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**RE-ENVISIONING OUR**

**REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE (RIC)**

# **Background**

It is recognised by the Scottish Government (2020) that the number of vulnerable children will increase because of additional pressures places on families and communities by the Covid-19 outbreak. However it is also clear that Covid-19 will impact most negatively on those children and families who were already marginalised prior to this pandemic (Osoksky et al, 2007).

The Forth Valley and West Lothian Region Improvement Collaborative currently has 6 workstreams. In light of the current COVID 19 situation, the local authority Directors are reviewing the RIC’s priorities and have agreed that although some of the current RIC priorities will continue to move forward, there are other others which will not.

This consultation paper outlines the possible vision and purpose of these new priorities, changes to current workstreams, governance structures and next steps.

# **Vision**

The priorities crucial to moving forward in this current COVID-19 pandemic are centred around social justice and using our evolving learning from this crisis to improve our education systems to meet the needs of all of our children and communities. Our vision statement is therefore a call for all staff and partners to:

*Recover health and wellbeing across Forth Vally and West Lothian (FVWL) by ensuring each of our learners receive the support they need to reach their potential in education through prioritising:*

* *those children and families who need it most*
* *health and wellbeing of staff, children and families*
* *transitions[[1]](#footnote-1)*

The focus will be on opportunities which add value to the work already being delivered by the individual local authorities of FVWL.

# **Proposal of new overarching group and its purpose**

A new steering group will lead the strategic direction of the RIC as set out above, with different workstreams feeding into this overarching group. The new group will be the ‘Health and Wellbeing’ (HWB) steering group. It will have responsibility for ensuring the development and cohesion of the strategy to take forward the RIC priorities and reporting on improvement data to the RIC. The membership of the groups will comprise of those from senior leadership roles across the RIC from Education, Health and Social Care Partnerships, Improvement Service, Third Sector and Education Scotland.

# **Change of structure**

There is agreement from the Directors from FVWL that some of the current RIC priorities will continue to move forward but will be adapted to take stock of our learning from March 2020 to present day and our experiences of COVID-19. The workstreams’ focus will be modified to focus on recovery and supporting children and families who need it most, the new model of blended/ flexible learning and transitions. The opportunity to develop the FVWL Virtual Learning Strategy will be accelerated to support this new blended learning with full consideration of equity of access for all.

The current workstream actions which are continuing are those from:

* Numeracy
* Literacy
* Health and wellbeing (curriculum)

These different workstreams will now be streamlined under one with a focus on quality learning and teaching with the priorities of supporting children and families who need it most, transitions and blended/ flexible learning.

In order to achieve our vision, we also need to consider the psychological needs of FVWL staff, children, families and communities and how we build capacity within the local authorities and RIC infrastructures to provide the support required. Therefore there will be three workstreams overall which feed into the overarching HWB Steering Group:

* Quality, learning and teaching
* Connection and engagement
* Building capacity

**4. Governance structures**

It is proposed that:

* The overarching HWB steering group will meet every month. These meetings will update and review actions and improvements
* A lead for each of the three workstreams will be allocated from the Steering Group and it will be their responsibility to lead individual workstreams and feedback to the group on behalf of the workstream.
* The steering group and workstreams will review and evaluate their progress towards improvement formally every 6 months.
* RIC recruited staff will be represented on the HWB Steering Group by the RIC Lead Officer.
* Each workstream will have individual improvement plans which will be more specific about how they will action the RIC priorities in their own areas. It will be the role of the Health and Wellbeing steering group to ensure these are cohesive, aligned and focus on the new RIC priorities.

**5. Terms of reference**

* Role and responsibilities of the HWB Steering Group

The HWB Steering Group will be responsible for developing the overarching strategy for the RIC with the focus on improving outcomes in education for the children, young people and families in most need of support following COVID-19. This will be through consultation with stakeholders and RIC workstreams. The group will also be responsible for reviewing the improvement and progress towards objectives on a 6 monthly basis which will be reported to RIC Directors. Arrangement for improvement monitoring will be further developed in consultations with RIC Directors.

* Decision making regarding strategic plans and proposed allocation of resources which are developed by the HWB Steering Group will require agreement by the RIC Directors prior to being implemented. The group’s role is advisory.
* Membership and role of group members:
  + The members of the group will be multi-agency and will be invited from senior leadership roles across the RIC from Education, Health and Social Care Partnerships, Improvement Service, Third Sector and Education Scotland. Other agencies such as Public Health, Universities/ Colleges may also be invited to be part of the group but can attend on a less regular basis to ensure all parts of the system are involved.
  + Each representative should be able to make decisions and speak on behalf of their organisation.
  + It will be the role of the representatives from each organisation to consult, communicate and take actions from the RIC and Steering Group into the organisations/ groups/ workstreams which they represent. This should be a two-
* Operations:
  + Workstream Leads will feedback on a monthly basis to the HWB Steering Group on the improvements and progress of their workstream.
  + Meetings will be virtual as well as face-to-face depending on social distancing guidelines.
  + Minutes will be taken from each meeting and shared by the RIC admin. These will then be available for wider consideration by the different workstreams and through the FVWL blog.
  + Communication of the work of the HWB workstream will be twofold. They will shared formally through publication of papers, plans and improvements on the RIC blog and twitter and informally through consultation on strategy and plans with stakeholders, representatives working alongside colleagues on RIC actions and tasks for the benefit of FVWL children, young people and families. A Communications Strategy should be considered by the HWB Steering Group.
* Evaluation and review of the HWB group:

The HWB Steering Group will report on improvements and progress on a monthly basis to the RIC Directors through their minutes. The RIC Lead Officer will also attend these meetings as will the Chairperson, if required. There will be a formal review and evaluation every 6 months which will be reported to RIC Directors and every year there will be public reporting of improvements

**6. Next steps:**

Short term (May – October 2020)

* Agree vision and purpose of HWB Steering Group
* Consult internally and externally with stakeholders including local authority staff and partners on proposed new priorities, structure and governance and amend accordingly
* Consider current workstream remits and action plans to ensure they support new RIC priorities
* Consider membership of Health and Wellbeing Steering Group and ask for representation from senior leaders in each of the relevant areas.
* Develop new steering group for RIC who will:
  + Develop strategy, governance and terms of reference for themselves and associated workstreams
  + Develop longer term plan for Oct 20-Aug 22 following consultation with local authorities and partners and focusing on new priorities
* Workstream leads to be allocated from Steering Group.

Longer term (Oct 2020 – Aug 22)

* Implement and evaluate RIC Improvement Plan

***Date: 29th May 2020***

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1. Transitions includes all the different types of transitions which our children and families are likely to experience in the future months ahead including returning to school buildings, transitions such as ELC to P1, P7 to S1 and post school, transitions to a new teacher or class, transitioning to a new way of learning, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)