meet need?
- Data expertise/presence required for panels – regional, national, PISA?
- Not just the data but intelligent analysis of what it means for school improvement.
- Carry out SWOT of panel approach
- Could panels delay some processes?
- If we're developing a school led system, the panel/process should include development/training for school leaders to help them determine regional need and respond effectively to it at the point when they take a more accountable role for school improvement.
- Supportive of idea
- Needs to fully represent region – teachers; HTs
- CSC need a role to turn policy into operational activity
- Monitoring of how effective the model and the strategic vision is – CSC role
- A more agile hub programme to respond to panels: identified need
- Flexible approach to funding – not blanket funding
- Need vs Want

Strategy Group Comments
- If we create a panel(s) what do we need to remove?
- Not keen on receiving a Needs Survey if in addition to other forms etc. So what does it

replace?

Comments from the Advisory Board (Extracted from Minutes 25.01.18)
- It was noted that there will be a need to review the existing governance model for the panels to work. There will also be the need to ensure that the panels are represented by the appropriate personnel. It was suggested that the Strategy Group could be used as one of the panels.

2. Alternative suggestions?

- Part of the challenge for the panel will be to identify 'best practice' across the region in all schools not just a limited range i.e. does high results = excellent provision?
- Needs to be a link between professional learning and area specific provision.
- Welsh Medium voice
- Teacher Voice
- Rota of Headteachers
- LA voice especially for areas such as ALN
- Linking between panels
- 3 panels or 8?
- Agile hub model with flexible funding to align with panel
- CSC link – strategic lead to pane to ensure strategic vision can translate into operational plans and support
- CSC strategic lead to monitor impact/effective needs of panel – focus on outcomes/pupil data.

Hubs – Section 9

1. **What are your views on how hubs should contribute going forward?**

*   We are still a long way off schools leading/supporting each other in whole school self-improvement

    When a hub runs a programme participating schools often take what the hub has to offer (in terms of quick fixes) without any real attempt at considering why this is making a difference to learning in the hub school i.e. understanding what journey the hub school has gone to improve standards of teaching and learning. What they take away from the programmes is limited and doesn't seem to have an effect on whole school improvement.   Often the change is limited to practice in one class (that of the participating teacher) and does not have a long term effect on either that class or the whole school.   Hubs should provide direction in teaching and learning and not in methods (i.e. no Big Maths, mindfulness etc) they should be instead looking at what we know makes a difference in terms of teaching and learning. The rationale behind hubs was to get away from the 'one-person-goes-on-a-course-and-tries-it-out-in-their-classroom' effect but have we just created a 'one-person-goes-on-a-**longer**-course-and-tries-it-out-in-their-classroom' system?   Do we have the evidence to show we are creating **longer term and whole school** change to standards of teaching and learning? One solution going forward might be to look at groups of schools with a shared need attending the hub programme rather than practitioners in isolation. For example, one of the primary literacy hub programmes last year was attended by a cluster of schools including the high school.   This provided shared enterprise and, because of existing relationships between the schools, the schools have continued to use and develop the strategies shared on the hub programme.

    We need hubs to work together more, with and apart from the strategic team, to ensure they are developing their own practice in areas other than the reason why they are a hub.   Hub teacher teams with strategic team support could be developed to work on areas of regional need (e.g. the writing toolkit currently under development was started with strategic and hub school partnership).   The original version behind the hub schools envisaged them as settings that developed their own practice as well as providing other schools with information about what they do.   Not sure to what extent hub schools are engaged in developing their own practice through their own action research that should run alongside the programme they are delivering. One of the early ideas behind the hub model was that members of the strategic team would be based in these schools and work alongside the school to develop practice and provide either a broader range of support or more detailed support in areas of identified need. This did not happen for a number of reasons but could be worth re-visiting as a way forward.

    Hubs have worked best where there has been a very close liaison with central teams. Working with central teams has helped hubs themselves to improve and develop their own provision. The self-improving system needs to be about more than just spreading good practice, that practice itself has to develop. Expertise from strategic teams can help facilitate this.

