



EAS

Education Achievement Service
for South East Wales
Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg
i Dde Ddwyrain Cymru

Education Achievement Service for South East Wales: Business Plan (2020-2021)

“Transforming pupil outcomes, creating
capacity through networks, enabling
excellence in teaching and leadership”

The Education Achievement Service (EAS) Business Plan has undergone a thorough consultation process. The consultees are listed below:

- EAS staff
- Directors of Education (within South East Wales) and Diocesan Directors
- Regional Joint Executive Group
- EAS Company Board
- EAS Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
- Individual local authority education scrutiny committees
- Regional Headteacher Strategy Group
- All Headteachers from within the region
- All Chairs of Governors from within the region
- School Councils from within the region
- All school based Professional Learning Leads

The final version of the Business Plan will be formally agreed by each local authority Director of Education / Chief Education Officer, the Joint Executive Group and the Company Board:

<p>Cllr K Preston</p> <p>Chair of Education Achievement Service Company Board</p>	
<p>Cllr D Yeowell</p> <p>Chair of Joint Executive Group</p>	
<p>Ms D Harteveld</p> <p>Managing Director, Education Achievement Service</p>	
<p>Mr Will McClean</p> <p>Lead Director on behalf of South East Wales Directors Group</p>	

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Section 1: Regional context

Why the EAS? Why this model?

The centralised model of service delivery that has been adopted across the South East Wales region has enabled efficiencies to be realised, economies of scale to be secured, particularly in relation to avoiding duplication of functions and the ability to secure a range of educational expertise within the region. The talent and expertise that resides in schools within and beyond the region is incentivised and used effectively to support professional learning and school improvement activity.

“The regional approach to deployment of resources allows economies of scale to be achieved; and the impact on service delivery of reduced EAS resources is being mitigated by a concerted effort to build compensatory capacity within schools to allow the quality of support to schools to be maintained.” (EAS Value for Money Report 2018/2019)

Key regional facts and figures



The number of pupils of compulsory school age within the region in 2019 was 72,698. This represents 19% of all pupils in Wales.



There are 234 maintained schools in the region, 16% of all maintained schools in Wales (EAS figure correct from September 2019, Wales figure from PLASC, 2019).



There are 20 Welsh medium primary schools, 3 Welsh medium secondary, 17 Roman Catholic and 11 Church in Wales schools within the region.



There are 234 maintained schools in the region, 16% of all maintained schools in Wales (EAS figure correct from September 2019, Wales figure from PLASC, 2019).



The percentage of pupils of compulsory school age who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) is 19.2%. This level of eligibility is the joint highest of the four regional consortia with Central South Consortium (PLASC, 2019).



In the region, 10% of people aged three and over say that they can speak Welsh compared to the Wales average of 19% (2011 Census, ONS).



The percentage of pupils aged 5 or over from an ethnic minority background is 10.8%.



Based on local authority reported numbers (Summer 2019), 1024 children in the region are looked after (LAC) by a local authority and attend a school in the region.

Overview of school numbers in the region

Caerphilly (19.7% FSM)

- 14 Non-maintained Nursery Settings**
- 63 Primary** (11 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)
- 6 Infant**
- 4 Junior**
- 11 Secondary** (1 Welsh medium)
- 1 Special**
- 1 Pupil Referral Unit**
- 1 3-18**



Blaenau Gwent (22.7% FSM)

- 2 Non-maintained Nursery Settings**
- 19 Primary** (1 Welsh medium, 3 Roman Catholic, 1 Church in Wales)
- 2 Secondary**
- 2 Special**
- 2 3-16**



Monmouthshire (11.3% FSM)

- 27 Non-maintained Nursery Settings**
- 30 Primary** (2 Welsh medium, 6 Church in Wales, 2 Roman Catholic)
- 4 Secondary**
- 1 Special**
- 1 Pupil Referral Service**



Newport (19.4% FSM)

- 24 Non-maintained Nursery Settings**
- 2 Nursery**
- 43 Primary** (3 Welsh medium, 2 Church in Wales, 6 Roman Catholic)
- 9 Secondary** (1 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)
- 2 Special**
- 1 Pupil Referral Unit**



Torfaen (22.0% FSM)

- 15 Non-maintained Nursery Settings**
- 25 Primary** (3 Welsh medium, 3 Church in Wales, 3 Roman Catholic)
- 6 Secondary** (1 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)
- 1 Special**
- 1 Pupil Referral Service**



Overview of regional school staffing

Local Authority	Number of Teaching Staff	Number of Support Staff
Blaenau Gwent	511	575
Caerphilly	1,519	1,366
Monmouthshire	679	642
Newport	1,427	1,283
Torfaen	773	751
EAS	4,909	4,617

Overview of regional school governors*

Local Authority	Number of school governors*
Blaenau Gwent	323
Caerphilly	1076
Monmouthshire	461
Newport	822
Torfaen	405
EAS	3087

* Correct as at 4.02.2020

Section 2: Overview

What does the EAS do on behalf of, and in partnership with, local authorities and other organisations?

The EAS is a not for profit limited company that is owned by the five local authorities in South East Wales. The EAS delivers, through an agreed Business Plan, a wide range of school improvement services to all schools (all key stages), pupil referral units and funded non-maintained nursery settings on behalf of each local authority. This plan supports the role that local authorities have in delivering their statutory functions, addressing their individual improvement priorities and promoting improved pupil outcomes. This Business Plan encompasses delivery across the following aspects:

- Monitor, challenge, support and intervention
- Curriculum, assessment and accountability reform
- Data collation, analysis and support (school, LA, region)
- Professional Learning: Teaching and Leadership
- Professional Learning: Teaching Assistants / Higher Level Teaching Assistants
- Equity and wellbeing
- Literacy, numeracy and digital
- Welsh language development and Welsh in Education
- Core and non-core subjects
- Support for governing bodies including professional learning
- National strategies, to include: Lead Creative Schools, Global Futures
- Specialist HR support
- Initial Teacher Education / Graduate Teacher Programme

How does the EAS support schools and settings to identify and address their improvement priorities?

Regional investment in building the capacity of schools and educational settings over the last five years have enabled more collaborative ways of working and a move towards the creation of a self-improving school system. The EAS remains committed to supporting the development of a skilled bilingual workforce in both Welsh and English medium schools. This approach is enabling teachers and leaders to learn from each other, from within and outside the region, to try out new approaches and to engage with educational research as the backdrop for improvement.

