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For all enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Julie Lloyd
(Tel: 01443 864246   Email: lloydj4@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 22nd March 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

A multi-locational meeting of the **Education Scrutiny Committee** will be held in Penallta House, and via Microsoft Teams on **Tuesday, 28th March, 2023** at **5.30 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. Councillors and the public wishing to speak on any item can do so by making a request to the Chair. You are also welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, both these requests require a minimum notice period of 3 working days. A simultaneous translation will be provided on request.

Members of the public or Press may attend in person at Penallta House or may view the meeting live via the following link: https://civico.net/caerphilly

This meeting will be live-streamed and a recording made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. Therefore the images/audio of those individuals speaking will be publicly available to all via the Council website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,

Christina Harrhy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

Pages

1   To receive apologies for absence.

A greener place   Man gwyrddach

Correspondence may be in any language or format | Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat

2   Declarations of Interest.

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To approve and sign the following minutes: -

6   To receive and consider the following Cabinet Reports*: -

1. Formulising the Youth Service Model – 23rd February 2023;
2. Proposed Voluntary Termination of the Caerphilly CCBC School PFI Contract – 8th March 2023.

If a member of the Scrutiny Committee wishes for any of the above Cabinet reports to be brought forward for review at the meeting please contact Julie Lloyd, 01443 864246, by 10.00 a.m. on Monday, 27th March 2023.

To receive and consider the following Scrutiny reports: -

Circulation:

Councillors Mrs E.M. Aldworth, C. Bishop, A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson, A. Farina-Childs, A. Gair, C.J. Gordon, M.P. James, B. Miles, T. Parry (Chair), L. Phipps, M. Powell, J. Rao (Vice Chair), J.E. Roberts, J. Winslade and K. Woodland

Co-opted Members:

Cardiff ROC Archdiocesan Commission for Education Representative (with voting rights on educational matters)
Mr M. Western

Parent Governor Representatives (with voting rights on educational matters) G. James (Parent Governor Representative) and Tracy Millington (Parent Governor Representative)

Outside Body Representatives (without voting rights)
Mrs J. Havard (NEU) and Mrs P. Ireland (NEU)

Caerphilly Governors Association (without voting rights)
Mr D Davies

And Appropriate Officers

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EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 14TH FEBRUARY 2023 AT 5.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor T. Parry - Chair

Councillors:

E. M. Aldworth, C. Bishop, A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson, A. Farina-Childs, A. Gair, C. Gordon, B. Miles, L. Phipps, M. Powell, J. E. Roberts, J. Winslade and K. Woodland.

Cabinet Members:

Councillor C. Andrews (Education and Communities).

Together with:

Officers: R. Edmunds (Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), K. Cole (Chief Education Officer), P. Warren (Strategic Lead for School Improvement), P. O'Neill (Youth Service Manager), S. Mutch (Early Years Manager) A. West (21st Century Schools Manager), C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Manager) and S. Hughes (Committee Services Officer).

Also present:

Co-opted Members: Mr M. Western (Cardiff ROC Archdiocesan Commission for Education Representative) and Mrs T. Millington (Parent Governor Representative).

Also in Attendance:

L. Davies (Chair, Youth Forum).

RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting would be live-streamed and a recording made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items - Click here to view. The Committee was advised that voting on decisions would be taken via Microsoft Forms.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M.P. James and J. Rao (Vice Chair), together with Mrs P. Ireland (NEU).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES – 26TH SEPTEMBER 2022

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Education Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26th September 2022 be approved as a correct record. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 10 for, 0 against and 3 abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

> RESOLVED that the minutes of the Education Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26th September 2022 (minute nos 1- 8) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. MINUTES – 19TH OCTOBER 2022

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the special meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee held on 19th October 2022 be approved as a correct record. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 12 for, 0 against and 2 abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

> RESOLVED that the minutes of the special meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee held on 19th October 2022 (minute nos 1- 3) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

6. EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Manager presented the report which outlined details of the Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the period February 2023 until March 2023 and included all reports that were identified at the Education Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26th September 2022.

Members were asked to consider the Forward Work Programme, alongside the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, prior to publication on the Council's website.

A Member sought clarification and further details on an e-mail received regarding the delay of the 21st Century Schools Programme. The 21st Century Schools Manager addressed the Committee to highlight a number of factors which have resulted in the delay, both internally and externally. Members were informed that the supply chain, contractors and the building trade have been impacted by COVID, Brexit and the war in Ukraine, which has resulted in tenders coming in significantly higher than anticipated. Members were also informed that there had been some legislative changes which have come into effect, such as requirements for sustainable drainage where consultation has to take place on the pre-planning process.

In conclusion, a request was made for a report on the reasons for the delay of the 21st Century Schools Programme to be scheduled on the Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

Following consideration of the report, and subject to the additional report proposed, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 14 for, 0 against and 1 abstention) this was agreed by the majority present.

> RESOLVED that the Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme be published on the Councils' website.

7. **CABINET REPORTS**

None of the Cabinet reports listed on the agenda had been called forward for discussion at the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

8. **EARLY YEARS - EXPANSION OF FLYING START AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet Member for Education and Communities introduced the report to present the plans for Flying Start expansion phase 1 and Flying Start Childcare expansion phase 2 as well as the capital plans required to meet the full implementation. A presentation was delivered by the Early Years Manager to provide an overview of the Flying Start expansion and Capital Programme which highlighted how you can help to increase the take up of Flying Start Childcare places.

In response to a Members query, the Early Years Manager explained how childcare settings will be brought onto the Dynamic Purchasing System and how families can check for providers. Members were informed that the Early Years Hub have offered to go out into communities with iPads to help families complete the forms and support is also provided over the telephone.

A Member commented on the delay of the 21st Century Schools Programme and raised concerns regarding the impact to nursery and childcare provision, particularly in relation to the Welsh language. The Early Years Manager explained that this is part of the reason why refurbishment and reconfiguration has been mainly opted for in Phase 2, rather than new builds. It was highlighted that there are a lot of existing private providers, including childminders and day nurseries, who own their own buildings and grants are available to support settings to meet the requirements for quality provision and expansion of places.

In response to a Members query regarding eligible postcodes, the Early Years Manager gave examples to explain how areas have tried to be shaped to prevent splitting a road or street with different postcodes where possible, however this may happen on occasions.

Clarification and further information were provided on the Gwent Midwifery and Early Years Strategy. The Caerphilly Early Years team has worked with partners in the other Local Authorities and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to develop the Midwifery and Early Years Strategy and core programme under the Early Years Integration Transformation Programme, which is a universal programme of support for all families across Gwent.

In response to a Members query, clarification was provided on funded childcare placements.

The Early Years Manager outlined the complexity of funded childcare places which included the Flying Start funded childcare for 2-3 years olds which is based on postcode and the childcare offer for 3-4 year olds for working families and for families who are in higher or further education.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there was 15 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

> RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee received the report and commented on the plans to expand delivery of the Flying Start programme and Flying Start childcare placements from April 2023.

9.   WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN - 5YEAR ACTION PLAN

The Cabinet Member for Education and Communities introduced the report to present a summary of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032, 5year action plan to enable scrutiny and accountability towards the target by 2032 throughout the life of the plan. The Committee received a presentation from the Early Years Manager who provided an overview of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032. The presentation outlined priority areas for the five year plan 2022-2027, the role of the Communication Task Group, the Latecomer Immersion Unit, the expansion of Flying Start childcare and sustainable communities for learning.

In response to a Members query, clarification was provided on the Latecomer Immersion Unit. The Committee was informed that the idea of the Latecomer Immersion Unit will be for primary age school children to start with but if a child wanted to move into Welsh medium education they would receive an intensive term and a half of Welsh language, where 4 days a week they will attend the Latecomer Immersion Unit and their host school for 1 day a week.

In response to a Members question it was confirmed that funding for a pupil in Welsh medium education is the same as English medium education.

In response to a Members query regarding non-Welsh speaking families, the Early Years Manger outlined ways to help and encourage more Welsh speaking in English speaking settings which included adult learner courses, support documents and providing online resources for families.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 15 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

> RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee received the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan's 5year action plan and commented regarding sufficiency of information and targets to achieve the minimum 26% target in year 1 cohort by 2032.

10.   FORMALISING THE YOUTH SERVICE MODEL.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Communities presented the report to seek the views of the Education Scrutiny Committee on a proposal to Cabinet to formalise the blended approach to youth work that has gained prominence and delivered success throughout and beyond the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Youth Service Manager provided an overview of the report and introduced L. Davies (Chair of the Youth Forum) to the Scrutiny Committee, who was also available to answer any questions.

A Member commented that although the Covid pandemic required the more immediate and ultimately very successful repositioning of youth work to meet the sudden changes of need by young people and communities to a much more flexible and responsive position, some of these changes were already taking place before the Covid-19 pandemic. The Scrutiny Committee was advised that before the Covid-19 pandemic, the Youth Service had been experimenting with different ways of delivering youth work, which included online and outreach work. The Youth Service Manager explained that outreach work provided the flexibility to go out and meet young people, especially those young people who would not walk into a youth club. It was highlighted that young people are more sophisticated and require a broader means of engaging with Youth Workers. They want a service that is responsive to their needs with more flexibility, that is offered throughout the year and relevant to young people all year-round.

A Member commented on the advantages of a youth club style provision and raised a number of concerns regarding the blended approach. The Youth Service Manager advised the Committee that there will be three cluster areas with a large scale, fit for purpose youth centre. Young people will be transported from different areas across the borough to access the youth centres, where they will get the benefit of really good facilities. It was explained that the Youth Service Model will reach out to young people wherever they choose to be, year-round. Members were informed that the online version of youth work uses a wide variety of social media platforms, and it was highlighted that some young people are more comfortable meeting this way. Members were also informed that building based youth work can exclude young people who are not comfortable attending a youth club and interacting in that way. Assurances were provided that the Youth Work Model was subject to consultation with young people.

During the course of discussion, a number of queries were raised relating to financial implications, the re-training off staff and the percentage of staff who are Welsh speaking. The Youth Service Manager advised that MTFP requirements will have to be met, but other than that the savings will be used to provide resources for young people. The Scrutiny Committee was assured there has been a substantial investment in the training of staff, and not just during lockdown, to make sure they are comfortable working in a blended environment. It was highlighted that staff can provide youth work in a building, but now also in parks and street corners etc. There are also opportunities to work with the Youth Homelessness Team and to support vulnerable young people. Members were advised that in terms of a bi-lingual service a workforce exercise has been carried out where 15% of staff identified they can speak Welsh. Reference was made to the Welsh language youth facility and the Committee was informed that Welsh Government funding has been secured to expand the Welsh language youth work offer. An example of joint work with SYDIC at Virginia Park was provided where this work has been developed to ensure it is relevant for young people.

