

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM April 30th 2014

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

A summary of Wirral Education Quality Services (WEQS) – school traded services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises the recent developments and approach for Wirral Council school traded services.

BACKGROUND

1. Summary

1.1 WEQS is a strategic partnership between Wirral Council and its schools to deliver a wide range of traded services for schools, governed by schools themselves.

1.2 Aims:

- To provide high quality, value for money services to schools and educational settings
- Respond to needs identified by Headteachers and governors
- Publicise the high quality expertise in Wirral Schools and share that good practice
- To foster school-to-school support even more and in particular work in partnership with Teaching Schools, schools with Leadership License and other providers

1.3 The main market for WEQS is Wirral schools and educational settings.

1.4 WEQS generates around £9 million of income, mostly from Wirral schools.

1.5 The main strengths of WEQS are the partnership arrangements that govern the services with schools and the LA and these include:

- Representation and strategic leadership of the traded services schools purchase;
- A coordinated coherent approach to trading services from Wirral Council;
- A school-as-the-customer approach from all traded services;
- A unified approach to promoting, pricing, product and processes;
- A single account manager and a single unified and coordinated approach to service level agreements;
- An open and transparent approach to budgeting and resourcing.

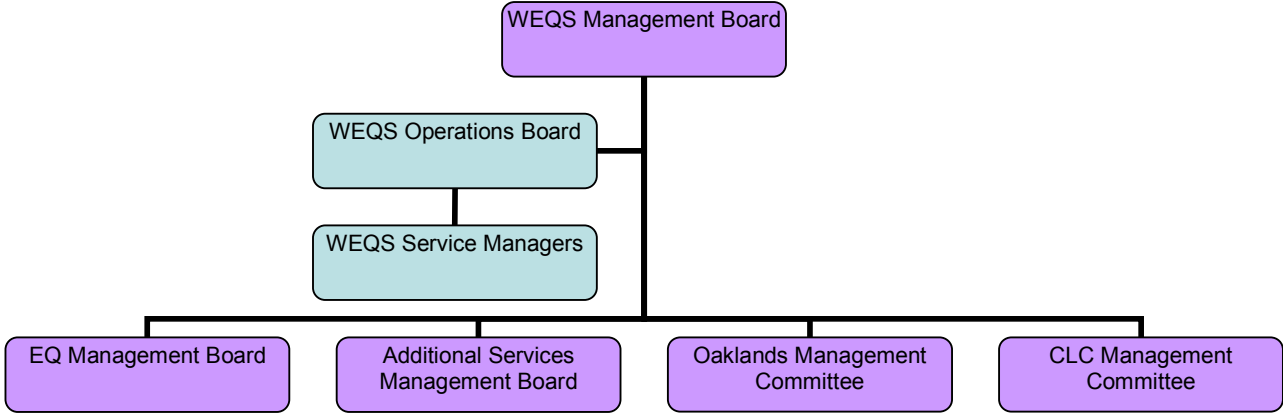
1.6 The main services within WEQS are:

- 1.6.1 Education Quality (EQ)
- 1.6.2 Facilities Management
- 1.6.3 Financial Support – Primary & Special
- 1.6.4 Financial Support – Secondary
- 1.6.5 Grounds Maintenance
- 1.6.6 Human Resources
- 1.6.7 ITSOS
- 1.6.8 Software Support Service
- 1.6.9 Library Service – Primary
- 1.6.10 Metro Caretaking & Cleaning Support Service
- 1.6.11 Payroll & Human Resources Administration Services

- 1.6.12 Risk Management & Insurance Services
- 1.6.13 Wirral Community Patrol
- 1.6.14 Cash to bank
- 1.6.15 Occupational Health
- 1.6.16 Education Social Welfare Service (Academies)
- 1.6.17 Oaklands
- 1.6.18 Music

1.7 WEQS is managed as a full cost recovery traded service to schools across the LA under the Assistant Chief Executive / Head of Universal & Infrastructure Services utilising existing council frameworks.

2. Governance structure



	Purpose	Membership
WEQS Management Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a strategic lead including key decision making for WEQS To represent key partners to ensure that there is full engagement with WEQS To monitor and evaluate the impact of WEQS 	Headteachers, Governors and LA staff
EQ Management Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To advise the WEQS Management Board on key operational aspects of EQ Services To make decisions affecting individual service delivery including, where appropriate, scope of service, budget and costings To challenge and support individual service delivery 	Headteachers, Governors and LA staff
Additional Services Management Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To advise the WEQS Management Board on key operational aspects of Additional Services To make decisions affecting individual service delivery including, where appropriate, scope of service, budget and costings To challenge and support individual service delivery 	Headteachers, Governors and LA staff
WEQS Operations Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To coordinate the day-to-day operational aspects of WEQS 	Key LA staff
WEQS Service Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To disseminate key decisions of the Management Board To receive feedback on operational aspects 	WEQS Service Managers

3. Developments

- 3.1 Wirral Council is currently developing its approach to shared services which includes work with Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC), which may have implications for WEQS and the individual traded services.
- 3.2 Wirral and CWaC were recently successful with a joint bid for a Schools' (Traded) Services project to the DCLG *Delivering Differently: Transforming Local Authority Services Through New Delivery Models* programme. We were one of 10 successful bids and this has secured:
- Up to £100k of support – including access to bespoke consultancy support
 - Workshops on delivery models and transformation
 - Access to an advisory panel able to provide guidance and critical challenge
 - Networking events and opportunities
- 3.3 The council is revising two traded service offers ready for September 2014, Metro Catering (to support schools with the new proposals from government on Universal Infant Free School Meals); and Education Social Welfare Service. The WEQS Boards will be used to support consultation and decision making on these two services.
- 3.4 The WEQS Boards will also be used to support consultation and decision making on the other main SLAs, as listed in 1.6.1 to 1.6.15, ready for implementation from April 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Schools Forum to note the report.**

Julia Hassall
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