    Having identified a regional need it may not be enough to identify schools that do it well and post other schools towards that setting. Often this leads to schools simply cherry picking some ideas from the 'lead' school/copying some areas of good practice as opposed to making a systematic change for improvement. Perhaps those good schools should be working with the strategic team to develop toolkits that can be applied across

phases and subjects. This will lead to more systemic change.

We are not getting the best value for money out of the Hub system at present. Perhaps we could look at a two tier system with schools bidding for funding on specific needs – that they are then commissioned to provide and other schools providing support for red and amber schools. Once regional need is identified then schools (all schools) should have the opportunity to bid to provide the school to school support to meet that need demonstrating how they would provide support. Hubs shouldn't just roll on year after year. In danger of becoming a bit of a 'clique' where certain schools are in the 'club'.

While accepting that any hub school should be paid more than just enough to cover costs (this would be even more the case if they could show how they were using the funding to fund their own practice development in areas of regional need), at the same time, any robust financial audit of how the hub schools spend their funding would probably find schools struggling to identify where their £20,000 (as a curriculum hub) was spent.

Parts of the Hubs SLAs are not always completed (e.g. attending/running networks, supporting schools during the programme/research development) should we remove these from the SLA and reduce the money hubs receive or raise the profile of these elements so they are done well?   The essential network meetings that run in literacy/numeracy/science/digital could not run without CSC strategic staff input. Also, the quality of reports from hub schools involved in read and amber work is variable. They can require further work from the strategic team in terms of chasing up completion in the first place and then elements of the report require rewriting to make them more evaluative. Schools are not ESTYN, and experience so far would seem to show that they are not always comfortable completing reports in an 'ESTYN' manner. Red and amber support would perhaps work better if hub schools provided support and reported on the activities they have undertaken, but then any evaluation of the impact of that work on the red and amber school is not conducted by the hub school but by the central team.

An example of a very good response to regional need was evident in the computing/IT lead practitioner schools. These schools provided support for change in GCSE/GCE ICT computer science. They arranged network meetings that focussed on specific areas of the curriculum and guided teachers through the changes and developed materials that they could all use. They were flexible and changed what they were providing as needs changed. They were experts in their subjects and so could help teachers across the region who are not necessarily subject specialists. This has been an example of where school to school working has been very effective. However it has not addressed any long term issues or focussed on any future change. They have been very much responding to need that exists now. This area is important but so is the area for longer term change – particularly in the light of the new curriculum.

- I see Hubs moving forward as the moderated green/yellow schools offering an identified area of strength.

- Do hubs require £20K? Resources created by English medium schools are not provided in Welsh thus having greater cost implication for Welsh medium.
- Positives:-
    - o W2L Primary – They respond to the needs as identified by the Welsh team. They also respond to barriers that could exist to Welsh e.g. EAL, FSM, FPh.
    - o W2L Secondary – respond to new GCSE specification. Provide resources to share and guidance to others. As 3 hubs they work as an effective triangle.
    - o Merthyr Partnership – Link to language needs in WM schools. Respond to

regional need.
- o Gydan Gilydd (Distributed Hubs) – A true self-improving system. 9 schools involved in providing 26 programmes including training non-specialists to develop teaching capacity.
- o Cadwyn Cynradd – 9 schools developing programmes identified by schools as a school need for WM schools e.g. Science (Welsh resources) Mindfulness (Welsh Resources)
- Points to consider:-
  - o W2L Primary - The WIEOs provided a great deal of input into creation and resources for programmes. Also QA
  - o W2L Secondary – They tend to consider what each school is good at within the perimeters of the spec.
  - o Merthyr Partnership – Limited to very specific areas e.g. boys MAT Level 5.
  - o Gydan Gilydd – They would need continued financial support.
  - o Cadwyn Cynradd – Would need greater investment to respond to all needs.