Assurances were sought in that the engagement was sufficient to fully comprehend and demonstrate service users views. In response, the Youth Service Manager provided assurances and it was highlighted that during the recent Youth Forum Cabinet elections a number of young people stood for Cabinet who would not have been reached if the blended approach to youth work had not been introduced. Members were informed that the aim is to have steering groups for each cluster area with young people, key partners and others to advise the Youth Service in that area. Members were assured by L. Davies (Chair of the Youth Forum) that the blended approach is great as it allows young people, who wouldn't have been able to get involved in opportunities, to take part.

In response to a Members query, the Scrutiny Committee was advised that parental engagement is a big factor in making changes. It was explained that staffing has been

reconfigured in order to carry out engagement with families on a permanent basis. The aim is to deal with any local issues through contact and discussion in order to seek a resolution.

A question was raised as to how staff engage with young people through the blended approach model. Members were advised that there are a set of protocols for outreach work, with staff working in pairs. It was explained that there will be a period of reconnaissance where staff will explore an area and get to know the young people, shop keepers and key community people. Then they will use their youth work skills to build those relationships and identify and respond to issues that young people may have. It was highlighted that this type of work can lead to better local relationships and less school disengagement. This work can also lead to further engagement with colleges and training courses.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and particularly thanked L. Davies (Chair of the Youth Forum) for attending and the Senior Youth Service Manager for his responses.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 16 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

The Education Scrutiny Committee considered the recent adaptations to the youth service and commented on the proposed refinements to formalise this new way of working.

> RECOMMENDED to Cabinet: -
>
> 1. That the Youth Service formalises this new way of working and moves forward with the changes required to achieve further service improvement.

The meeting closed at 7.24 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 28th March 2023 they were signed by the Chair.

_____
CHAIR

**EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
28TH MARCH 2023**

SUBJECT: **EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

REPORT BY: **CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To report the Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

2. **SUMMARY**

2.1 Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that Scrutiny Committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholder.

3. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 That Members consider any changes and agree the final forward work programme prior to publication.

4. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

5. **THE REPORT**

5.1 The Education Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the scrutiny committee meeting on Tuesday 14th February 2023. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period March 2023 until June 2023.

5.2 The forward Work Programme is made up of reports identified by officers and members. Members are asked to consider the work programme alongside the cabinet work programme and suggest any changes before it is published on the

council website. Scrutiny committee will review this work programme at every meeting going forward alongside any changes to the cabinet work programme or report requests.

5.3 The Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1, which presents the current status as at 6th March 2023. The Cabinet Work Programme is attached at Appendix 2. A copy of the prioritisation flowchart is attached at appendix 3 to assist the scrutiny committee to determine what items should be added to the forward work programme.

5.4 **Conclusion**

The work programme is for consideration and amendment by the scrutiny committee prior to publication on the council website.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 No assumptions are necessary.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 As this report is for information only an Integrated Impact Assessment is not necessary.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Mark Jacques, Scrutiny Officer jacqum@carphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate
                     Services
                     Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer

Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer
Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer,
Legal Services
Councillor Teresa Parry Chair Education Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Jo Rao, Vice Chair Education Scrutiny Committee

Appendices:
Appendix 1   Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
Appendix 2   Cabinet Forward Work Programme
Appendix 3   Forward Work Programme Prioritisation Flowchart

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	Forward Work Programme - Education		Appendix 1	
Date	Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member
28/03/2023 17:30	Schools Inspections		Edmunds, Richard (Ed);	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
28/03/2023 17:30	EAS Business Plan 2023-24	To approve the EAS Business Plan	Edmunds, Richard (Ed);	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
28/03/2023 17:30	Support for Schools (Report of EAS)		Edmunds, Richard (Ed);	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
28/03/2023 17:30	Additional Support Delegation (March 23)		Ellis, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
28/03/2023 17:30	Information Item - School Admission Arrangements for the Academic Year 2024/25		Strathdee, Emma J.;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
28/03/2023 17:30	Information Item Budget Monitoring Report Period 9 (Education)		Southcombe, Jane;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol
15/05/2023 17:30	ALN Progress and Outcomes of Working Group		Ellis, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
15/05/2023 17:30	Exclusions		Ellis, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
15/05/2023 17:30	Education Other Than At School (EOTAS)		Evans, Rhys;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
15/05/2023 17:30	Youth Forum update		O'Neill, Paul;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
20/06/2023 17:30	Not in Education Employment or Training (NEETs)		O'Neill, Paul;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
20/06/2023 17:30	Pupil Attendance		Warren, Paul;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
20/06/2023 17:30	Provision of services for children with disabilities		Ellis, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
20/06/2023 17:30	Information Item - Library Standards		Pugh, Karen;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
11/09/2023 17:30	Update on the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme		West, Andrea	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
06/11/2023 17:30				
15/01/2024 17:30				
13/02/2024 17:30				

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Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 21st March 2023   **Appendix 2**

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author:	Cabinet Member:
22/03/2023 13:00	Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2021-2022	For Cabinet to consider and approve the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2021-2022 prior to publication on the Council's website.	Kath Peters; Anwen Cullinane	Cllr. Eluned Stenner
22/03/2023 13:20	Gender Pay Gap	To agree the Gender Pay Gap report which has to be published by 31st March 2023.	Lynne Donovan	Cllr. Nigel George
22/03/2023 13:40	Biodiversity and Grass Cutting Regimes	To seek Cabinet approval in relation to proposals to enhance and promote biodiversity in our grass cutting regimes across the county borough and following consultation with local members.	Mike Headington	Cllr. Chris Morgan
05/04/2023 13:00	Draft Waste Strategy	For Cabinet to agree the draft Waste Strategy.	Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Chris Morgan
05/04/2023 13:30	A469 Troedrhiwfuwch	To seek Cabinet approval on an implementation plan to undertake a significant highway repair to the A469 north.	Mark S Williams; Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Julian Simmonds
05/04/2023 13:40	Update on the Trinity Fields Band B project	To provide Cabinet with an update on the Trinity Fields Band B project and to seek Cabinet approval on the additional budget required to deliver the project.	Andrea West	Cllr. Carol Andrews
19/04/2023 13:00	EAS Business Plan 2023-24	To approve the EAS Business Plan.	Keri Cole	Cllr. Carol Andrews
19/04/2023 13:10	Additional Support delegation	To endorse the proposed arrangements for the delegation of additional support funding to schools.	Sarah Ellis; Keri Cole	Cllr. Carol Andrews
19/04/2023 13:20	Review of the Local Public Convenience Strategy	To seek Cabinet approval for the Council's updated Local Public Convenience Strategy following a review and public consultation.	Rob Hartshorn	Cllr. Philippa Leonard

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 21st March 2023   **Appendix 2**

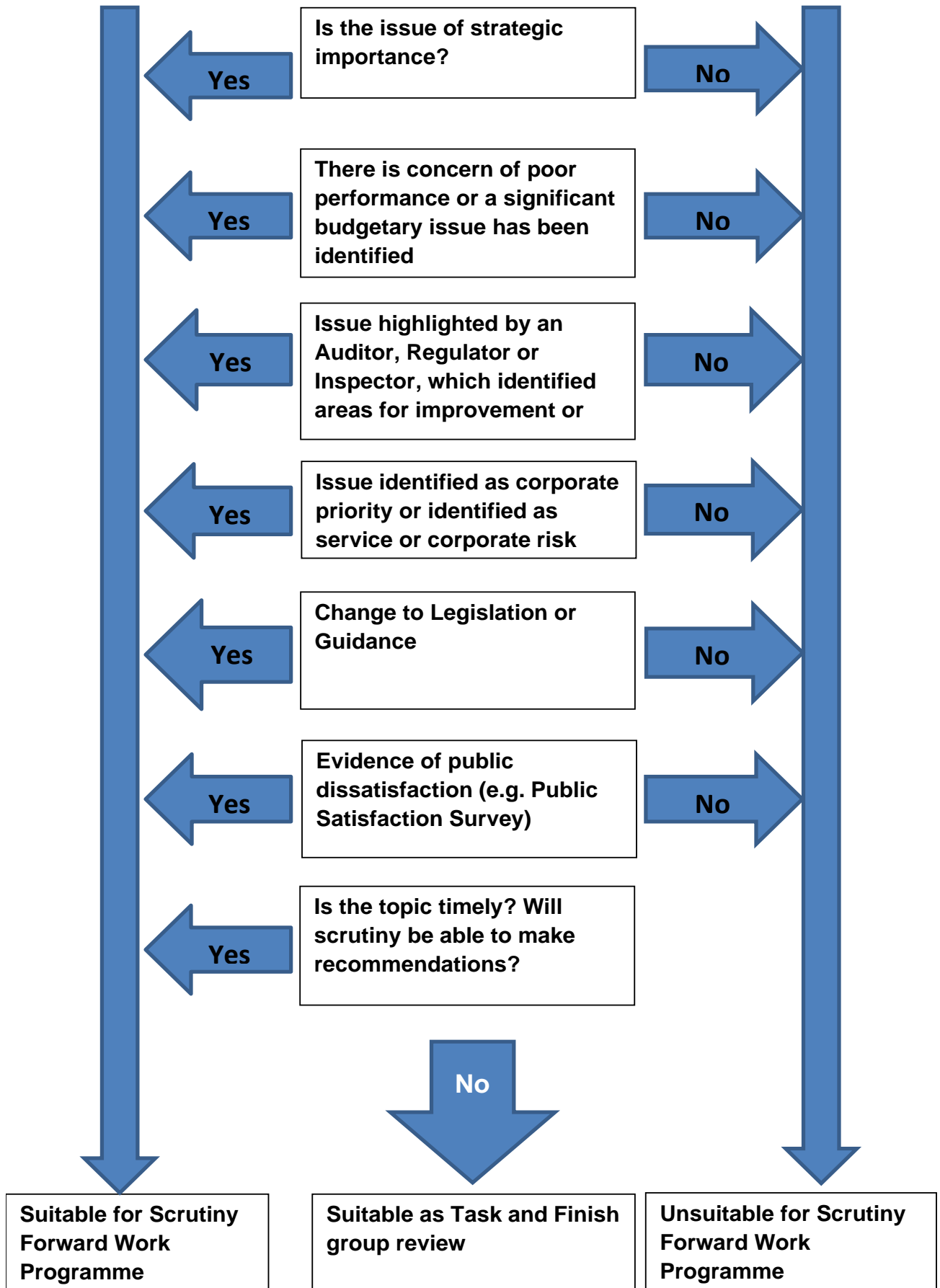| Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author:	Cabinet Member:
19/04/2023 13:30	Multi-functional Cadet and Sports Pavilion at Morgan Jones Park and Parc Penallta Visitor Centre	To update Cabinet regarding the inability to progress previously approved proposals to build a multi-functional cadet / sports pavilion at Morgan Jones Park and a Visitor Centre at Parc Penallta and to seek Cabinet approval to implement alternative schemes at both locations and to release previously approved capital contributions back to the Authority's capital reserves.	Rob Hartshorn	Cllr. Chris Morgan
19/04/2023 13:40	Suspension of Housing Repair Grants	To determine whether Housing Repair Grants should be reinstated following their suspension during and post covid.	Nick Taylor-Williams	Cllr. Shayne Cook
03/05/2023 13:00	No items currently scheduled.			
17/05/2023 13:00	Court House Car Park, Blackwood – variation of parking charges	To seek Cabinet approval to vary the parking charges in Courthouse Car Park, Blackwood to allow up to 1 hour parking free of charge for all users.	Dean Smith; Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Julian Simmonds
17/05/2023 13:10	Review of Licensing fees for Dog Breeders, Scrap Metal Dealers and Activities involving animals (Pet sales) 2023.	The authority has a statutory duty to administer certain licences, registrations and permits and to set fees to recover the cost to the Authority in providing the service. The majority of Licensing fees are set by the two Licensing Committees with the exception of these fees which are the responsibility of the Executive.	Lee Morgan	Cllr. Philippa Leonard
17/05/2023 13:20	Exempt item - Proposed Mineral Working and Restoration of	Exempt item subject to Public Interest Test	Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Julian Simmonds

