Report

Report to:	**Clyde Valley Learning and Development Joint Committee**
Date of Meeting:	**1 June 2009**
Report by:	**Chair of Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project Implementation Group**

Subject:	**Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project - Shared Services Project Review**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

♦ update the Joint Committee on the outcomes and conclusions of the recent project review

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Joint Committee is asked to note the following recommendation(s):-

(1) that a review of the project was undertaken by members of the Implementation Steering Group on 19 May 2009

(2) that it is recognised that individual member councils have both contributed to and benefited from the work of the Clyde Valley Project to date

(3) that there remains scope for improvement and that a number of actions have been identified to address these in the immediate future

(4) that a proposal for the sustainable future of the Clyde Valley Project will be presented to the September meeting of the Joint Committee

3. Background

3.1 Having reported on and completed phase one of the project, it was proposed at the last meeting of the Joint Committee (2 March 2009) that now was an appropriate time to take stock on the project and to re-focus the plan of future activities.

3.2 The Implementation Steering Group agreed to organise and manage a development day involving all member councils in order to start the process of review and generate some recommendations and actions for the future.

3.3 Following consultation with all members the event took place on 19 May 2009. This date was selected as the most suitable for the majority of members, with only Inverclyde Council being unable to attend.

4. The Review Process

4.1 In advance of the meeting a number of preliminary questions were drawn up and distributed to the Implementation Steering Group representatives. Each council was asked to consider the questions and submit their responses in advance of the meeting. The collated responses then formed the basis of the discussion and analysis for the development of the event.

4.2 An officer from Fife Council was invited to attend the session to act as facilitator for the process. This also helped ensure that there was a balanced and neutral perspective to the process and to afford each of the Clyde Valley Steering Group members and project staff a more full opportunity to participate in and contribute to the discussion.

5. Issues Addressed

5.1 Participants were asked in advance to consider what they would hope to achieve from the day, and to reflect on what each council had contributed to the project. Councils were also asked to identify the key benefits which they had derived from the Clyde Valley Project.

5.2 Through a facilitated exercise, the group evaluated which aspects of the Project had gone particularly well and those aspects where there was room for improvement. This exercise allowed the group to consider how the project might be improved through introducing better practices and eliminating inefficient aspects of how the group works.

5.3 The last stage was to identify critical issues to be addressed in the near future. These issues included:-

♦ maximising the benefits from possible new e-learning infrastructure
♦ new subject areas
♦ the future structure and funding of the Clyde Valley Group

6. Outcomes

6.1 Each member council cited examples of their individual contributions to the project. Examples include hosting and participating in meetings, piloting delivery, providing resources and personnel for development work and providing advice, expertise and administrative support.

6.2 Examples of individual benefits include actual savings through reduced costs and economies of scale in procurement and delivery, wider access and opportunity, increased profile in each council for learning and development, better networking and exchange of ideas and good practice.

6.3 These benefits also helped identify the aspects of the project which have gone well. The common themes being partnership working, networking, shared and group working, and delivery of innovative approaches to learning and development.

6.4 It was also recognised that there remains scope for improvement in working practices. In particular these included a tendency for the scope of the project to move on from stated priorities, delays in decision making across the partner organisations and wasted time in effort chasing responses to communications or consultation documents.

6.5 A number of specific areas were then addressed and prioritised as requiring action in order to sustain and develop the project. These include the following actions:-

- individual authorities to re-affirm their commitment to the project
- each authority to establish internal linkages and better communication with other stakeholders in the project (e.g. between Steering Group members and Sub Group members)
- there should be greater emphasis on marketing and promotion of the project's achievements and successes
- future scoping should focus on both areas for potential quick wins and longer term challenges
- the subject of learning and development within Education Services should be tackled
- sharing information should be a higher priority
- a workable model to sustain the work of the Clyde Valley project beyond the funded period should be developed.

7. Conclusions

7.1 The project review exercise provided a springboard for the project to progress more productively. The actions outlined as proposals require more detailed development and allocation of resources and priorities.

7.2 Specific conclusions drawn from the exercise noted the following observations on the Clyde Valley Learning and Development project to date:-

- there remains a strong commitment to the project from member councils
- a number of good practice examples have been developed and implemented as a result of the project so far
- these new approaches have already yielded real savings in both cash and time for member councils
- there is a strong sense of goodwill both within and outwith the project (e.g. the Improvement Service) to make the project successful
- there is scope for better clarity on the main objectives for the future
- more attention should be placed on evaluation of outcomes (perhaps using a different evaluation model)
- promoting and marketing the project should be a priority
- there is scope for both quick wins and longer term developments (e.g. Education)
- it is essential that a proposal for the future of the Clyde Valley project is developed and considered by the Joint Committee in September 2009

8 Employee Implications
8.1 None.

9 Financial Implications
9.1 None.

10 Other Implications
10.1 None.

11 Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements
11.1 Not required at this stage.

Gill Bhatti
Chair
Clyde Valley Learning and Development Implementation Group

22 May 2009

Previous References
Clyde Valley Joint Committee Progress Report – March 2009

List of Background Papers
Clyde Valley EGF Training Bid
NBSS Clyde Valley Consortium Submission Nov 06
NBSS Clyde Valley Consortium – Secondary Paper December 06

Contact for Further Information
If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-
Gill Bhatti, Chair, Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project Implementation Group
Ext: 5604 (Tel: 01698 455604)
E-mail: gill.bhatti@southlanarkshire.gov.uk