Across the region there are now a variety of ways in which the EAS supports and challenges school improvement. The impact and effectiveness of the strategies are reviewed regularly through both internal and external processes. The region has commissioned several external reviews over the past 3 years that have helped to shape future direction based upon effective principles of a self-improving system.

A summary of these bilingual supporting strategies is:

- The role of the challenge adviser in supporting, brokering and challenging the pace of progress schools make in addressing their identified school priorities;
- The role of EAS officers (including subject specific support, support for governors, wellbeing and equity) in supporting, brokering and challenging the pace of progress schools make in addressing their identified school priorities;

- Access to funded school networks that support all aspects of professional development and school improvement focused on improving the quality of leadership and teaching and learning;
- Access to a wide range of professional learning, some with accreditation options, for teaching assistants, teachers, school leaders and governors;
- Peer working and peer reviews;
- The use of trained and accredited coaches and mentors for teachers and leaders, sourced from within and beyond; and
- Access to eLearning materials and high-quality resources.

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Delivery of professional learning for a school, cluster or at regional level



Wherever possible, resources are available in a digital format to enable schools to use these for staff professional learning.

What is the delivery model for services across the region?

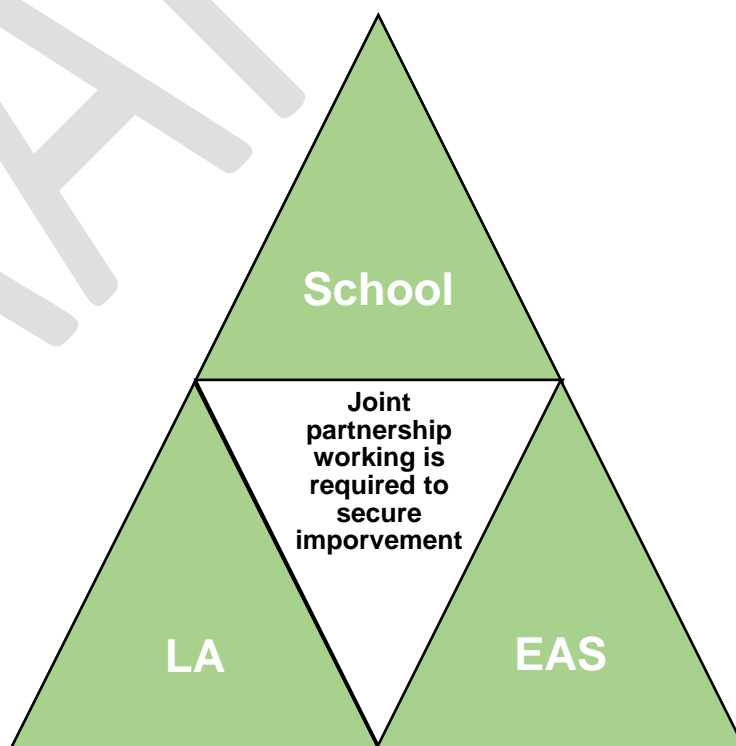
The EAS offers a comprehensive Professional Learning Offer (PLO) to all schools and settings across the region. For the past three years the region has funded schools to deliver a large proportion of the professional learning activity much of which is offered on a cluster basis and can therefore be delivered through the medium of Welsh or English. Each cluster has an assigned lead for professional learning who organises and co-ordinates support for, and access to professional learning across each of the clusters. In addition, each school has a partially funded professional learning lead who co-ordinates this work at school level. Support via the numerous funded learning network schools is also organised on a geographical basis to support this delivery model ensuring provision is available through the medium of Welsh and English.

The cluster-based professional learning lead also provides schools within the cluster with updates and bilingual development materials to support all key priorities within the National Mission, to include: Curriculum for Wales, Schools as Learning Organisations and the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership. This work is disseminated to all schools / practitioners through their nominated professional learning leads.

Each cluster also has a linked curriculum pioneer school that supports regional delivery of key information and latest key information with regards to the new Curriculum for Wales. The EAS organises regular briefing sessions with professional learning leads, headteachers, chairs of governors, local authority partners and middle tier organisations to ensure consistency of messaging, understanding and respective roles and responsibilities in key areas of work.

All schools are provided with a bespoke support package that compliments the priorities identified within their own School Development Plans (SDPs) in line with the levels of support they require. The support levels are informed by the national categorisation process, Estyn inspection outcomes and /or local intelligence. There is a degree of flexibility within the deployment model to allow for in-year changes in circumstances. The progress schools are making towards their priorities within their SDPs and against their local targets are captured on a termly basis and are reported to local authorities.

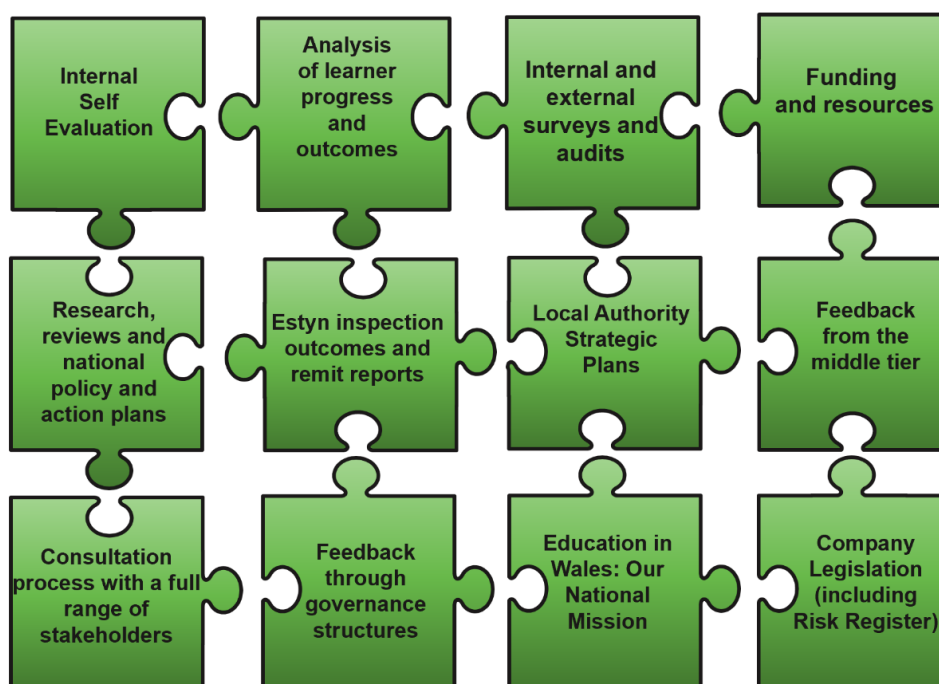
The EAS can offer advice, support and guidance that promote improved outcomes in schools and settings, whilst local authorities retain the statutory responsibility for schools and school improvement. For sustained school improvement to happen it is essential that the culture and recognition for change is embedded and well understood within each school and that all partners work together, recognising that each (school, LA and EAS) has its role to play in securing improvements.