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author:	Cabinet Member:
	Bedwas Tips - extension of exclusivity agreement.			
31/05/2023 13:00	No items currently scheduled.			
14/06/2023 13:00	Violence at Work Policy	To approve version 4 of the Violence at Work Policy.	Emma Townsend; Lynne Donovan	Cllr. Nigel George
14/06/2023 13:10	Youth Forum priority issues for the coming year.	Members of the Youth Forum will be requesting Cabinet support to resolve young people's priority issues 2023/24, including the key priority issue - life skills - we need more opportunities to learn new skills including living independently, budgeting, car maintenance and British Sign Language.	Clare Ewings, Community Education Manager (Participation and Inclusion) Keri Cole	Cllr. Carol Andrews
14/06/2023 13:20	Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2022-23	To consider the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report.	Anwen Cullinane/ Sue Richards	Cllr. Nigel George
14/06/2023 13:30	Corporate Plan (including Well-Being Objectives) 2023 to 2028	To consider the Councils Corporate Plan and Well-being objectives 2023 to 2028	Christina Harrhy; Ros Roberts	Leader; Cllr. Stenner
28/06/2023 13:00	Local Housing Market Assessment and the Welsh Government Prospectus	For Cabinet to discuss and approve the Local Housing Market Assessment and the Welsh Government Prospectus. Welsh Government requires all Local Authorities to undertake a Local Housing Market Assessment and a Prospectus. The documents set out the requirement for housing within the county borough and is utilised to inform the LDP, the allocation of Social Housing Grant and the	Nick Taylor-Williams; Jane Roberts-Waite	Cllr. Shayne Cook

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author:	Cabinet Member:
		Council's own Caerphilly Homes development programme.		
28/06/2023 13:20	Development and Governance Strategy	The establishment of the development strategy which details the principles, practices and governance arrangements which are needed to facilitate, enable and support the new build objectives of Caerphilly Homes now and in the future. It will tackle the challenges, the development process, development programme and strategic priorities.	Nick Taylor-Williams; Jane Roberts-Waite	Cllr. Shayne Cook
28/06/23 13:40	Waste Strategy	For Cabinet to consider the outcome of the public Consultation and approve the final Waste Strategy.	Marcus Lloyd; Hayley Jones	Cllr. Chris Morgan
12/07/2023 13:00	No items currently scheduled.			
26/07/2023 13:00	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report plus the Annual Safeguarding Management Information Report.	To seek approval of the Annual Safeguarding reports.	Gareth Jenkins	Cllr. Elaine Forehead
26/07/2023 13:10	Day Services	For Cabinet to consider and approve the new proposed Day Services Model.	Jo Williams	Cllr. Elaine Forehead

Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme Prioritisation

Is the issue of strategic importance?

Yes

No

There is concern of poor performance or a significant budgetary issue has been identified

Yes

No

Issue highlighted by an Auditor, Regulator or Inspector, which identified areas for improvement or

Yes

No

Issue identified as corporate priority or identified as service or corporate risk

Yes

No

Change to Legislation or Guidance

Yes

No

Evidence of public dissatisfaction (e.g. Public Satisfaction Survey)

Yes

No

Is the topic timely? Will scrutiny be able to make recommendations?

Yes

No

Suitable for Scrutiny Forward Work Programme

Suitable as Task and Finish group review

Unsuitable for Scrutiny Forward Work Programme

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**EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE -
28TH MARCH 2023**

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF ESTYN INSPECTION OUTCOMES UNDER
THE NEW COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK (CIF) –
JANUARY 2022 TO DECEMBER 2023

REPORT BY: EDWARD PRYCE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, EAS

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To inform members of the judgements made by Estyn inspection teams of Caerphilly schools from January 2022 – December 2023 (where published).

1.2   To seek members' views on the Estyn outcomes.

2.   SUMMARY

2.1   The schools included in this report were inspected from January 2022 onwards. Each of them was inspected under the arrangements for inspections that came into effect from 1 January 2022, with the first two terms being considered pilot arrangements.   The report identifies the schools and the dates on which the inspections took place, together with the follow up category.

3.   RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1   Members are asked to consider the contents of the report and raise any questions or comments they may have of officers about the information contained within.

4.   REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1   Members should be made aware of the outcomes of inspections in Caerphilly schools, and of the schools requiring follow-up support.

5.   THE REPORT

Previous Estyn Common Inspection Framework (Sept 2017 onwards)

5.1   From September 2017 schools in Wales were inspected under the Common Inspection Framework (CIF). This judged schools under 5 Inspection Areas (IA):

1. Standards
2. Wellbeing and attitudes to learning
3. Teaching and learning experiences
4. Care, support and guidance
5. Leadership and management

5.2   There was no separate judgement on 'current performance' and 'prospects for improvement'. The previous 4-point judgement scale remained, but its wording was amended to focus on actions to be taken to support improvement:

- Excellent – Very strong, sustained performance and practice
- Good – Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
- Adequate and needs improvement – Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
- Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement – Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

5.3   There were 3 follow-up categories of support, as the previous Local Authority monitoring has ceased as an Estyn category. The last two remained as statutory categories:

- Estyn Review
- Significant Improvement
- Special Measures

Estyn Common Inspection Framework (From 1 September 2022)

5.4   The new inspection framework commenced on 1 September 2022, however in the Spring and Summer of that year a small number of pilot inspections took place. This report therefore includes information from 1 January 2022.

5.5   Estyn's new a new approach to inspection in schools and Pupil Referral Units across Wales, no longer focuses on a grading, detailing instead how well providers are helping a child to learn. This means that inspection reports will no longer include summative gradings (e.g. 'Excellent', 'Good' or 'Adequate').

5.6   A key overview of findings is included in each report headline focusing on a school's strengths and areas for development. Estyn also produce a separate report summary for parents which will allow parents to access the key information they need about an inspection quickly.

5.7   Estyn's new approach aligns with the personalisation of the new curriculum for Wales. Our inspections will also involve more in-person discussions, placing less emphasis on achievement data. They intend that their new inspection approach will make it easier for providers to gain meaningful insights that help them to improve without the spotlight on a judgement.

5.8   There is however no change to the statutory categories of special measures and significant improvement. The category of Estyn Review is also retained.

5.9   Estyn have reduced the notice period for inspections from 15 to 10 working days. Estyn have committed to continue to work with partners and stakeholders to gather

views as we look to further evolve our inspection framework, including moving towards more regular inspection across providers.

5.10 Comparisons over time with the previous framework are not possible, given that there are no judgements for the 5 Inspection Areas to compare.

5.11 It is also to be noted that a relatively small sample of judgements are available at the time of writing (10 in total, comprising 8 primaries and 2 secondaries, with a further 2 schools and the PRU, awaiting publication of their report). Across the region a total of 29 schools have had inspection reports published (23 primaries, 1 special, 4 secondaries and 1 PRU, with a further 8 schools awaiting publication of their reports).

Caerphilly

5.12 The following Caerphilly schools have been inspected since January 2022, under the New Framework. Follow up category, the only summative data available is included in the table below (No Follow Up, Estyn Review, Significant Improvement, Special Measures)

School	Phase	Inspection Date	Follow-Up Category * = Estyn Case Study
Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili	Primary	Feb-22	No Follow Up
Aberbargoed Primary	Primary	Jun-22	Estyn Review
Bryn Primary	Primary	Jun-22	No Follow Up
Risca Comprehensive	Secondary	Sep-22	Significant Improvement
Cefn Fforest Primary	Primary	Oct-22	No Follow-Up
Crumlin High Level Primary	Primary	Oct-22	Special Measures
Lewis Girls' Comprehensive	Secondary	Oct-22	No Follow-Up (*)
Ysgol y Lawnt	Primary	Oct-22	No Follow-Up
Markham Primary	Primary	Nov-22	No Follow-Up (*)
Pontllanfraith Primary	Primary	Nov-22	Estyn Review
Glanynant Learning Centre	Special	Dec-22	Significant Improvement

5.13 The following case studies from Lewis Girls' Comprehensive are now available on the Estyn website Improvement resources search | Estyn

- The impact of professional learning on teaching and learning, curriculum development, and leadership
- Broadening pupils' horizons and developing a culture of belonging

5.14 The following case studies from Markham Primary School are scheduled to be available on the Estyn website

- Effectively engaging the school community
- Securing strong differentiation through effective and unique curriculum design

5.15 When compared with the profile across the region and Wales. Published reports only.

Estyn Follow Up Category:	Caerphilly	SE Wales Region	Wales

	Number (%)	Number (%)	Number (%)
No Follow-Up	6 (55%)	21 (69%)	152 (76%)
Estyn Review	2 (18%)	4 (13%)	26 (13%)
Significant Improvement	2 (18%)	3 (10%)	8 (4%)
Special Measures	1 (9%)	3 (10%)	14 (7%)
TOTAL	11	31	200

5.16   Estyn inspections of schools are informative for the LA and the EAS in a number of ways. Although they report on a school in a specified period of time, they can be helpful in confirming that the school is receiving appropriate support and challenge and triangulate judgements which have been made prior to the inspection. Where schools are a cause for concern, recommendations made by Estyn will be the focus for intervention and the tracking of progress made. If the school is placed in a statutory category, then the LA can invoke powers of intervention immediately. Where excellent practice is identified, then schools can be asked by Estyn to produce case studies which are then shared with other schools, via publication on the Estyn website.

5.17   The table below summarises the recommendations for each Caerphilly school inspected.

School	Recommendations
Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili	R1 Provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum. R2 Strengthen opportunities for pupils to develop as independent learners.
Aberbargoed Primary	R1 Address the standards of teaching and low expectations for pupils in Years 3 to 6. R2 Create opportunities to develop pupils' independent skills and further challenge pupils in Years 3 to 6. R3 Ensure that senior leaders robustly monitor and evaluate learning and teaching to identify key areas for improvement. R4 Develop the roles of leaders at every level to secure improvement.
Bryn Primary	R1 Focus self-evaluation and improvement work more sharply on what pupils know, understand and can do. R2 Improve pupils' confidence and ability to speak in Welsh, both in lessons and around the school. R3 Ensure that teachers' feedback addresses errors in pupils' learning more robustly.
Risca Comprehensive	R1 Raise standards and improve performance at key stage 3 and key stage 4. R2 Improve the achievement of more able pupils.