- Reduce
- Greater accountability, quicker – take the money back!!!
- Good hubs have been effective in providing support to schools in need e.g. red schools bespoke support.
- Need for CAs and SCAs to broker the support as hubs can't do it.
- The need for a stepped approach for support e.g. what will suit which situation (pathfinder, hub etc).
- Are hubs value for money? E.g. WEO input into Hub Programme
  - o Whole staff training
  - o Clear guidelines and expectations for improvement
  - o Use of WEO resources on programme
  - o Modelling strategies at classroom and school level for programme implementation
  - o Monitoring of strategies to ensure impact on whole school
  - o Direct involvement in creating programme
  - o QA programme delivery
  - o Brokerage of Hub support
  - o Evaluating impact and effectiveness of Hub support
- Welsh hubs in the English sector are dependent on WEO.
- Welsh hubs in the English medium sector are led by WEOs and that input is essential at the moment as the hubs continue to develop. They continue to need subject knowledge support.
- Gyda'n Gilydd and Cadwyn Cynradd are excellent models that are self sufficient and meet the needs of the Welsh sector.
- Welsh (1st/2nd language) Hubs are currently very effective. However this is a result of guidance, resources and coaching from WEO. Maybe the hubs need to be more innovative and self-sustaining.
- Ensure hub schools are held accountable for the budget i.e. that the money they receive for being a hub is spent effectively to develop and raise standards for all teaching staff (with breakdown of costs).
- Moving forward – recognising the demands of the new curriculum i.e. that Welsh is part of the LLC and therefore should be given equal status.
- We need clear criteria for hubs to allow them to re-apply.

School Improvement Groups (SIGS) – Section 10

1. How much do we want to protect SIGs? Essential to our culture or an exercise that has successfully broken down barriers and now schools should be left to network as they consider best?

- SIGs have been important in the region. They have broken down barriers between schools and local authorities. It would be a shame to lose this cross authority learning but we would need to see evidence that this is making an impact on whole school change and on raising standards of teaching and learning – we don't see the information on this impact.
- As with the hubs anecdotal evidence tells us that for many schools, staff who are not involved in the actual SIG working do not know about the projects that are taking place. Often staff attend programmes when their SIG is spending money on developing exactly the same thing.
- I think SIGs play an important role in the system and through cross regional working enable schools to gain wider perspective, become less inward looking and develop a wider support network. They are less competitive than clusters and therefore more honest and supportive, providing a vehicle for collaborative projects such as the recent Curriculum for Wales readiness project.
- Not all SIGs effectively include WM colleagues and often this can lead to the creation of a Siglet or WM Schools.
- It has broken down some barriers but not all and sometimes the involvement of WM schools is at a lip service level with no depth. However the networking of teachers is crucial to future collaboration across all authorities.
- Again not all resources created are available in Welsh.
- Needs greater monitoring and impact.
- Cluster working – where do SIGs sit with Curriculum 4 Wales model?
- The impact of SIGs has been quite patchy.
- Siglets have been more successful due to smaller working groups.
- SIGs bid as an innovation model to take forward professional learning opportunities? Danger that some schools will be less proactive.
- Very successful area of school to school learning – maybe a peer checking model for evaluation? Training for this activity.
- Is it too early to dismantle this system? Especially as many are working so successfully to meet bespoke needs?
- The best SIGs are essential – very positive effect. Better value for money than the hubs.
- SIGs are very effective. They identify a specific need and work collaboratively to produce a resource or meet training needs to raise standards.
- I think we should stop thinking of their funding as "primp priming" and think of it instead as "enabling funding". We know that schools are strengthened and point to failure of traded hub model as evidence. Maybe consider implications of that in context of SIG funding.
- Also if no funding, how will the return of evaluative information be "encouraged"?
- Continue funding for pathfinder support

Peer Enquiry – Section 11

1. Have we reached a point where we are happy with school improvement strategies lying outside of consortium and local authority control?

- Not able to make a decision as we have no evidence on how successful this has been.
- No – I don't believe the system is ready for this. From my experience of peer enquiry I don't feel there is enough scrutiny and accountability for it to lead to meaty school improvement, mainly due to the relationships involved (too cosy). Could the work of peer enquiry not be linked more to panel groups and used to moderate schools claiming to be green?
- They can work depending on the team.
- Trial schools (green) without a challenge adviser and find out if they are truly a self improving school?
- Use the framework as an accountability tool (similar to Estyn)

2. Are there other strategies for which schools could now take responsibility?

- True green and strong yellow schools could be assigned a red and amber school to school support (with funding and therefore clear lines of accountability and responsibility)
- Categorisation for green school – support for green schools could be from each other rather than CA.