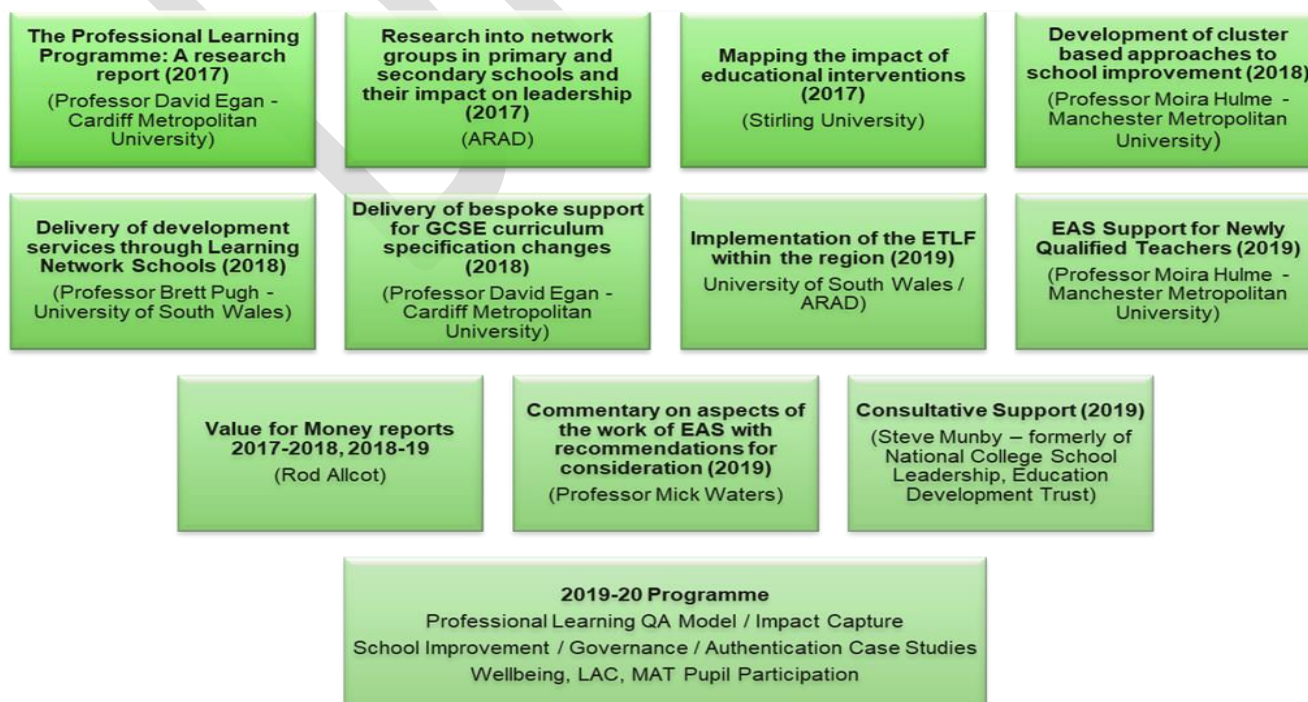
Section 3: Business Plan 2019/2020

Introduction

This Business Plan (2019/2020) outlines the programme of work that is required to continue to accelerate outcomes and provision for children and young people in settings and schools in South East Wales. The plan focuses on the need to raise aspiration and accelerate improvement in pupil outcomes, improve the quality of teaching and leadership, support schools to implement the curriculum for Wales and to continue to build upon the self-improving system within and across schools and settings. A wide range of information has been reviewed to formulate the priorities within this Business Plan:



The EAS Business Plan priorities continues to be shaped using the outcomes of external reviews and research (facilitated via grants from Welsh Government):



“Systems and processes, these are excellent. The Business Planning processes are consultative and transparent. The Hwb system enables data and information to be held in one place and is significantly reducing bureaucracy and workload, whilst enabling a clear record to be kept of actions and impact. Grant planning is transparent and clear.”

“EAS welcomes external challenge and is not resting on its success. It is keen to bring in external expertise to review its progress and to learn from elsewhere. External reviews from Manchester Metropolitan University, Cardiff Metropolitan University, Professor Mick Waters and others have helped to keep EAS on the front foot and to be thinking strategically about further improvement.”

Dr. Steve Munby: Review of EAS current practice and direction of travel (October 2019).

How has the EAS reported on the progress and impact of the previous Business Plan in 2019/2020 to its local authority partners?

The EAS has been held to account on a regular basis through its governance structure of which local authorities are represented on all groups, including the Joint Executive Group, the EAS Company Board and the EAS Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. Throughout 2019/2020 there have been regular impact reports on the progress of the Business Plan to these groups. These reports have also been made available to each local authority in a timely manner to enable local authority officers to keep all elected members fully apprised of the impact of the work of the EAS.

These include: reports on pupil outcomes and progress (including vulnerable learners), progress on schools causing concern, regular updates on outcomes/impact from regional / local authority self-evaluation activity and regional strategies, feedback from external reviews, annual regional value for money report, Managing Director’s Annual Report, outcomes from regional school and governor surveys.

There have been regular quality assurance meetings between local authority Directors of Education and senior EAS officers to discuss the quality of service that has been provided by the EAS and the pace of progress of schools causing concern. The meetings have been an effective mechanism enabling clear lines of accountability and communication so that timely action is taken by all parties.