	R3 Strengthen approaches to co-ordinate and implement teaching in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum to improve pupils' skills.
	R4 Improve the quality of teaching and assessment.
	R5 Refine the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders to focus on raising standards and improving teaching.
	R6 Improve self-evaluation procedures to inform development planning, and to set clear and appropriate priorities and targets for improvement
Cefn Fforest Primary	R1 Raise standards in Welsh.
	R2 Increase opportunities for pupils to influence how and what they learn.
Crumlin High Level Primary	R1 Establish and maintain effective leadership and governance to support school improvements.
	R2 Improve the quality of teaching and assessment practices across the school.
	R3 Improve pupils' extended writing skills.
	R4 Improve pupils' numeracy skills.
	R5 Ensure that the provision for Welsh improves pupils' oracy skills.
Lewis Girls' Comprehensive	R1 Improve the provision for developing pupils' Welsh language skills and their knowledge of Welsh culture.
	R2 Strengthen the provision for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance, particularly for those eligible for free school meals.
	R3 Revise the leadership of additional learning needs, so that it ensures a strong strategic direction and supports the full implementation of the ALNET act.
Ysgol y Lawnt	R1 Improve pupils' Welsh reading skills.
	R2 Share best practice in teaching across the school.
Markham Primary	R1 Improve outdoor provision to enrich all pupils' learning experiences.
	R2 Improve attendance.
Pontllanfraith Primary	R1 Develop and implement effective evaluation and improvement processes.
	R2 Ensure that teaching supports pupils to develop the full range of skills progressively as they move through the school and that pupils have opportunities to use these skills in their work across the curriculum.
	R3 Develop effective partnerships with parents.
Glanynant Learning Centre	R1 Strengthen improvement planning by ensuring self-evaluation activities focus on pupil progress and the standards they achieve.

	R2 Ensure that all members of the management committee and the local authority have a good understanding of the PRU's strengths and areas for development.
	R3 Improve attendance and pupils' engagement in full-time education.
	R4 Improve pupils' literacy, numeracy and digital competence skills.
	R5 Ensure that teachers' feedback enables pupils to know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve.

5.18   There a number of key themes that emerge, with the most frequent references related to:

- Leadership
- Self-evaluation and improvement processes
- Literacy
- Welsh
- Numeracy and digital Skills
- Independent Learning
- Teacher Feedback
- Pupil progress

5.19   During this period there are also a number of schools that have were originally inspected under the previous arrangements and have since had monitoring visits. Since January 2020, the following schools have had monitoring visits, with the dates and status being listed.

School	Original Inspection Date	Original Inspection Date	Follow up Visit Date	Current Status
Ysgol Bro Sannan	Oct-19	Significant Improvement	Mar-22	Removed from SI
Ysgol Gilfach Fargod	Oct-19	Significant Improvement	Jun-22	Removed from SI

5.20   The schools that have been removed from an Estyn statutory category have been supported to do so by both the Local Authority and the EAS. Support and where required specific intervention are initially co-ordinated through a Post Inspection Action Plan conference and following the Schools Causing Concern approach. This approach is explained in the Support for Schools report.

5.21   Please note that Estyn intend to inspect schools that have been formally federated jointly. Schools in less formal collaborations will be inspected separately.

Conclusion

5.22   This report provides members with information on the outcomes of Estyn inspections in Caerphilly Schools. Given the significant change to the framework in to date less

than 13% of Caerphilly schools have been inspected. We will continue to provide members with annual updates on the profile of inspection outcomes.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1. There are no specific assumptions.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 This report is for information only therefore no Integrated Impact Assessment is required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 This work is funded through the EAS Business Plan, therefore there are no specific financial implications.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 The Consultees are noted below:

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, Children's Act 2004, Standards and Framework Act 1998

Author: Edward Pryce, Assistant Director, EAS, edward.pryce@sewaleseas.org.uk

Consultees:
    Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
    Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
    Dave Street, Corporate Director, Social Services
    Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
    Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
    Councillor Jo Rao, Vice Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
    Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
    Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
    Sue Richards, Head of Transformation and Education Planning and Strategy
    Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN

Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Officer.

Links

Link to Estyn Inspection explained

**EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE -
28TH MARCH 2023**

SUBJECT: EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT SERVICE (EAS) BUSINESS
                PLAN 2023-2025

REPORT BY: DEBBIE HARTEVELD, MANAGING DIRECTOR, EAS.
                TO BE DELIVERED BY EDWARD PRYCE,
                ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – POLICY AND STRATEGY

1.   **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1   This report contains the draft EAS Business Plan 2023-2025 (June 2023 – March
        2025). The consultation period for this plan is from 13th March 2023 to 19th April
        2023. This report asks for members to consider the draft EAS Business Plan as part
        of the regional consultation process.

2.   **SUMMARY**

2.1   This document contains the main priorities that the EAS believe will be relevant to focus
        upon in the next iteration of the regional Business Plan for 2023-2025. The EAS
        delivers, through this agreed Business Plan, a wide range of school improvement
        services to all schools (all key stages, including all through schools and special
        schools), pupil referral units and funded non-maintained nursery settings on behalf of
        each LA. This plan supports the role LAs have in delivering their statutory function,
        addressing their individual improvement priorities and promoting improved pupil
        outcomes.

3.   **RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1   Members are asked to receive the report and comment on the contents of the EAS
        Business Plan as part of the consultation process.

4.   **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1   The EAS are required to submit their Business Plan to Welsh Government and the
        Scrutiny committee asked for feedback as part of the regional consultation process.

5.   THE REPORT

Background

5.1   As a result of the uncertain financial situation and funding for the EAS, Joint Executive Group (JEG) members agreed that the next iteration of the EAS Business Plan should be delayed so start in June 2023. JEG members agreed an accompanying timeline that includes a full consultation period.

5.2   The current Business Plan spans three years, 2022-2025, this was agreed by the Joint Executive Group (JEG) and through each Local Authority (LA) Cabinet in the summer term 2022. This document contains the next iteration of this three-year plan and covers the period from June 2023 to April 2025.

5.3   This version of the EAS Business Plan is underpinned by the already agreed three-year Business Plan (Appendix B). It builds upon the progress and identifies priorities that have resulted from robust EAS self-evaluation processes. The plan will enable flexibility so that the specific needs within Caerphilly are contributed to.

5.4   This consultation version of the Business Plan 2023-2025 has been constructed using the best available financial information at the time of writing. This could be subject to change once the final funding profile from local authorities and Welsh Government are known.

Proposals

5.5   Last year the EAS reviewed how we constructed and communicated our Business Plan. We decided it was timely to review and adapt our processes to make them more accessible to a wider audience. We used a new approach to help us articulate the changes and impact we want to make as the regional school improvement service for South East Wales and the connections and actions needed that will allow that change and impact to be successfully achieved.

5.6   This year we have further refined our success criteria so that we can better report on the impact of our work so that it aligns more explicitly to the EAS vision of developing all schools as learning organisations. We have made sure that our own evaluations, trends in school and LA needs and priorities, national policy and inspection findings are captured. These directly inform our priorities and success criteria.

5.7   We have also strengthened the plan by including a Partnership Annex that is specific to each LA's needs and priorities for the coming year. This section is also draft and further discussion is required with LA Officers to reach a final version.

5.8   This will also be significantly determined by the EAS final financial position for 2023-2024.

5.9   We have prioritised our high level and high-risk areas, and further details and activities are in our Detailed Delivery Plans. We have captured several important 'Assumptions: Processes that should be in place' for each Business Plan priority to ensure this activity is visible in the system and that expectations are clear.

5.10   We fully recognise the importance of collaboration and fostering effective partnerships with the local authority and schools to realise the full potential of our actions. The plan identifies the aspects that the EAS would request that the local authority undertake to support the delivery of this plan.

5.11   As we review our work in schools, we are looking for indicators to demonstrate:

- Changes/ Improvements at leadership and governance levels;
- Improved teaching and learning;
- School wide improvement in policy and practice;
- Learner progress
- Growing capacity in the system.

5.12   Our expectations are clear and are set out in the EAS Business Plan success criteria and in our vision and values.

5.13   The EAS uses three models to help us frame the Intent, Implementation and Impact of our work. This model allows us to use a common language to plan, implement and evaluate the impact of the work of the EAS in schools and settings across Caerphilly.

EAS Business Plan: Success Criteria 2023-2025

5.14   Welsh Government have set out 8 contributory factors to support schools to navigate the changing education landscape. These factors describe the key attributes that schools that are successfully realising the curriculum will possess.

5.15   These describe the factors that support reform and which, where absent, are likely to act as barriers to success. The factors cover learner progress and the curriculum itself, as well as wider processes and priorities. The factors are captured below and are interwoven into our priorities for 2023-2025.

5.16   As part of our work to develop a strong approach to evaluation, and in particular the evaluation of learning, the EAS has developed a guide to help identify the wide range of evidence available for review and analysis. This builds on the work to look at the intent, implementation and impact of our interventions. It will support both School Improvement Partners and schools to consider how best to respond to the WG guidance quoted above. In particular, how to build the enabling conditions around the Curriculum for Wales and define its impact through embedded and accurate reflection and self-evaluation. Our approach to evaluating learning will focus on progress, attainment, wellbeing, social capital and equity and fairness.

5.17   The final version of this iteration of the 3-year plan will be accompanied by a detailed delivery plan which incorporates timescales, resource implications, accountabilities and evaluation. In addition, the evaluation following the Quarter 4 review of progress from the current Business Plan will be added in the final version of the new plan.

5.18   Following the consultation period and certainty on the EAS funding position, this draft plan will be updated, and the final version will be presented to JEG for final agreement on May 24th 2023.

Monitoring Arrangements

5.19   The EAS is required to submit to the Business Plan to Welsh Government, this plan covers the period 2023-2025.   The progress on the implementation and impact of the Business Plan and the related LA Partnership Annex will be reported formally to the Joint Executive Group and Company Board. 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.