<table>
<tr><td>

Clusters – Section 12

</td></tr>
</table>

- *There is a clear need for schools to work together to develop a curriculum for its learners so that the national curriculum for Wales is realised. Consideration should, therefore, be given to outlining models of cluster working that would facilitate this.*
- *Funding for cluster work would need to be identified and allocated fairly.*

1. Do you recognise the need for cluster work in realising Successful Futures?

- Yes – for this type of work I think clusters should work closer together?
- Definitely!!!!
- Link to progression KS2-KS3
- Localised curriculum

2. Do you agree that clusters can be different organisations of schools?

- Concerns over 1 secondary school per cluster. Perhaps need for secondary to secondary and primary to primary clusters.
- It is important to develop clusters that are local to each other – it facilitates how they can provide support to each other.
- Note sure what is meant by this. I think clusters can become too inward looking which is a problem if your school is not in a strong cohesive cluster. Personally I don't find cluster meetings hugely helpful for school improvement work, more a network of support. This is why SIGs can be more beneficial.
- Possibly however I feel that it makes more sense to use the clusters that already exist.
- Concerns over 1 secondary school in a "traditional" cluster model.
- There is a need for secondary-to-secondary working
- Don't understand what the question means.

3. If so, how should this fit with our existing strategies?

- We need to make sure that clusters don't become silos in themselves. Everything that clusters do that is supported by the consortium needs to be shared across the region.

New Models of Working – Section 13

- *Welsh medium schools and special schools have been considering new models of working that have increased responsibility/accountability for school systems and a lesser role for challenge advisers.*
- *The benefits of such models should be considered, risks identified and if managed, pilots established. These could be evaluated to determine the next steps.*

1. **Are we ready to consider these models and pilot them?**

- WM 'Gydan Gilydd' and 'Cadwyn Cynradd' are a distributed hub where the schools recognise regional needs and develop programmes of support.
- The pilot of WM schools is also developing further the pattern of enhancing School to School working. It is in its infancy at present but provides a model that could be mirrored.
- We are ready – green schools (see Peer Review comments)

Challenge Advisers – Section 14

The following action could be considered:
- *Continue the move to headteachers working as partner CAs so increasing credibility and developing capacity within the school system.*
- *Embed the new deployment of CAs so as to develop ways of working that increase capacity within the system.*
- *Sustain the improvements recognised by Estyn in regards to recruitment, training and high expectations.*
- *Consider CA/SCA involvement in panels so using their knowledge of what schools need and ensuring that they know the quality of what support is available so as to facilitate brokerage.*
- *Consider developing the model whereby CAs have a strategic lead role with an associated reduction in the number of schools. This would improve brokerage as well as ensuring that the system benefits from their expertise.*

1. Your views on the suggestions made? Any further suggestions?

- Concerned about:-
  - *Consider developing the model whereby CAs have a strategic lead role with an associated reduction in the number of schools. This would improve brokerage as well as ensuring that the system benefits from their expertise.*

The role of strategic lead is very different from CA role.
Strategic lead can spend significant amount of time in schools/departments and with individual teachers. Can CAs do this? Strategic leads up to date with many subject specific aspects – probably more that CAs.

Possible solution – could strategic team members take up 1 or 2 schools as CA? There is precedence for this in the past e.g. Gina Ray.