In addition, each local authority has received a termly overviews that contain the impact and engagement of schools in EAS support and professional learning. The quantity of information that is supplied to each local authority on the impact of the work of the EAS is too great to contain within this plan but it can be found in the documents mentioned above and the supporting documents referenced at the end of this plan.

Key facts and figures in 2019/2020

The following facts and figures are a snapshot of a few of the successes achieved during 2019/2020:



As a result of internal self-evaluation, we need to work with local authorities and schools to:

Ensure that schools that require the highest levels of support and / or in Statutory Categories secure improvement within an acceptable timescale (within 2 years) to reduce their support level and / or be removed from a statutory category.



Improve the quality of teaching and learning, to include skills development, in identified secondary schools in order to secure improved learner progress, outcomes and engagement in learning, particularly for vulnerable learners.



Provide effective intervention, challenge, support and capacity-building. Continue to be clear about the bottom lines for intervention and continue to refuse to compromise when children are losing out on a good education. In most cases the focus should be on capacity-building.



Develop a talent management and leadership framework that focuses on middle leadership development on individual schools and clusters rather than mixed cohorts.



Work in partnership with local authorities to support school leaders to address the actions, as appropriate, contained within the Welsh in Education strategy and Cymraeg 2040: Welsh language strategy.



Continue to build the capacity of governing bodies within the region by revising the delivery model for governor training, aligned to the cluster model and provide bespoke professional learning to secondary governing bodies to enable them to undertake their roles effectively.



Further strengthen the governance arrangements by appointing high quality non-executive directors who can provide additional expertise and independent external challenge.



Consider a more strategic approach to identifying the next group of headteachers in the region. Further develop the executive headship role so that the very best leaders can make an impact in more than one school.



Retain a high bar for the identification of those who can provide support for other schools, continuing to focus on quality and ensuring due diligence and brokering the best from within and outside the region.

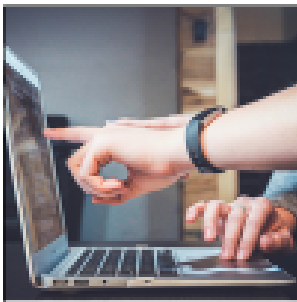


As a result of internal self-evaluation, we need to work with local authorities and schools to:

Continue to develop bespoke and school led peer review models focussing on improving the quality of teaching and learning that build mutual and reciprocal peer support and challenge.



Continue to be clear about what the role of EAS is around the wellbeing and equity agenda. Continue to champion and to integrate the work and to stay focused on EAS priorities.



Develop a boarder range of evaluation strategies that identifies that does not focus solely on end of key stage outcomes but looks at a range of teaching and leadership behaviours that would be a result of a support or intervention strategy.



Continue to promote succession planning within EAS and to empower the broader leadership team, especially when it comes to exposure to governance and to the production of strategic reports.

As a result of internal self-evaluation, we need to work with other regions, Welsh Government and middle tier partners to:

Secure the effective implementation of curriculum for Wales in all schools and settings. Engage in consultations that support the reform agenda.



Engage in two pilot programmes for schools causing concern and the implementation of the National Resource for School Improvement.

Design and deliver national professional learning.


Ensure that elected members are fully apprised of changes to accountability arrangements.




To secure an indicative 3-year grant funding model.

Local authority education strategic priorities 2020/21 (provided by each local authority)


This Business Plan addresses each local authority strategic priority that are indicated with *. These priorities fall within the remit of the work of the EAS. Additionally, the EAS will work in partnership with LAs to support additional local priorities, as appropriate.

The improvements that are required at regional and local authority level require a strong commitment of partnership-working to be successful. Where local authorities and the EAS work in close partnership, there is evidence, particularly with regards to schools causing concern, that rapid and sustainable school improvement can be achieved.

Local Authority	Strategic priorities for 2020/2021	Main link(s) to improvement strands within the Business Plan
Blaenau Gwent 	Accelerating early language acquisition skills between the ages of 3 to 7. *	1, 2 and 3
	To increase value-added progress in English and maths between key stage 2 and 3 and particularly between key stage 3 and key stage 4. *	1, 2 and 3
	To increase attainment in English and maths in key stage 3 at Level 6+. *	1, 2 and 3
	To improve attainment in English and maths (maths in particular) at level 2 in key stage 4*	1, 2 and 3
	To improve value-added progress for our most vulnerable learners, particularly between key stage 3 and key stage 4. *	1, 2 and 3

Local Authority	Strategic priorities for 2020/2021	Main link(s) to improvement strands within the Business Plan
Caerphilly 	Improve outcomes at Key Stage 4 with particular focus on standards in the English language and Capped 9 measures. *	1, 2 and 3
	Further improve the quality of leadership across all phases of education. *	1 and 3
	Increase the number of pupils achieving 3 A-A* at Key Stage 5. *	1 and 3
	Improve attainment and progress of vulnerable learners across all phases of education, with particular focus on more able pupils in receipt of free school meals*	2
	Further improve pupils' acquisition digital competency skills *	1 and 3
Monmouthshire 	Strengthen leadership and teaching and learning capacity in identified schools to ensure that all pupils make appropriate progress from their starting points. *	1, 2 and 3
	Improve the outcomes for all vulnerable learners, particularly those eFSM, at the secondary stages (key stages 3 and 4) and at the higher levels. *	1, 2 and 3
	Reduce variance in outcomes between schools and departments particularly at key stage 4. *	1, 2 and 3
	Work with all stakeholders to develop effective mechanisms to help reduce the amount of exclusions.	2
Newport 	Improve provision and outcomes for FSM learners in all key stages. *	1, 2 and 3
	Reduce variance in outcomes, teaching and leadership, particularly at key stage 4. *	1, 2 and 3
	Ensure a consistent approach to ALN provision, in line with the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 through the implementation of a Leadership/ALN Review framework in collaboration with Local Authority inclusion services.	2
	Reduce persistent absenteeism, particularly in secondary schools, and so improve secondary attendance.	2

Local Authority	Strategic priorities for 2020/2021	Main link(s) to improvement strands within the Business Plan
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<p>Torfaen</p> 	<p>Improve the progress that FSM pupils make across all key stages, particularly key stage 4 by ensuring LA services compliment and support regional provision. *</p>	<p>1, 2 and 3</p>
	<p>Ensure all of Torfaen schools have a clear strategy for improving the quality of teaching and learning particularly in secondary schools to reduce within school variation so all pupils, including boys and vulnerable learners, make appropriate progress over time. *</p>	<p>1, 2 and 3</p>
	<p>Reduce the level of variability in the quality and impact of leadership at all levels in secondary schools in the authority to secure good and sustained pupil outcomes. *</p>	<p>1, 2 and 3</p>

Each improvement strand within this plan has a specific emphasis on the work of the EAS in promoting improved outcomes for vulnerable learners, in particular those in receipt of FSM and specific actions that are undertaken to improve secondary schools.