Caerphilly Local Authority Strategic Priorities

5.20 The EAS Business Plan and the related LA/EAS Partnership Annex will contribute to the strategic priorities within the remit of roles and responsibilities. The full list of Caerphilly Local Authority Strategic Priorities are listed below:

- Continue to provide robust approaches to safeguarding of children and young people based on emerging needs and demands as an outcome of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Equip leaders with the skills to have a significant impact on progress, attainment and provision and wellbeing.
- Ensure the effective implementation of Curriculum for Wales.
- Accelerate the progress of vulnerable learners. In particular:
  o Accelerate the progress of pupils who receive education outside a mainstream setting (EOTAS/EHE)
  o Reduce the number of young people post-16 without access to education, employment or training (NEETS).
  o Implementation of the ALN Act.
- Improve pupil attendance and reduce exclusions, with particular focus on vulnerable groups.
- Further improve provision and support for young people (post-16)
- Close the gap in attainment between those learners from low-income backgrounds and those who do not live in poverty.
- Improve digital skills for all learners.
- Reach the target of 26% of year 1 pupils in Welsh medium by 2031
- Support pupil wellbeing by improving attitudes to healthy food choices and active fitness
- Ensure the most vulnerable families including those in poverty, can access support to give their child the best start to their early years.
- Through the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme ensure that the County Borough provides sufficient school places to meet demand as well as upgrading/replacing school accommodation, as appropriate, so that schools are fit for purpose in the 21st century.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1. In writing this plan a number of assumptions have been made. If these are not in place, then they become a risk to the content and successful delivery of the plan. The EAS risk register will be reviewed and refined, if required, following the agreement of the final EAS Business Plan and related resource:

- The funding from both LA contributions and Welsh Government grants is sufficient to enable the effective delivery of the Business Plan.
- Professional learning has a positive impact on practice and behaviour.
- We are one part of the much wider system.
- Schools / education settings positively engage with us.
- We have the expertise, capacity and resources to undertake our activity effectively.

- When the conditions in a school / education setting can secure improvement, readiness for support results in positive change.
- Our partners provide us with timely and appropriate information.
- We work with schools / education settings to ensure priorities for improvement are based on robust, accurate self-evaluation.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 This report is for information and consultation, however an EAS Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken (Appendix C). This must take a long term view as part of its impact on life chances, employment and quality of life. Causes within attainment are complex although one of the main ones is deprivation. The measure that is commonly used to measure deprivation is a pupil's eligibility to receive Free School Meals. One of the Council's Well-being Objectives is to 'Improve outcomes for all learners but we want to particularly focus on those vulnerable to underachievement'.

7.2 Ensuring high quality education is fundamental to securing the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of future generations. The Business Plan focuses support for all schools appropriately schools. The school curriculum includes focus on social, environmental and cultural well-being, and these aspects are support as part of the plan. This plan supports the role LAs have in delivering their statutory function, addressing their individual improvement priorities and promoting improved pupil outcomes.

7.3 The EAS have their own Equalities and Welsh Language plans in place. CCBC has therefore not undertaken any specific impact assessment on the EAS Business Plan. The EAS Welsh Language Policy (Updated September 2021) describes in full the ways in which the EAS complies with the Welsh Language Measure (2015), including accesses to all materials bilingually, actively promotes the use of the language and offers an ever a range of services and support through the medium of Welsh for those who require them.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 As noted in 5.4, this consultation version of the Business Plan 2023-2025 has been constructed using the best available financial information at the time of writing. This could be subject to change once the final funding profile from local authorities and Welsh Government are known.

EAS Funding Sources:

8.2 The main funding sources to the EAS budget are:

- Annual core budget contributions from each of the 5 LAs – this funds approximately 50% of total costs.
- Annual Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant and Education Improvement Grant – grants from WG fund approximately 50% of total costs.

8.3 The EAS Company Board have taken a series of steps to reduce operational costs and restructure EAS staff. One of the main factors in the EAS being able to achieve the

efficiencies required and increase the breath of support to schools over the past 8 years has been the increased use of the school-to-school model. The move to Headteachers undertaking the role of School Improvement Partners (SIPs) from EAS employed SIPs has realised efficiencies and brought additional benefits to the model. In addition, the use of schools to support others through our Learning Network Schools (LNS) model has enabled reductions in the core team.

8.4   There has been a continued reduction in the combined LA core contributions to the EAS since inception in 2012. The EAS has faced significant challenges in being able to set a balanced budget for 2023-2024. Whilst there are some discussions still being undertaken with LA partners regarding their contributions, the EAS is working on a circa 10% reduction totalling £302,132, this is set alongside cost pressures equalling a total reduction of circa £504k for the budget in 2023-2024. Productive discussions have taken place with Directors of Education and JEG members about how the delivery model will look for the forthcoming year.

8.5   The EAS Business Plan has been constructed with a view to protecting front line services to schools and settings for 2023-2024. Additionally, a phased approach will be taken over the next 2 years to explore potential additional cost savings to the delivery model. The current approach to set a balance budget for 2023-2024 does not present a long-term sustainable funding model for the EAS and represent a short-term solution.

8.6   The following proposals have been devised assuming a common percentage funding model from LAs can be reached. If LAs cannot agree on a common percentage reduction in core contributions, it will be essential to demonstrate how an equitable service is being delivered for those LAs who are contributing more / less into the model.

8.7   The table below shows the current known position of the LA core contribution funding for 2023-2024:

Local Authority Core Contribution	2022-23	2023-24	Contribution Cut
Percentage Cut		-10%	
Blaenau Gwent	£350,046	£315,041	(TBC)
Caerphilly	£980,663	£882,597	£98,066
Monmouthshire	£403,815	£363,434	£40,382
Newport	£783,291	£704,962	£78,329
Torfaen	£503,498	£453,148	(TBC)
Total	**£3,021,313**	**£2,719,182**	

8.8   The EAS remains committed to work closely with LA partners to respond appropriately in the context of a collectively challenging financial position and ensuring we remain flexible to meet the needs within each LA and in schools and settings.

9.   PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1   There are no personnel implications.

10.   CONSULTATIONS

10.1   The Business Plan is in the consultation process. The Consultees are noted 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
- Headteachers from within the region
- Chairs of Governors from within the region
- EAS Supporting School Trade Union Group (SSTU Group)

11.   STATUTORY POWER

11.1   Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, Children's Act 2004, Standards and Framework Act 1998

Author: Debbie Harteveld, Managing Director, Education Achievement Service

Consultees: In addition to the groups listed above
               Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
               Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
               Dave Street, Corporate Director, Social Services
               Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
               Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
               Councillor Jo Rao, Vice Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
               Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
               Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
               Sue Richards, Head of Transformation and Education Planning and Strategy
               Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN
               Sarah Mutch, Early Years Manager
               Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
               Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
               Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
               Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer, Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation)
               Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
               Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Officer.

Appendices:

Appendix A Education Achievement Service: Annual iteration - Business Plan 2023-2025 (Consultation Version – Accessible)
Appendix B Education Achievement Service: Current Overarching 3-year Business Plan 2022-2025
Appendix C EAS Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment (FEIA)

Edward Pryce (Assistant Director, EAS), 07904 644686,   **ed.pryce@sewaleseas.org.uk**

Regional
Business Plan 2023-2025

(June 2023 - March 2025)

Consultation Version
(March 2023)

Forward

The Educational Achievement Service (EAS) is the school improvement service of the five local authorities in South East Wales: Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen.

The EAS is owned by the five Councils and operates within a robust governance structure which is populated by representative Elected Members from each Council. The EAS has been in operation since September 2012 and has undergone many changes during this period.

Through the commissioning of the three-year regional Business Plan the EAS delivers key school improvement support to all schools and educational settings across the South East Wales region. The EAS endeavours to work in partnership local authorities, schools and settings and wider stakeholders, ensuring that service delivery remains of a consistently high standard and meets the needs of the system. The service welcomes external expertise and challenge to support continued improvement and will remain agile and responsive to regional need.

EAS Values:

Integrity: Doing what is right and delivering what we promise by providing a high support and high challenge environment.

Innovation: We promise an innovative culture and attitude. We will challenge and aim for excellence in all we do.

Collaboration: We value everyone and work together to achieve our vision.

Contents

1. Introduction

Last year we reviewed how we constructed and communicated our Business Plan. We decided it was timely to review and adapt our processes to make them more accessible to a wider audience. We used a new approach to help us articulate the changes and impact we want to make as the regional school improvement service for South East Wales and the connections and actions needed that will allow that change and impact to be successfully achieved.

The current Business Plan spans three years, 2022-2025, this was agreed by the Joint Executive Group (JEG) and through each Local Authority (LA) Cabinet in the summer term 2022. This document contains the next iteration of this three-year plan and covers the period from June 2023 to April 2025.

This year we have further refined our success criteria so that we can better report on the impact of our work so that it aligns more explicitly to the EAS vision of developing all schools as learning organisations. We have made sure that our own evaluations, trends in school and local authorities needs and priorities, national policy and inspection findings are captured. These directly inform our priorities and success criteria. We have also included a Partnership Annex that is specific to each local authority's needs and priorities for the coming year.

We have prioritised our high level and high-risk areas, and further details and activities are in our Detailed Delivery Plans. We have captured several important 'Assumptions: Processes that should be in place' for each Business Plan priority to ensure this activity is visible in the system. This means that we can make sure we undertake the range of statutory activities on behalf of local authorities as well as measure the penetration of our work and track individuals' and schools' development and engagement.

We fully recognise the strength of our collaboration and partnerships with stakeholders and our role in working increasingly together, so we have identified, as in our monitoring arrangements how we are dependent on effective joint working to succeed.

2. Impact: Key features of school improvement

As we review our work in schools, we are looking for indicators to demonstrate change at leadership and governance levels; improved teaching and learning; school and setting wide improvement in policy and practice; learner progress and growing capacity in the system. Our expectations are clear and set out in the EAS Business Plan success criteria, our vision and values.

The EAS uses three research informed models to consider three important questions that helps frame the Intent, Implementation and Impact approach as outlined below. Each model allows us to use a common language to plan, implement and evaluate the impact of the work of the EAS.

1. **What are we trying to achieve?**
2. **Where are we?**
3. **How will we know?**

INTENT

What are we trying to do? What is our intention? This considers what characterises effective school improvement and helps frame clear success criteria to measure impact against.

IMPLEMENTATION

Where are we on this improvement partnership journey? How can we evaluate where we are and where we go next? Where are we in the implementation of our organisational change journey? Is this supporting the school to become an effective learning organisation?

IMPACT

What impact are we having on an individual or organisational improvement journey? What first hand evidence can we use to capture progress and impact of professional learning? How long with this impact take, over what time scales can we expect to see impact? Are schools and settings better placed to lead and evaluate their own progress and plan for ongoing improvement? Is there an improvement in learners outcomes?
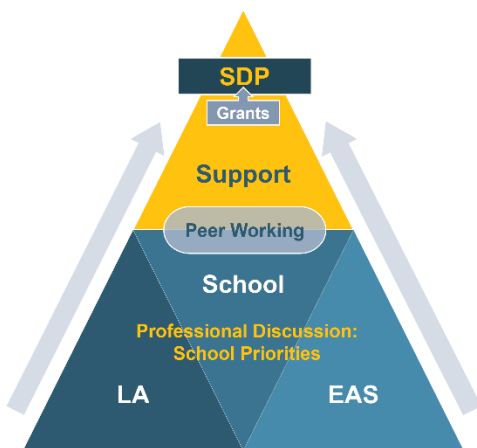
3. School Improvement

In August 2022 WG published the School Improvement Guidance: Framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability, which aims to:

- strengthen the effectiveness of self-evaluation and improvement planning by schools
- replace the national categorisation system with a similar support process that does not require the publication of school categories
- strengthen and provide clarity about the separation between evaluation / improvement activities and the accountability system
- clearly assign the roles and responsibilities of different bodies in a self-improving system.