- I think headteachers working as partner CAs is a sound one provided their schools have been exposed to scrutiny and moderation. (Most true green schools would welcome this). A core of full time CAs would still be needed to ensure brokerage and oversee the system.
- As a headteacher currently seconded out of the system for a year, I personally feel I will be even better support to a HT and school if still a headteacher and that it would be very easy to become too far removed.
- Re: Taking Strategic Lead – Would CA's have the capacity to fulfil both roles? Strategic leads have developed a knowledge base, network infrastructure and exercise within the subject. If Strategic Leads become CAs then this would encourage closer working between Challenge/Support.
- Strategic Advisers also role of CAs as in other consortia??
- Headteachers released to work as CAs can impact on quality of leadership in the school.
- However the appointment of CAs who have had significant headship experience given credibility to the role.
- The current agenda set for CAs visits does not allow sufficient time for support rather than challenge. This was identified in ESTYN latest annual report.
- Challenge Advisers linked to clusters in a more efficient and productive approach to addressing school improvement priorities and developing cluster working further.

Moving Forward

A Discussion Paper

The published ambition of CSC remains that by 2020:

- Learners have the best educational outcomes in Wales, rivalling comparable parts of the UK

- The poverty-related attainment gap is reduced faster here than anywhere else in Wales

- The region is known and recognised for its high-quality school led professional learning and the impact it has on outcomes

❑ **This is our published ambition - do we all recognise it and own it?**

❑ **How is it communicated to CSC staff, schools and other partners?**

❑ **How do we track progress towards achieving that ambition?**

❑ **Does it need amending e.g. is it possible to compare with the rest of the UK given differences in systems?**

Since its formation in September 2012, CSC has evolved to provide a school improvement service to the 397 schools within the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff and the Vale Of Glamorgan that is underpinned by the following key principles:

- That sustained school improvement is most effectively developed through a move away from central control/direction to a school led system in which schools have the capacity to make decisions, take responsibility and be accountable.

- That resources should move from being held centrally to being used to develop system capacity.

- That a high-quality school workforce with access to quality continuous professional development is key. Activity should be research-based and used as a stimulus for reflection and creativity.

❏ **Are these still our main underpinning principles?**

❏ **Do they impact on our decision making?**

Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

67

The ultimate aim is to develop a self-improving school system that:

- Is about effective teacher development, professional pride and status

- Is about developing future leaders at all levels

- Is about sharp accountability at all levels in schools, within and between schools

- Has meeting learners' need as the focus

- Needs to be led from school-to-school, not imposed or mandated

- Needs to be a learning system – sharing what's working, evaluating and changing what's not, commitment to whole system improvement

- Needs to be overseen and quality assured by school leaders

- Must include brokerage for those missing out, isolated or with poor leadership

- Needs authorities/regulators who hold the system to account and intervene only where needed

❑ **Do we all recognise and share this ultimate aim? Has anything changed?**

❑ **Do we agree with what a self-improving school system means? Anything missing?**

Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

CSC has made significant progress in developing a school self-improving system and moving toward its ambition:

- There has been a significant improvement in all key performance indicators in all phases

- Through the Central South Wales Challenge, schools are engaged in school-to-school improvement work through hubs, school improvement groups, peer enquiry and pathfinders - the professional learning offer is provided by schools for schools

- Culturally there has been a huge shift in the way in which schools think about collaboration with other schools across the region

Despite the improved pupil outcomes, the system has not always been effective in demonstrating the link between its work and improved outcomes for learners. Recently, this has been addressed and the progress made noted by Estyn and by NFER.

Taken together, activities...have increased schools leaders' confidence to lead in developing systemic school improvement...They have developed the capacity for mutual challenge and support. They have also nurtured analytical skills, e.g. in understanding the developmental needs of individual schools and groups of schools...There is also evidence that those who are participating in the work have developed deeper engagement with professional matters (pedagogy, leadership styles, curriculum development etc). It is evident that the consortium itself has changed its way of working in response to the school-led model...The consortium has developed its quality assurance work, e.g. by ensuring that schools provide appropriate challenge and support to each other. This reflected the need for school-led approaches to be underpinned by robust quality assurance. At the same time, the system-wide intelligence held by the consortium is being used to identify beneficial collaborations and broker appropriate school-led partnerships.