These strategies are based on a wide range of research evidence. It will be important that all other stakeholders, including schools and local authorities, have their own specific strategies to support and promote improved outcomes for learners. The EAS will endeavour, as appropriate, and within available resources to support local authority strategic plans to maximise the impact on learner outcomes.

EAS Business Plan 2020/2021

The actions below have been developed in collaboration with our key partners, linked to each local authority strategic priorities. They represent the key priorities for the region to deliver in 2020/21. However, they are not exhaustive, and we recognise the importance of continuing to deliver our core business to a high standard. These actions are complemented by a regional professional learning offer for school staff and governors.

Improvement Strand 1	<p>i) Developing a high-quality education profession</p> <p>ii) Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing all staff and leaders to have the right knowledge and skills to do their job effectively so that pupils make good progress over time. • Developing leaders and providing them with the opportunity to learn with and from others.
What will the EAS do?	
<p>Quality assurance and impact of all professional learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide schools with guidance to complete, publish and evaluate the impact of their Professional Learning Plan. • Pilot the regional model for quality assuring all professional learning to capture impact. <p>Curriculum for Wales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide all schools with access to the national professional learning programmes, for all staff, to support the implementation of the curriculum for Wales. This will be jointly delivered with regional innovation schools and professional learning schools. • Provide schools with examples of effective school development actions for curriculum reform and support schools to implement these. • Encourage all schools to be research informed by creating a network of lead enquirers from professional learning schools to develop the capacity for professional enquiry in all schools. • Use the outcomes of the engagement visits completed by Estyn to support the development of a set of common expectations around the implementation of the curriculum for Wales. • Review the regional Welsh language strategy in collaboration with school leaders and other partners, considering the findings in future delivery models. <p>Schools as Learning Organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and facilitate professional learning that encourages schools to develop as effective learning organisations. This will include a range of approaches such as e-learning, school to school working and research. • Provide a coordinated programme of support to ensure all schools develop as effective learning organisations e.g. how to use the survey to inform school development priorities. • Support the remaining schools who have yet to engage the schools as learning organisation (SLO) survey. • Share case studies where schools and clusters are effectively developing as learning organisations. • Provide support and guidance to schools about how to use the SLO survey to inform school development priorities 	

Teaching and Learning

- Identify and share effective whole school strategies for teaching and learning from within and beyond the region to increase expectations around achieving excellent outcomes for learners.
- Support schools to use a range of first-hand evidence to improve the quality of teaching and learning through a modelled, shared and guided approach.
- Identify and work with effective leaders, teachers and teaching assistants across the region from all phases to share best practice that captures the progress of learners. This will include the development of a regional online resource that will include pupils work, portfolios, film clips of teachers, learners and leaders.
- Provide a range of delivery models and access to a wider range of professional learning across all areas of learning to support schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning within and beyond the region.
- Identify and share through planned professional learning, successful examples of provision, teaching and application of skills that evidences pupil progression across all phases from within and beyond the region.
- Continue to work in partnership with key partners, to include Welsh Government and Higher Education Institutions to offer a programme of professional learning to develop staff proficiency in the Welsh language.

Professional learning teaching assistants

- Provide a professional learning offer that supports teaching assistants whether new to the role, a practicing teaching assistant or as an experienced higher-level teaching assistant.

Professional Learning for statutory induction

- Continue to refine and develop the induction support for Newly Qualified teachers, including the role of the school-based induction mentor, the role of the external verifier and the support provided beyond the statutory induction period. Strengthen partnership working with HEI institutions to offer joint induction support for early career entry.

Initial Teacher Education

- Continue to work with higher education partners, cross regional partners and schools in developing and delivery of all routes into initial teacher education.

Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards

National professional learning offer for leaders

- Provide a professional learning offer in partnership with higher education institutions and other regions to support leaders at all levels in all schools and settings through a nationally endorsed range of programmes: Middle leadership, senior leadership, aspiring headteacher / preparation for NPQH, NPQH, New and Acting headteachers, experienced headteachers.
- Work in partnership with local authorities to support school leaders to address the actions, as appropriate, contained within the Welsh in Education strategy and Cymraeg 2040: Welsh language strategy.

Identifying, recruiting and retaining effective leaders

- Identify aspirational leaders and provide them with bespoke professional learning and a range of leadership experiences that supports them to develop an individual professional learning journey, particularly within the Welsh medium and secondary sectors.
- Work with local authorities and governing bodies to explore a range of leadership models e.g. Executive headship

- Regional specialist HR will work with local authorities to review and revise senior leadership recruitment processes to include using evaluations from a range of stakeholders and professional learning for appointment panel members.
- In partnership with other regions and higher education institutions, provide a national mentoring and coaching programme to develop and support school leaders and governors.

Governors as leaders

- Review and refine the Governor Support Clerking Service Level Agreement, to ensure that it supports effective governance.
- Review and refine the delivery model for professional learning (not including the mandatory training) for governors using the cluster-based 'train the trainer' approach.
- Further develop online resources for governors, including tools to assist with self-evaluation.
- Provide opportunities for collaborative professional learning for school leaders and governors.
- Identify governors who can undertake a range of roles within and beyond their own school, providing bespoke professional learning to strengthen and build capacity within the region.
- Explore and encourage peer support arrangements for governing bodies to secure improvement.

Specialist HR

- Work with local authorities to complement existing services.
- Provide specialist HR professional learning for school leaders to include the implementation of the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership and managing performance.

Targeted support for the secondary phase (in addition to above)

- Review and refine the current model for the development of teaching and learning strategies in identified schools, use the outcomes to engage a further cohort of secondary schools.
- Continue to provide a range of strategies to support leadership of teaching and learning e.g. school to school, research informed approaches.
- Continue to provide professional learning for Chairs and Vice Chairs of governors in secondary schools focussing on improving the quality of leadership and teaching and learning.
- Support schools to explore a range of models to help them prepare for the implementation of curriculum for Wales.
- Review and refine co-ordinated Challenge Adviser and subject specific support and delivery in identified schools e.g. intensive block time, challenge adviser and school to school model
- Supporting schools to ensure that curriculum pathways provide an appropriate choice for all learners.