This guidance provides a new point of reference for schools, pupil referral units, local authorities, diocesan authorities, regional consortia and Estyn, which outlines Welsh Governments expectations of these organisations in contributing to school improvement, in the context of their wider legal duties.

Within the context of Curriculum for Wales, the Welsh Government guidance aims to foster sustainable school improvement through a clear framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability. The majority of energy and focus in the system should be on delivering school improvement, guided by effective self-evaluation, improvement planning and support in all schools. To be successful, it is crucial that all aspects of the school system are aligned with and support the Curriculum for Wales along with its underlying principles.

The regional model for school improvement has been designed with all partners and includes:

Local authorities and EAS will participate in a professional discussion with schools regarding their priorities for improvement and the progress the school is making towards them.

This process is cyclical and supports schools to determine and / or review their priorities in line with their self-evaluation processes.

The discussion also helps to determine the ongoing support needs of the school from each local authority and EAS and identify practice worth sharing.

All schools can access bespoke support aligned to their needs and priorities within their School Development Plan (SDP) which can be appropriately designed, co-constructed and facilitated in a flexible way.

# 4. Delivery approach: Universal, Targeted and Intensive

Universal Offer: All schools have access to a universal offer of support from their SIP (School Improvement Partner) and wider teams, focused on the school development plan. Schools have access to a wide range of professional learning opportunities and professional networks across a range of areas to include school leadership, support for teaching and learning and support for wellbeing. This also includes access to support from Professional Learning (PL) and Learning Network Schools (LNS). It is for schools to determine the most appropriate parts of the universal offer that most appropriately meet their needs.

Targeted Offer: This is in addition to the universal offer which is tailored and designed specifically to individual school or cluster needs. This can be brokered through the SIP and could come from the EAS and /or the local authority.

Intensive Offer: This is tailored, ongoing support for a school on an individual basis, with a focus on leadership and improving the quality of teaching and learning. This is coordinated wraparound support, usually provided by a Learning Network School, School to School model and / or intensive support from wider teams. This offer will be differentiated according to need and will usually be over a sustained period. Support will be reduced when improvement is sustained and embedded.
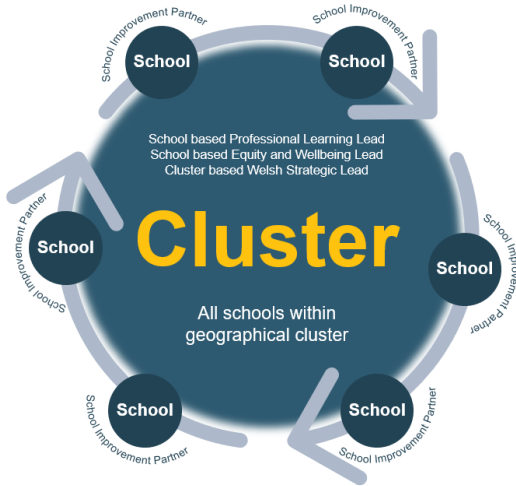
- **Principal School Improvement Partner Cluster Link**
- **Curriculum Partner / Professional Learning Partner Link**
- **Governor Support Link**

Team Around the Cluster:

In line with our vision to support collaboration and innovation, we will enhance our work with clusters of schools and align our resources accordingly. This will further support building capacity to more effectively support the progress that learners make.

5. Self-Evaluation: Progress towards current EAS Business Plan 2022-2025

EAS Business Plan 2022 - 2023: Evaluation and Impact Report (Quarter 4: May 2023) – this will be added in the final version of the new plan.

6. EAS Business Plan: Success Criteria 2023-2024

Welsh Government have set out 8 contributory factors to support schools to navigate the changing education landscape. These factors describe the key attributes that schools that are successfully realising the curriculum will possess. These describe the factors that support reform and which, where absent, are likely to act as barriers to success. The factors cover learner progress and the curriculum itself, as well as wider processes and priorities. The factors are captured below and are interwoven into our priorities for 2023-2024.

1. Enabling all learners, and in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to progress along their own learning pathway and raise their aspirations to achieve their full potential; allied to a range of assessment approaches to understand and support this progress.

2. Co-constructing a curriculum, in line with the Curriculum for Wales Framework, which promotes a broad range of knowledge, skills and experiences (including social and interactional experiences) with a clear understanding of why these matter.

3. Ensuring the school environment supports learners' and practitioners' well-being.

4. Supporting practitioners' understanding of what works in curriculum design by investing in the enquiry and pedagogic skills of all staff.

5. Enabling ambitious professional learning for all practitioners in a school dedicated to being a learning organisation.

6. Embedding reflection, self-evaluation and improvement within schools, with good school leadership as a pre-condition for that.

7. Being at the heart of their communities - building better relationships between schools and families, communities and employers, to support and promote educational achievement and excellent employment, next steps education and training.

8. Listening to children and young people as they engage with their learning and supporting them in achieving their aspirations.

As factors that contribute to curriculum realisation, they should inform schools' understanding about what successful realisation of the Curriculum for Wales is likely to involve, as well as being an important reference for schools when evaluating their own curriculum realisation and deciding where and how they need to improve. They are not designed to be an exhaustive checklist for schools. They do however offer a consistent framework for use across Wales.

The self-evaluation and improvement cycle is central in enabling schools to continually develop and improve their practice: to give all learners the best possible learning experiences and outcomes, whatever their background or circumstance, and in order to achieve high standards and aspirations for all. Welsh Government have co-constructed the National Resource:

Evaluation and Improvement to support schools in undertaking robust, evidence-based self-evaluation. Within the School Improvement guidance, Welsh Government recognise the new national priorities which schools must have regard to when setting their improvement priorities which are:

- Improving pupils' progression by ensuring their learning is supported by a range of knowledge, skills and experience;

- Reducing the impact of poverty on learners' progression and attainment.

As part of our work to develop a strong approach to evaluation, and in particular the evaluation of learning, the EAS has developed a guide to help identify the wide range of evidence available for review and analysis. This builds on the work to look at the intent, implementation and impact of our interventions. It will support both School Improvement Partners and schools to consider how best to respond to the WG guidance quoted above. In particular, how to build the enabling conditions around the Curriculum for Wales and define its impact through embedded and accurate reflection and self-evaluation. Our approach to evaluating learning will focus on progress, attainment, wellbeing, social capital and equity and fairness.

7. EAS Business Plan: Activity 2023-2024

This section details the activities that will take place during 2023-2024. Each section has a set of success criteria which contributes to the overarching vision that we have for 2025. The support across each area is interrelated and should not be viewed in isolation, this section will be accompanied by a detailed plan that links to accountability arrangements, timescales and resources.

Priority 1: School Improvement

Priority 2: Leadership and Teaching

Priority 3: Curriculum for Wales

Priority 4: Health Wellbeing and Equity

Priority 5: School Governance

Priority 6: EAS Organisational Foundations

Priority 1: School Improvement: Provide bespoke support to local authorities, schools and educational settings (PRUs and Non-Maintained Nursery settings) that promotes peer collaboration and cluster working through a high support, high challenge model that fosters the development of an effective learning organisation.

Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
1. Schools and educational settings accessing the universal, targeted or intensive offer, receive timely support aligned to their improvement priorities and demonstrate progress overtime. 2. Self-evaluation activity identifies areas of strength and bespoke support needs for all schools and educational settings enabling the EAS and local authorities to know schools and educational settings well. 3. All schools and educational settings make progress against their inspection recommendations and identified improvement priorities.	• Engage in sessions to review, refine and co-construct regional processes and policies. • Share relevant and appropriate information that supports a holistic view of each school in a timely and systematic way. • Organise Professional Discussions in line with the regional guidance. • Identify schools who require a Team Around the School (TAS) approach in line with the regional guidance. • Document local authority support within the Support Plan and Notes of Activity as appropriate. • Support schools and settings with additional support which is outside the scope of the EAS role and responsibilities. • In partnership with the EAS, review the capacity of Headteachers to work as SIPs to support a self improving system.

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Assumptions: Processes that should be in place

- All schools and educational settings engage in professional discussions that enable the sharing of effective practice.
- All schools and educational settings have a bespoke support plan aligned to their identified priorities for improvement which is shared with the governing body on an annual basis.
- All schools and educational settings engage in regular supported self-evaluation activity.
- There are robust performance management arrangements in place for Headteachers.
- Estyn reports are co-constructed with local authorities for schools in statutory categories.
- Monthly partnership meetings are held with local authorities to meet accountability arrangements.
- Where appropriate, leaders, schools and educational settings are encouraged to work collaboratively within and beyond their own cluster to support improvement and develop system leadership.

Priority 2: Leadership and Teaching: Provide professional learning and support for the continuous development and growth of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce (Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants), to enable the development of an effective learning organisation.

Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
1. The workforce is supported by a professional learning offer and networking opportunities which promotes continuous learning opportunities and contributes to improvements in teaching and leadership. 2. Schools and educational settings requiring targeted or intensive support, receive timely and appropriate professional learning which leads to improvements in teaching and leadership. 3. Practitioners who access agile leadership and/or coaching and mentoring professional learning develop improved approaches within their own schools and settings. 4. Effective partnership working reduces the impact of potential recruitment and retention challenges.	• Encourage leaders to engage in regional processes to strengthen accurate self-evaluation and improvement planning and in the regional Celebrate, Share, Support and Refine (CSSR) processes. • Promote the regional teaching and learning offer for all practitioners (Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants). • Provide access to appropriate and relevant data about trends in staffing, particularly recruitment and retention. • Promote the regional Talent Management Approach for all schools and encourage schools, to engage in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) placements, where capacity allows. • Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP) address challenges in recruitment and retention. • Support the work of professional learning and learning network schools. Identify schools that demonstrate any barriers to engagement in the regional professional learning offer. • Encourage appropriate schools to engage in ITE partnership across Wales. • Engage in the endorsement of candidates that meet the Aspiring Headteacher and preparation for National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) threshold.

Assumptions: Processes that should be in place

- All schools access valuable professional learning aligned to their own school priorities.
- A sustainable supply of high-quality ITE placements are provided.
- All schools have robust statutory induction support for newly qualified teachers (NQTs).
- Higher Level Teaching Assistant assessment (HLTA) Status and NPQH assessment processes meet requirements.
- All Curriculum for Wales professional learning schools and learning network schools adhere to their annual workplan on behalf of the EAS.
- Where appropriate, leaders, schools and educational settings are encouraged to work collaboratively within and beyond their own cluster to support improvement and develop system leadership.

Priority 3: Curriculum for Wales: Provide professional learning and support for schools and educational settings (PRUs and Non-Maintained Nursery Settings) to realise Curriculum for Wales (CfW) and to enable them to become effective learning organisations within and beyond clusters.

Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
1. The workforce is supported by a professional learning offer and networking opportunities for curriculum for Wales that supports and contributes to improvements in curriculum design, subject disciplines, teaching, skills development and learning. 2. All schools and educational settings have appropriate arrangements in place to review and evaluate their curriculum provision and its impact on learner progress. 3. Schools and educational settings requiring targeted or intensive support for curriculum implementation, receive timely and appropriate professional learning that enhances provision and learning. 4. The provision for Welsh and bilingualism is developing both strategically and operationally in all English medium schools from the current position. 5. Work in clusters is benefiting learners, teachers and the wider system as collaboration and sharing enhances school's own improvement priorities in relation to the developments in curriculum provision.	• Determine where slow progress is undermining schools' ability to deliver the agreed syllabus as part of curriculum for Wales. • Work collaboratively to determine where there may be risks to Welsh in Education delivery targets. • Promote and support the regional and national professional learning offer for curriculum for Wales. • Support the Religion and Values Education (RVE) partner to ensure effective operation of local Standing Advisory Councils for Religion, Values and Ethics (SACs). Identify where mandatory aspects and the agreed syllabus are not yet fully embedded. • Work collaboratively to review the work of schools and educational settings undertaking the role of learning network schools, and their capacity to support a school improving system.

Assumptions: Processes that should be in place

- All schools and educational settings have processes in place to ensure that the mandatory aspects of the curriculum for Wales framework support curriculum provision.
- All schools and educational settings follow the agreed syllabus to ensure that the mandatory requirements of RVE and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) are met and support curriculum provision.
- Provision for Welsh enables a progressive pathway to qualifications in Welsh / through the medium of Welsh, including post 16, and opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in schools and educational settings (formal and informal).
- All Curriculum for Wales professional learning schools and learning network schools adhere to their annual workplan on behalf of the EAS.
- Where appropriate, leaders, schools and educational settings are encouraged to work collaboratively within and beyond their own cluster to support improvement and system leadership.

Priority 4: Health Wellbeing and Equity: Provide professional learning and support for health, wellbeing and equity to improve the outcomes of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners supporting the development of effective learning organisations.

Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
1. All schools and educational settings have an appropriate vision and approach to health, wellbeing and equity. This integrated and responsive approach is reflected in each school's SDP and teaching and learning strategies. 2. Schools and educational settings requiring targeted or intensive support, receive timely and appropriate professional learning in relation to Health, Wellbeing and Equity that supports improvement in the educational attainment and wellbeing outcomes of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners. 3. Professional learning, support and guidance assists schools to develop systems and processes to reduce the impact of poverty on vulnerable and disadvantaged learners. 4. Schools' own evaluations of provision, teaching and learning for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners are appropriately informed by the professional learning provided. As a result, whole school strategic interventions are responding to learner needs and are improving attitudes to learning and leading to better progress.	• Ensure that the EAS and local authority services are joined up to support the regional provision for Health, Wellbeing and Equity. • Support the review and impact of the use of Pupil Development Grant (PDG). • Identify schools and educational settings who require additional support and share relevant information. • Promote and support the regional and national professional learning offer. • Support the EAS in keeping under review learning network school capacity to support the wider system sharing information where relevant.

Assumptions: Processes that should be in place

- There are clear roles and responsibilities between the EAS and each local authority for the provision of support for Health, Wellbeing and Equity so that schools and educational settings are clear about where to access support.
- All schools and educational settings comply with the policy directive to prioritise health and wellbeing and community focussed schools in their SDPs.
- All schools and educational settings comply with PDG grant terms and condition requirements.
- All Curriculum for Wales professional learning and learning network schools adhere to their annual workplan on behalf of the EAS.
- Where appropriate, leaders, schools and educational settings are encouraged to work collaboratively within and beyond their own cluster to support improvement and system leadership.

Priority 5: School Governance: Provide a broad range of professional learning, support, advice and guidance, that has a positive impact on developing governance and its role in the development of schools as effective learning organisations.

Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
1. Professional Learning (PL) and networking enables governors to impact positively on school leadership and governance. 2. Governing Bodies accurately evaluate the impact of their work on the development of the school, using the self-evaluation tool to identify their own development needs. 3. Where schools require targeted or intensive support, the Governing Body is supported to understand both the implications and the support available, so that they can demonstrates a positive impact on leadership. 4. Governing Bodies knowledge and understanding of their school is improved through the provision of the SIP Annual Report detailing the support that is being provided to the school. 5. When required, Chairs of Governors engage with advice and support from the Regional Specialist HR service, through the school improvement team, so that they are able to support the development of school leadership. 6. The Service Level Agreement provides a comprehensive range of support services to support governing bodies in meeting their core responsibilities and statutory requirements.	• Provide local authority specific professional learning for governors. • Communicate support needs for specific governing bodies, to help target professional learning and support. • Encourage governing bodies to engage with the self-evaluation process. • Provide appropriate local authority input into statutory processes as required. • Consider the suitability of any applications for local authority governors, through usual governor appointment processes. • Take action to support recruitment or amend arrangements in governing bodies, where required. • Take action to support the recruitment of governors, amending arrangements in governing bodies, where required. • Ensure that they are satisfied, as per Welsh Government Guidance, that all schools have an adequate complaints procedure.

Assumptions: Processes that should be in place

- All newly appointed governors attend mandatory training within the stipulated timescales and are supported by a mentor from within the governing body. Non-compliance is reported to the relevant chair of governors and LA.
- Where a Governing Body has more than three vacancies for over a term, does not hold three meetings in a year, or does not hold an Annual General Meeting the chair of governors, headteacher and LA are informed.
- All governing bodies have an 'adequate complaints procedure that is publicised' based on revised Welsh Government Guidance (December 2022).

Priority 6: EAS Organisational Foundations: Provide a lean, efficient organisational infrastructure which delivers on our agreed priorities to support all schools and educational settings to be thriving, learning organisations.

Success Criteria	LA Partnership Working
1. The financial and operational delivery model enables effective delivery of the regional school improvement model. 2. A balanced year end budget is achieved through effective financial management. 3. Timely progress is made towards the Business Plan priorities demonstrating impact and value for money. 4. Processes for self-evaluation and impact capture are used well to inform strengths and areas for improvement. 5. Processes for performance management and professional learning enable a skilled and effective workforce. 6. Effective systems enable the collation of a range of information on schools and educational settings to be used to support improvement. 7. Effective partnership working including national and cross regional work contributes to system wide improvement in Wales and beyond.	• Local authorities are committed to financing and supporting a sustainable regional model for school improvement. • Support effective governance arrangements through engagement and attendance. • Engage in consultation and self-evaluation processes, as appropriate.

Assumptions: Processes that should be in place

- The EAS is an agile and responsive organisation providing bespoke and flexible support to local authorities.
- The EAS values and develops transparent and productive relationships with all partners.
- The EAS regular reviews all systems and processes to ensure they consider workload implications.
- A robust governance model is in operation with optimal attendance and engagement.
- The EAS complies with all legal requirements as an employer and as a company.
- The EAS engages in a broad range of internal and external audits that support improvement.

8. EAS Business Plan: LA Partnership Working 2023-2024 (draft and for further discussion)

LA Partnership Working in Caerphilly 2023-2024

LA Priorities and Success Criteria	EAS targeted actions agreed with LA

• Equip **leaders** with the skills to have a significant impact on progress, attainment and provision and wellbeing.
• Ensure the effective implementation of **Curriculum for Wales.**
• Improve **digital skills** for all learners.
• Close the gap in attainment between those **learners from low-income backgrounds** and those who do not live in poverty.
• Further improve provision and support for young people (**post-16).**
	• Bespoke support for schools working with a school improvement partner (SIP) via the universal, targeted and intensive model.
	• Support from learning network schools
	• Support from the curriculum team focusing on Curriculum for Wales and skills.
	• Cluster professional discussions with all schools
	• CSSR approach to be undertaken in identified schools, to establish specific aspects for support
	• Undertake thematic reviews which provide a position statement on identified areas to include questionnaires, focused visits and feedback from SIPs
	• Continue to provide PL and associated support for the implementation of the Raising the Achievement of Disadvantaged Youngsters programme (RADY).
	• Tackling Aspects of Poverty (TAP) professional learning (PL) programme to be delivered.
	• Implement the universal PL programme, including professional networks, including:
	   o the Governor Pathway professional learning programme in all schools.
	   o leadership and delivery of digital skills.
	   o Welsh
	   o Progression and assessment
	• Continue to support schools to deliver the SEREN programmes.
	• Continue to support schools to achieve the Cymraeg Campus Award.

LA Estyn Recommendations
July 2012: R1 implement improvement strategies and specific actions to improve outcomes for learners especially at key stages 3 and 4; R2 strengthen the level of challenge to its secondary schools; R3 improve the robustness of self-evaluation and target setting; R4 align corporate and partnership strategic planning processes in order to make best use of available resources to improve outcomes for children and young people; and R5 take urgent action to reduce surplus capacity in schools generally and secondary schools in particular.
LA Education Strategy Priorities

- Continue to provide robust approaches to **safeguarding of children and young people** based on emerging needs and demands as an outcome of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Equip **leaders** with the skills to have a significant impact on progress, attainment and provision and wellbeing.
- Ensure the effective implementation of **Curriculum for Wales.**
- Accelerate the **progress of vulnerable** learners.
- Improve pupil **attendance** and reduce **exclusions**, with particular focus on vulnerable groups.
- Further improve provision and support for young people (**post-16)**
- Close the gap in attainment between those **learners from low-income backgrounds** and those who do not live in poverty.
- Improve **digital skills** for all learners.
- Reach the target of 26% of year 1 pupils in **Welsh medium** by 2031.
- Support pupil wellbeing by improving attitudes to **healthy food choices and active fitness.**
- Ensure the most vulnerable families including those in **poverty**, can access support to give their child the **best start to their early years.**
- Through the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme ensure that the County Borough provides sufficient **school places** to meet demand as well as upgrading/replacing school accommodation, as appropriate, so that **schools are fit for purpose in the 21st century**.

LA Themes

Autumn 2023	Spring 2024	Summer 2024
Schools' response to post-covid baseline assessments in the foundation phase.	Provision and progress of disadvantaged learners.	Digital skills (update on progress from summer 2023, includes focus on digital qualifications at key stage 4).

Reporting impact: EAS Stats and Stories

Autumn 2023	Spring 2024	Summer 2024
Provision for Welsh and standards in English Medium schools with a focus on opportunities to develop and use the language outside Welsh lessons	An overview of how schools have used baseline assessments to address the impact of Covid on FPh learners, including case studies of a range of schools.	Provision for and progress of disadvantaged learners, including a focus on how schools track progress and how leaders ensure equity for learners.

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EAS

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

Education Achievement Service

Regional Business Plan

April 2022 - March 2025

(Consultation Version - **Accessible**)

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Foreword

The Educational Achievement Service (EAS) is the school improvement service of the five local authorities in South East Wales: Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen.

The EAS is owned by the five Councils and operates within a robust governance structure which is populated by representative Elected Members from each Council.

The EAS has been in operation since September 2012 and has undergone many changes during this period. Through the commissioning of an annual Business Plan the EAS delivers key school improvement support to all schools and educational settings across the South East Wales region.