(NFER Report)

- ❑ **Do you agree?**
- ❑ **What more does CSC need to do?**

Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium
Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

Having recognised the significant progress, it is important to recognise the existing and emerging barriers and challenges to the consortium's continued development of a school led self-improving system.   These include:

- Education In Wales: Our National Mission, provides the Welsh Government's action plan for the period 2017-21. It contains clear implications for local authorities and consortia. Fortunately, a great deal of it fits with the ambition and underpinning principles of CSC. The new draft CSC business plan is closely aligned. However, the challenges arise from the fact that the direction is determined centrally by Welsh Government (WG). Secondly it is absorbing a great deal of key CSC staff time in realising the vision, potentially conflicting with local authority (LA) demands on time.

- Increasingly, consortia are required to work together to deliver key national priorities. This can have significant implications for the CSC business plan. Further, the monitoring and reporting arrangements for these plans are currently outside of CSC governance arrangements. The new business plan should make the links between cross-consortia improvement planning and the CSC business plan. This aims to bring greater clarity and transparency. However, the fact remains that a great deal of decision making is occurring at meetings of consortia and WG. It is not always easy to see how this is linked to elected members or to a school led system.

- The establishment of a national leadership academy has a number of benefits but it does have the potential to reduce the consortium's and therefore school leaders' ability to shape what is delivered and how. Further, there is an emerging pressure to consider a national professional learning offer. It will be key that the CSC vision is not compromised and that schools shape what is provided.

- Financial austerity is impacting at WG, LA, consortia and school level. Whilst it can be seen as an opportunity for creativity in that the status quo is not an option, it does challenge the school to school working in that schools may not have the resource capacity to lead the system as required. Further, 97% of the consortium's business plan is funded by WG grants. Each award of funding has terms and conditions that can restrict how a self-improving school system would choose to use that funding.

- The national model provides a framework of how consortia should work. The model is currently being reviewed. There is not always agreement between LAs, consortia and WG with regard to how education in Wales should look and be monitored.

- The statutory power for education remains with the LAs. Elected Members rightly hold to account education providers. However, they are often forced to use a narrow set of performance indicators that inadequately capture what schools deliver and can lead to undesirable behaviour at a school level that is not in the best interest of the learners. An intelligent accountability system that promotes, not hinders, a school self-improving system is required.

Aspects of the Central South Wales Challenge need review. For instance:

- Hubs were initially intended to create a trading model between schools but currently are in most cases provided free of charge. Further, the link between identification of need and what is provided by hubs is not clear.

- School improvement groups were financially pump primed to encourage regional working but the funding has been sustained and not reduced/removed.

- There is a lack of clarity between the pathfinder system and the support provided to red and amber schools by hubs.

- In some cases, accountability for the provider is too bureaucratic and not impactful.

- Although steps have been taken recently to improve things, brokerage remains a key issue.

Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

- Whilst the work of the strategy group of headteachers and of the regional stakeholder group made up of headteachers has been valued, the governance arrangements are such that it is not headteachers making the decisions, as would be expected in a truly self-improving school system.

❑ **Do agree that these barriers exist?**

❑ **Would you add any others?**

❑ **Have we identified appropriate actions/strategies to overcome them?**

Moving Forward

The following suggestions/questions are intended to provoke debate so that through consultation an agreed way forward is determined.

Putting it simply, the 'consortium' needs to effectively:

- Identify need

- Determine and coordinate how that need is best met

- Evaluate how effectively the identified need has been met

Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

Consideration needs to be given to who is best placed to do these three things. Headteachers for instance know what schools need but won't always know regional or national need. Thought could be given to establishing a panel to:

- Identify need

- Determine and coordinate how that need is best met

- Evaluate how effectively the identified need has been met

The composition of the panel needs discussion but the following possible members would have something to contribute:

- Strategic lead

- Headteachers - Associate HT, RSG HT, Strat group

- Hub leads

- Senior challenge adviser/Challenge adviser

- AOLE member

- Expert member eg NNEM, leadership academy

- HEI member

- Pupil

- Governor

The task could be broken down into specific areas, with a panel for each. Possibly:

- Leadership

- Professional learning

- The six areas of learning within The National Curriculum for Wales

- Initially, it would be for the strategic lead to establish the panel and coordinate its working. The presence of the senior challenge adviser or possibly a challenge adviser would help improve brokerage and bring intelligence about what schools need. In the longer term as the capacity in the system developed, it is possible to envisage how the need for a strategic lead and senior challenge adviser could be reduced/removed, thus providing a strategy for the further development of school led self-improving system.

Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

- It will be important to consider initially how the panel would evaluate the impact of the provision. The Research And Evaluation Board is currently exploring options, including an electronic system completed by participants at the start, end and six months after the programme. This should reduce the bureaucratic burden and collect only information that can be used effectively. This should link with EWC's learning passport if possible.

- A simple survey, issued at the correct time, could effectively gather from all headteachers the provision they feel is needed the following year, so increasing schools' shaping of the system.

- Would any impact be gathered from challenge adviser interaction with schools?

❑ **What are your views on panels, their composition and purpose?**

❑ **Alternative suggestions?**

Hubs

- Consider commissioning hubs to address the need identified by each panel.

- Consider separating the training provision from red/amber support and only use specialised schools with the capacity for such support. Such schools should not be prevented from providing training if they have the capacity. Ensure CAs know the provision and have confidence in it, so reducing barriers to effective brokerage.

- Consider making the pathfinder system part of the red/amber support so providing clarity and potentially improving efficiency.

- Distinguish between what pioneers schools deliver and what hubs provide. Use funding accordingly.

- Determine what professional learning needs remain after having considered pioneer provision.

- Consider temporary arrangements for the summer term so that a high quality, new learning offer can be developed.

- It would be important to recognise the urgency and the impact this potentially has for some schools. Need to avoid destroying capacity built up over years. Phasing seems necessary, moving from current system to new system over two to three years.

- Consider a hub being made up of more than one school.

- Should everything hubs offer be provided free of charge? They were initially set up to develop trading between schools. Is a core 'free' provision important with other provision available at a cost or should a charge be made for all training?

❑ **What are your views on how hubs should contribute going forward?**

Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

School Improvement Groups (SIGs)

- These play an important role in ensuring cross-authority school collaboration. However, there is a need to discuss if the level of what was initially pump prime funding is sustainable/required.

❏ **How much do we want to protect SIGs? Essential to our culture or an exercise that has successfully broken down barriers and now schools should be left to network as they consider best?**

Peer Enquiry

- The model has been evaluated and reviewed. Consideration should be given to if the system could now work outside of CSC, so becoming a pure school-to-school model.

❑ **Have we reached a point where we are happy with school improvement strategies lying outside of consortium and local authority control?**

❑ **Are there other strategies for which schools could now take responsibility?**

Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

Clusters

- There is a clear need for schools to work together to develop a curriculum for its learners so that the national curriculum for Wales is realised. Consideration should, therefore, be given to outlining models of cluster working that would facilitate this

- Funding for cluster work would need to be identified and allocated fairly.

❑ **Do you recognise the need for cluster work in realising Successful Futures?**

❑ **Do you agree that clusters can be different organisations of schools?**

❑ **If so, how should this fit with our existing strategies?**

Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

New Models Of Working

- Welsh medium schools and special schools have been considering new models of working that have increased responsibility/accountability for school systems and a lesser role for challenge advisers.

- The benefits of such models should be considered, risks identified and if managed, pilots established. These could be evaluated to determine the next steps.

❑ **Are we ready to consider these models and pilot them?**

Challenge Advisers

The following action could be considered:

- Continue the move to headteachers working as partner CAs so increasing credibility and developing capacity within the school system.

- Embed the new deployment of CAs so as to develop ways of working that increase capacity within the system.

- Sustain the improvements recognised by Estyn in regards to recruitment, training and high expectations.

- Consider CA/SCA involvement in panels so using their knowledge of what schools need and ensuring that they know the quality of what support is available so as to facilitate brokerage.

- Consider developing the model whereby CAs have a strategic lead role with an associated reduction in the number of schools. This would improve brokerage as well as ensuring that the system benefits from their expertise.

Your views on the suggestions made? Any further suggestions?

Consortiwm Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd
Joint Education Service

This page intentionally blank