Specific focus on improving the outcomes of Vulnerable Learners

- Design and facilitate professional learning for specialist teaching assistants in partnership with local authorities and settings.
- Review and refine the secondary Vulnerable Learner Lead programme, sharing effective practice across selected clusters and primary schools.
- Design and facilitate national online resources to complement the middle leadership programme for more able and Seren school leads.
- Evaluate the current range of enhanced curriculum opportunities funded via the pupil development grant and share best practice across the secondary phase.
- Capture best practice of a range of curriculum offers that are provided in PRU provisions.

Improvement Strand 2

Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and wellbeing

- Providing schools with support, guidance and professional learning to ensure all learners (including all known groups of vulnerable learners) attend school every day, engage well in their learning, receive the correct support and challenge in supportive and inclusive learning environments.

What will the EAS do?

- To provide a programme of professional learning through a 'Train the Trainer' approach that provides the foundations of universal provision across all schools and settings. This will include strategy development and professional learning for: FSM learners, LAC learners, Known Adopted learners, Young Carers, More and Most Able Learners and those who have English as an additional language.
- Embed the regional Equity and Wellbeing Strategy (which encompasses strategies for all vulnerable learners) to further develop multi-agency working, to build on the universal provision for all schools and settings.
- To extend the use of first hand evidence within schools to support and challenge the progress that is made by vulnerable learners.
- To create an online interactive curriculum tool that captures the resources available to support schools in shaping their provision for Health and Wellbeing at a local and regional level.
- To co-construct a professional learning programme in partnership with local authorities on 'Improving pupil engagement and behaviours in learning' based upon the principles of adverse childhood experiences agenda.
- Review and extend the network of schools engaged with the 'Raising the achievement of disadvantaged youngsters' programme.
- To improve pupil voice and pupil participation across the region in partnership with the School and Super Ambassador Programme to influence school and regional priorities.
- To introduce a revised regional approach to improve the monitoring and impact of the pupil development grant that includes a professional panel attended by local authority officers.
- Work with local authorities to ensure that local authority strategic plans for vulnerable learners are complimented by the regional strategy.
- Will work in partnership with local authorities to analyse attendance and exclusions data and support school leaders to share effective practice and to improve outcomes, as appropriate.
- To support the Regional Transformation Officer to update stakeholders on ALN Reform and support the shaping of a professional learning programme to meet the changing requirements of ALN Reform.
- To continue to support schools and settings with the planning, monitoring and evaluating of grant plan expenditure. Continue to provide schools with guidance to complete, publish and evaluate the impact of the Pupil Development Grant.

Targeted support for the secondary phase (in addition to above)

- To engage with Career Wales to design a programme that offers learners career advice from year seven onwards in order to map their flightpaths to their desired destinations.
- Extend the RADY programme for identified secondary schools and their feeder primary schools.

Improvement Strand 3

Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability mechanisms, supporting a self-improvement system

- Providing support for schools to use a wide range of evidence to accurately assess where they are, where they want to be and how they will get there through continuous self-improvement.

What will the EAS do?

- Provide schools with a range of targeted support focussed on school development priorities in line with their current support level.
- Implement the regional approach to schools causing concern in partnership with local authorities and Diocesan Directors that includes regular schools causing concern meetings and regional schools causing concern register to monitor and increase the progress that schools make.
- Where concerns arise in any school or setting the EAS will share relevant information with local authorities and Diocesan Directors to inform next steps and where appropriate this may include the use of statutory powers to accelerate progress.
- Working alongside key partners including Estyn, Welsh Government, local authorities and school leaders, pilot an approach to supporting schools causing concern to identify appropriate and timely support and intervention in order to accelerate progress.
- Embed the regional strategy for target setting with a key focus on the school's context at a local level, and further develop the use of pupil progress data at school level in line with the national guidance.
- Provide professional learning opportunities for schools, governing bodies and local authorities to understand the changing assessment and accountability arrangements within the reform agenda.
- Support the piloting of the national evaluation and improvement resource (NEIR) in identified regional schools and ensure key learning is shared with all schools and settings.
- Provide professional learning to all schools and settings to promote effective self-evaluation, improvement planning processes and effective strategies for formative and summative assessment.
- Formally monitor and evaluate the quality and impact of self-evaluation and development planning for all schools and settings to secure improvement in progress and attitudes of learners, the quality of teaching and learning and the quality of leadership.
- Further develop the regional approach of 'School on a page' so that a broader range of information is used for accountability purposes focused on pupils' wellbeing and attitudes to learning, the standards achieved and progress made by all pupils including those in vulnerable groups, the quality of teaching and learning in schools and settings as well as the quality of leadership.
- Provide ongoing professional learning for elected members on how they can use this broader range of school information to hold schools to account more effectively, promoting cultural and behavioural change.
- Support and advise local authorities, as appropriate, in the delivery of their statutory functions for SACRE and the development of individual Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

Supporting a self-improvement system

- Refine the Learning Network Schools approach to reflect new and emerging service priorities.
- Refine and extend the peer working models for school leaders with a focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Provide further opportunities for schools to develop self-chosen networks of professional practice, based upon common improvement needs.

- Commission a range of evaluative research reports in priority areas to provide recommendations to further develop key areas of service delivery.

Targeted support for the secondary phase (in addition to above)

- Refine and extend the peer working programme to include middle leaders, to support a broad range of subjects across the curriculum in the secondary phase.
- Explore external systems that will support schools to set targets, track pupil progress, measure value added performance and engagement in learning.
- Provide guidance and support for schools to set appropriate local targets in line with school development priorities whilst retaining the focus on individual pupil level target setting.
- Support schools' engagement with consultations regarding reforms to key stage 4 qualifications.
- Collaborate with schools and other sectors to share and analyse outcome and destination data at key stage 5 for all learners.

