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Consultation Document

The future delivery of education services in Wales

Date of issue: **18 June 2013**

Action required: Responses by **13 September 2013**

The future delivery of education services in Wales

- Overview** This consultation seeks views on the options put forward in the report on the future delivery of education services in Wales.
- How to respond** Responses to this consultation should be e-mailed/posted to the address below to arrive by **13 September 2013** at the latest (please enter 'Review of education consultation' in the subject matter box).
- Further information and related documents** Large print, Braille and alternate language versions of this document are available on request.
The consultation documents can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at www.wales.gov.uk/consultations
- Contact details** For further information:
Review of Education Services in Wales Secretariat Team
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Data protection

How the views and information you give us will be used

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

Background

In March 2011, an independent task and finish group published its report on the structure of education services in Wales. It made a number of conclusions and recommendations in relation to the delivery of education services, recognising that educational standards were highly variable across Wales and that it was difficult to secure high-quality senior capacity and capability to deliver across 22 local authorities in Wales. The report recognised the development of regional consortia as a positive way to tackle issues relating to resources, capacity and outcomes. It further concluded that promising areas of benefit in the collaborative culture of the emerging regional consortia include releasing of resources to the front line that can be secured by the economy of scale, and the opportunity to provide very high-quality support services to schools.

There was a further recommendation that an in-depth review should be conducted in the autumn of 2013 to determine whether there is need for further structural change to deliver the best possible education in Wales. The Minister for Education and Skills made a statement on 20 November 2012 announcing that he was bringing forward the review on the future delivery of education services in Wales. In January 2013 the Minister announced the appointment of Robert Hill to undertake the review, which focused on looking at the effectiveness of the current education delivery at school and local authority level, and to consider what should be undertaken at school, local authority, regional and national level with a focus on:

- raising standards and improving learner outcomes at all ages
- better support and challenge to schools to improve standards
- developing and strengthening the leadership of schools and the quality of teaching and learning
- ensuring value for money and effective use of resources
- bringing about coherence and strong links between all areas of the education system, including post-16 provision and the wider children's services agenda.

Robert Hill has now completed his review and has submitted his report to the Minister for Education and Skills. The report presents a wide range of options for consideration by the Welsh Ministers covering five areas:

- improving classroom teaching and learning
- strengthening school leadership
- increasing school partnership
- improving accountability
- organising school improvement.

This paper invites comment, and whether you agree or disagree with the options put forward within the report. However, there are a number which already form part of the Welsh Government's Improving schools plan and will be taken forward over the coming months.