Specific focus on improving the outcomes of Vulnerable Learners

- Improve the analysis of progress data that pertains to vulnerable learners.
- Continue to refine the grant planning system and the processes in place to support the planning, reviewing and evaluating of impact of expenditure in line with the research from the Education Endowment Foundation.
- Refine the role of the Wellbeing and Equity LNS to become more focused on an area of work.
- To continue grant discussion meetings with local authority partners to focus on provision and progress of vulnerable learners.

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Improvement Strand 4

EAS Business Development

- Developing systems and processes that enable the company to effectively and efficiently support schools and settings promoting improved pupil outcomes.
- Develop a workforce that embodies the core values and mission of the EAS.
- Ensure the EAS adheres to legislative requirements.

What will the EAS do?

- Continue to refine the business model for the EAS to ensure that it aligns to and addresses regional priorities and national priorities.
- Work with key partners to deliver a more sustainable funding model that aligns with the workforce plan and secures an updated Collaboration and Members Agreement.
- Maintain a high-quality, well informed, flexible and motivated workforce that represent our values and vision.
- Embed performance management processes and extend the professional learning opportunities for staff that meet individual and service needs.
- Ensure the effectiveness of the company board and the audit and risk assurance committee, through appropriate professional learning.
- Continue to develop the regional grant mapping tool to enable more efficient and effective interrogation of data, impact capture and value for money at school, LA and regional level.
- To continue to publish the regional grant allocations and maximise delegation rates to schools.
- Ensure that systems and processes are in place to enable the effective delivery of the Governor Support Service Level Agreement.
- Refine the value for money model, further exploring access to comparative data.
- Enhance the use of self-evaluation processes to ensure our work has impact on improving outcomes, provision and leadership.
- Ensure the efficient delivery of accurate performance data and wider intelligence to support effective self-evaluation and service delivery.
- Refine and enhance the communication and marketing strategy to ensure appropriate stakeholder engagement, to include the development of a regional pupil forum.
- Continue to engage with other consortia and middle-tier organisations, such as Estyn, to realise efficiencies in programme development and delivery.

Working in partnership with local authorities, schools and setting the ambitions for 2020/21 and beyond are:

Overall the number of schools requiring the highest levels of support continues to decrease and when a school is placed within a statutory category it will be removed within an acceptable timeframe agreed with the LA.

Nearly all schools maximise their capped 9 performance through a focus on breadth and quality of provision for all learners. A majority of schools perform in line with modelled outcomes based on FSM eligibility.

The model for delivery of governor training will be reviewed and revised enabling more governors to undertake professional learning on a cluster basis.

A broader range of evaluation strategies will be developed and used that do not focus solely on end of key stage outcomes but looks at a range of teaching and leadership behaviours that would be seen as a result of a support or intervention strategy.

Nearly all schools are demonstrating progress against the national language charter framework objectives.

An online resource to support teaching and learning will be developed to exemplify and share best practice across the region.

Through the review of the Regional Welsh Language Strategy good progress has been made in addressing the actions, as appropriate, contained within the Welsh in Education strategy and Cymraeg 2040: Welsh language strategy.

Through self evaluation many schools are making good progress in achieving the milestones set out within the nationally agreed documentation for the realisation of the new curriculum for Wales.

The quality of SDPs within the secondary phase continue to improve with many schools using improved self-evaluation activity to inform improvement priorities. Many make at least good progress.

All schools causing concern will be held to account for the pace of progress and where this is too slow appropriate action will be taken or advised in a timely way.

A regional professional learning programme and talent management framework will be implemented enabling a more strategic approach to identifying, developing and retaining good quality leaders within the region.

A majority of Chairs and Vice Chairs of governors within the secondary phase will be better equipped to support and challenge the pace of improvement within their schools.

Challenge Advisers will use a wider range of first-hand evidence to support schools in promoting improved progress and outcomes for all learners, including vulnerable groups.

All schools and settings engaged in the pilot pedagogy programme will have developed a bespoke teaching and learning strategy for their school that is beginning to improve the quality of teaching and learning and reduce within school variation.

Nearly all secondary schools who have engaged with the programme for cross curriculum skills development and have improved their provision as a result with impact evident through a range of first-hand evidence.

Bespoke and school led peer review models demonstrate impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning in identified schools.

The revised learning network schools' model will be implemented focusing on quality and ensuring due diligence and brokering the best from within and outside the region.

EAS governance arrangements will be strengthened through the appointment of additional non-executive directors to broaden the breadth and balance of skills on the company board.

Succession planning within the broader leadership team of the EAS is improved with team members having more exposure to governance meetings and to the production of strategic reports.

The EAS will achieve the Investors in People Award and will demonstrate strong progress against the outcomes of the EAS learning organisation survey.

An online resource for Health and Wellbeing, bespoke to each local authority will enable schools to be signposted to effective provision, promoting improved pupil outcomes for vulnerable learners.

The delegation rate to schools is maintained at 94%.

Section 4: Delivery arrangements for 2020/2021

Governance and funding

The EAS is subject to a robust governance model that is underpinned by a Collaboration and Members agreement (CAMA) and Articles of Association. Ensuring that the EAS provides value for money is of utmost importance. As recipients of public funding it is important that budgets are allocated wisely. We will endeavour to deliver even better value for money through achieving financial balance and delivering services within the constraints of our budget, making further efficiency savings wherever possible and ensuring delegation rates to schools are maximised.

How will the EAS held to account for the delivery and impact of the Business Plan?

The progress on the implementation and impact of the Business Plan will be reported formally at a mid-year basis to the Joint Executive Group and Company Board; this will include an evaluation of the regional plan and of each individual local authority annex document. These reports, as in previous years, will be suitable for scrutiny activity at local authority and national level. In addition, the progress made towards the implementation of key actions will be reported at each meeting of the Joint Executive Group and Company Board.

This year the EAS will report additional information on a termly basis, as opposed to only mid-year, to both the Joint Executive Group and local authorities around the progress and impact of its work in support of each local authority strategic objective and their related success criteria and also the progress schools are making towards their individual targets. This approach will be aligned to the national changes in the accountability system.

Throughout the year there will be many interim impact reports associated with the implementation streams within the Business Plan which will be reported through each of the governance groups, though individual LA committees (as requested) and through evaluation and improvement events with Welsh Government officials, These include: reports on pupil outcomes and progress, progress on schools causing concern, regular updates on outcomes/impact from regional / local authority self-evaluation activity and regional strategies, feedback from external reviews, annual regional value for money report, Managing Director's Annual Report, outcomes from regional school and governor surveys.

The financial accounts are reported to both the company board on a quarterly basis and through the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on a termly basis. The final year end accounts are externally audited and reported in line with the 2016 UK Corporate Governance Code. In compliance with the Companies Act these accounts are reported and approved at the Annual General Meeting by the Joint Executive Members who are shareholders of the EAS.

Consortium funding

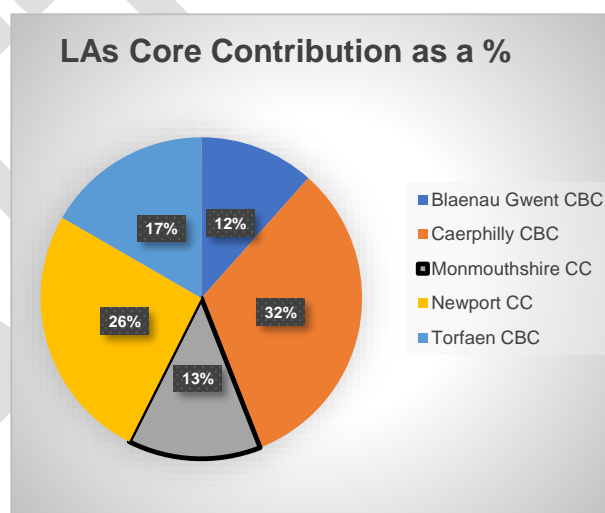
The EAS is funded on an annual basis from three sources: Local authority core contributions, regional school improvement grants and a service level agreement for governor support services. A spending plan accompanies the Business Plan which is intrinsically linked to all actions contained within it. A detailed overview of the regional distribution of all grants is available for all schools to view and compare allocations and rates of delegation through the regional grant monitoring tool.

Delegation rates to schools has increased to 94% whilst the EAS staff profile by 48% since 2012. An element of the EAS was originally set a trading income target of £1.25m from schools to enable balanced year end account position. This has now been totally eradicated from income dependency and schools are no longer charged for any training or services provided in line with the business plan.

Local authority contributions

Local authority funding for consortium working is underpinned by the National Model for Regional Working, published by the Welsh Government in 2014. The model recommended a core funding allocation of £3.6m for the EAS. The current LA core contribution is based on these figures less year on year efficiencies of £1.17m since 2012 agreed in collaboration with the 5 local authorities. The local authorities' indicative figures for 2020/21 are as follows:

Local Authority	£
Blaenau Gwent CBC	358,985
Caerphilly CBC	1,005,705
Monmouthshire CC	414,127
Newport CC	803,293
Torfaen CBC	516,355
Total	3,098,465



In terms of the above £0.357m of this figure is used to secure capacity within the Challenge Adviser team from current serving headteachers and £0.2m of this figure is used to secure service level agreements and venue costs sourced through local authorities.

Regional school improvement grants

The Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA) details the procedure that needs to be followed for all school improvement grants received into the region. All grants are approved by local authority Chief Education Officers / Directors of Education with a follow up ratification from JEG members.

Historically there were two main grants received into the region from Welsh Government. Pupil Development Grant (PDG) and Education Improvement Grant (EIG). The latter has been re-designated as the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG) and includes specific initiatives to support the objectives within the 'Education in Wales: Our National Mission'. In addition to the two main grants, two small regional indicative grants were received for SEREN learners.

Grant Name	Grant Total	Amount delegated to schools	Delegation* Rate	Regionally Retained
	Indicative Calculation 2020/21			
	£	£		£
Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG)				
- Education Improvement Grant	24,930,697	23,133,194	93%	1,797,503
- Professional Learning for Teachers	2,231,515	2,231,515	100%	0
- Other grant initiatives	3,527,764	2,658,940	75%	868,824
Pupil Development Grant (PDG)	18,064,750	18,064,750	100%	0
PDG (Lead Regional PDG Adviser)	100,000	0	0%	100,000
Seren Pre 16	98,400	98,400	100%	0
Seren Post 16	55,000	55,000	100%	0
Total	49,008,126	46,241,799	94.4%	2,766,327

*Delegation: This refers to funding which gives freedom of choice to a school in how it is used. It must however be spent in accordance with, and in the spirit of, the core purpose of the grant and the individual school development plan.

The following circumstances will not be classed as delegated:

- Staff seconded from the LA or the consortium to a school(s) or a cluster(s).
- Staff working wholly or partly in schools and paid for from a local authority or consortium retained budget.
- Staff or services that form part of an SLA – this type of activity will be classed as non - delegated.
- Monies delegated from the consortium to a local authority.

Several factors including funding, delivery of the business plan, workload, and the expectation placed by LAs, EAS, WG on the benefit of the grants has led to an enhanced live common school and cluster grant planning tool being proposed for 2020/21. This school planning tool delivers on each of these factors. WG Hwb will be used as the host and accessible to key staff within the individual school, LA and the EAS.

The tool has been designed to capture all grant costs associated with the national mission, provide transparency on school and regional spend, report on intended impact and outcome of the grant including direct reference to the Sutton Toolkit. The tool also can cross reference to the school development plan and the one plan approach will be piloted with several schools in 2020/21. To further strengthen the transparency every school across the region will have live access to the individual grants delegated to each and every school.

Governor Support Service Level Agreement

The EAS has responsibility for providing a Governor Support service to all schools in the region. The service provides support to school governing bodies, headteachers, and individual governors. This includes advice, guidance, training, and an optional clerking service in order to support governing bodies to deliver their responsibilities.

The optional clerking service is provided through an annual service level agreement with an option to buy into a clerking service and then additionally a statutory committee clerking service. Only one school opted not to buy into the clerking service in 2019/20. The indicative funding for 2020/21 is £0.388m.

Section 5: Additional supporting documents

This Business Plan is supported by the following documents:

- Local Authority Annex documents 2020 – 2021
- Detailed Business Plan 2020–2021
- Long term overview 2021-2023
- Regional Grant Mapping Overview 2020–2021
- Regional Self-Evaluation Report (Executive Summary)
- EAS Risk Register (Executive Summary)
- Regional Professional Learning Offer 2020–2021
- Local Authority Strategic Education Plans
- Mid-year and final year review of EAS Business Plan 2019/2020

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