The EAS endeavours to work in partnership local authorities, schools and settings and wider stakeholders, ensuring that service delivery remains of a consistently high standard and meets the needs of the system. The service welcomes external expertise and challenge to support continued improvement and will remain agile and responsive to regional need.

Section 1: Regional Context

Key regional facts and figures

- The number of pupils of compulsory school age within the region in 2021 was 73,324. This represents 19.3% of all pupils in Wales.

- There are 237 maintained schools in the region (which includes 4 pupil referral units), 15.8% of all maintained schools in Wales (EAS figure correct from September 2021, Wales figure from Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC), 2021).

- There are 21 Welsh medium primary schools, 3 Welsh medium secondary, 17 Roman Catholic and 11 Church in Wales schools within the region

- The percentage of pupils of compulsory school age who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) is 24.8%. This level of eligibility is the second highest of the four regional consortia with Central South Consortium highest with 25.1% (PLASC, 2021).

- 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 11.8%.

- Based on local authority reported numbers (March 2021), 847 children in the region are looked after (LAC) by a local authority and attend a school in the region. An additional 54 Looked After Children are educated in schools in England. (This data is no longer collected in PLASC).

Overview of regional school governors (*As at 15/02/22*)

Local Authority	Number of school governors
Blaenau Gwent	321
Caerphilly	1096
Monmouthshire	446
Newport	784
Torfaen -	399
EAS	**3046**

Overview of school numbers in the region Jan 2022

Blaenau Gwent (31.4% FSM)

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

Caerphilly (24.9% 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

Monmouthshire (16.6% FSM)

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

Newport (23.1% FSM)

23	Non-maintained Nursery Settings
1	Nursery
44	Primary (4 Welsh medium, 2 Church in Wales, 6 Roman Catholic)
9	Secondary (1 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)
2	Special
1	Pupil Referral Unit

Torfaen (30.0% FSM)

15	Non-maintained Nursery Setting
25	Primary (3 Welsh medium, 2 Church in Wales, 3 Roman Catholic)
6	Secondary (1 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)
1	Special
1	Pupil Referral Service

Overview of regional school / PRU staffing

Local Authority	Number of Teaching Staff	Number of Support Staff
Blaenau Gwent	502	552
Caerphilly	1,580	1,416
Monmouthshire	661	626
Newport	1,508	1,346
Torfaen	761	739
EAS	**5,012**	**4,679**

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Section 2: Introduction

As an organisation we have reviewed how we have written the Business Plan and communicated this to our partners. We decided it was timely to review and adapt this process and to make it more accessible to a wider audience. We have used the 'Theory of Change' approach to help us articulate the changes and impact we want to make as the regional school improvement service for South East Wales and the connections and actions needed that will allow that change and impact to be successfully achieved. This Business Plan spans a three-year period and will receive annual reviews each year.

However, this plan also considers how schools and educational settings continue to face the challenges of the pandemic. The EAS will remain sensitive and responsive to the needs of the workforce and will continue to be a highly supportive, reflective, and responsive organisation.

The EAS will build upon what has worked well during this period, particularly the aspects of our role that have been successful within the virtual environment. The support that the EAS will offer will fully align to the expectations set by local authorities, Welsh Government (WG) and links to emerging research. The pandemic has reminded us that positive change is and has been possible. Schools, settings and the EAS have seized opportunities to explore innovative ways of working and delivering meaningful learning experiences through a creative blended learning approach. These experiences should be built upon to avoid a 'snap back,' keeping the positive learning that has been developed during this time.

Stats and Stories from 2020-2021

- Nearly all (98%) agreed or strongly agreed (46%) that the blended learning masterclass has directly brought about advances in knowledge, skills and/or practice. It has prompted reflection on beliefs and attitudes regarding professional practice.

- Over 90% of leaders agree that the EAS provides high quality professional learning that supports for Leadership and Teaching, access to inspirational guest speakers , digital support and access to an equitable national leadership offer.

- Nearly all schools are Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Aware

- Over 100 School Improvement Partners (SIP) from both within and beyond the region are current serving Headteachers who are contributing to the self-improving system and the Schools as Learning Organisations (SLO) agenda.

- Sharing of best practice events highlighting key learning and good practice during the pandemic involving international speakers.

- Strong Learning Network school to school provision has been secured for schools who require high levels of support. This support is holistic and addresses leadership and improving the quality of teaching.

- The development of a growing bank of case studies evidencing examples of school improvement and turnaround leadership.

- Enhanced schools' ability to network and share practice. Curriculum for Wales (CfW) Teaching and Learning Development Group has over 380 members and the Progression and Assessment Development Group has 340 members.

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- 150 schools have accessed the CfW professional learning (PL) programme to support senior leaders and headteachers.

- Over the last 3 years 59 people in the EAS region have successfully met National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). The average pass rate over the last three years is 76%.

- 2020/ 2021 58 Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) achieved the status, a 98% pass rate, building capacity in schools

- Governing Body meetings moved online from the end of March 2020. In the subsequent 18 months over 1800 meetings were clerked, an average of 31 each week in term time.

- We have able to connect with more governors than ever across the region, offering a virtual Professional Learning (training) programme from Summer 2020. Since then, we have delivered over 130 virtual events for governors, with over 2000 individual attendances.

- Since Autumn 2019 across the EAS over 500 participants have accessed the Middle Leadership Development Programme. Nearly 900 evaluative comments have been received about the PL experience.

We will continue to research, refine, respond and reflect to school needs. Our established networks will continue to be the mechanism of communicating with schools and settings. The Supporting our Schools website will continue to be the 'go to place' for all resoures and guidance materials.

The EAS understands the need to over communicate with clarity to provide reassurance regarding advice, guidance, support and expectations. As a result, the EAS will work with local authorities to minimise any unnecessary bureaucracy for schools and settings to ensure they are able to focus on their important priorities and their support for learners.

The timing, delivery and focus of the support will be carefully considered in respect of the challenges that are likely to continue.

Section 3: Our Approach

The Theory of Change approach

This approach begins with asking why we are doing what we do in the EAS (our vision) and reinforces the need for the development of a collective regional vision, so that we are all clear about what we are trying to achieve and each other's respective roles in this. The EAS will work collaboratively with local authority partners, wider partners and schools and educational settings to implement the Business Plan.

Why? What are we aiming to achieve?

South East Wales Vision 2025

SE Wales Vision	**All young people are confident, ambitious, resilient and have a love of lifelong learning and realise their full potential.** *The SE Wales Vision is currently under development*

In working towards the SE Wales Vision, a strong commitment of partnership working is critical. It is important to recognise that each local authority, school and educational setting will have their own strategic priorities that support the realisation of the regional vision. These will be documented in LA Strategic Plans and School Development Plans.

EAS Vision 2025

EAS Vision	**Supporting and enabling schools and education settings to thrive ad effective learning organisations.** *There is an existing vision that is currently under development with all stakeholders*

In working towards the EAS Vision, it is critical that the EAS Business Plan reflects regional and local needs.

Wales has an ambition that all schools develop as learning organisations, in keeping with OECD principles. Schools that are learning organisations have the capacity to adapt more quickly and explore new approaches, with a means to improving learning and outcomes for all their learners.

What? What will the EAS do to achieve our vision?

All schools will be able to access a universal offer of professional learning support in each of the following areas: School Improvement, Leadership and Teaching, Curriculum for Wales, Health Wellbeing and Equity and School Governors which are intrinsically linked. As well as a holistic professional learning offer, this will include a set number of days to work with their School Improvement Partner (SIP) and a professional dialogue with the EAS and LA to agree and or amend improvement priorities and support requirements as part of an annual professional discussion.

In addition to the universal offer, schools will be able to access specific and targeted support as determined through ongoing professional discussion with their SIP and in line with their school improvement priorities. This professional learning support may be related to a task and finish activity, an option for further work with their SIP or an option for peer working.

Bespoke support will also be available for schools who require more intensive support. This could include more support from the SIP or the use of a Learning Network School to School Partnership.

Activities:

School Improvement: Bespoke support to schools and education settings which is aligned to their needs. Create and facilitate collaborative networks of professional practice.

Leadership and Teaching
Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.

Curriculum for Wales
Professional learning and support for curriculum for Wales.

Health, Wellbeing and Equity
Professional learning and support to improve health and wellbeing, with a practical focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

Governors: Provide a broad range of professional learning support.

These activities will be explained in more detail later in the document.

What are the foundations that enable activities to take place?
The EAS needs to have the following elements in place to enable the activities above. These are the foundations of the organisation:

- We are passionately committed to Wales, helping our staff, schools and education settings succeed.
- Agile, timely and responsive.
- Sensitive, flexible, and empathetic to system needs.
- The way we work is informed, drawing on research from a global perspective.
- Welcome challenge and review.
- Effective systems and processes for self-evaluation, risk, and financial management.
- The operation of a clear and effective governance model.
- Positive relationships with a range of partners and stakeholders.
- Adherence to all legislative requirements.
- Communicate clearly.
- Support the wellbeing and professional learning of staff.
- Work is well-planned and managed to deliver the best for schools and education settings.
- Draw upon expertise to improve our delivery.

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What will be the impact?

If schools and educational settings have the capacity to secure improvement and engage with the support available from the EAS this is the expected impact:

Impact:

The EAS provides support to enable leaders, governors and education practitioners to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours to positively impact practice, providing improved learner outcomes.

Professional learning is of high quality and appropriate to (individual) needs.	Support is aligned to needs, enabling schools and education settings to make progress.	The broad range of collaborative networks and activity support the development of a self-improving system.

How will we capture our work and share information with our partners?

There are many ways of capturing and sharing what the EAS does which are exemplified in this model as outputs.

Outputs:

Governance reports Policies and processes External research and review PL resources and guidance	EAS Website Case studies Supporting Our Schools Site	Impact capture reports Meeting minutes Partnership documentation

Assumptions

In writing this plan we have made the following assumptions. If these are not in place, then they become a risk to the successful delivery of this plan.

- Operate with integrity, honesty and objectivity.
- Partners understand our role in the education system.
- Professional learning has a positive impact on practice and behaviour.
- We are one part of the much wider system.
- Schools / education settings positively engage with us.
- Schools / education settings use funding effectively.
- We have the capacity and resources to undertake our activity effectively.
- When the conditions in a school / education setting can secure improvement, readiness for support results in positive change.
- Our partners provide us with timely and appropriate information.
- We work with schools / education settings to ensure priorities for improvement are based on robust, accurate self-evaluation.

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SE Wales Vision	**All young people are confident, ambitious, resilient and have a love of lifelong learning and realise their full potential.** *The SE Wales Vision is currently under development*		
EAS Vision	**Supporting and enabling schools and education settings to thrive ad effective learning organisations.** *There is an existing vision that is currently under development with all stakeholders*		
Impact	The EAS provides support to enable leaders, governors and education practitioners to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours to positively impact practice, providing improved learner outcomes.		
	Professional learning is of high quality and appropriate to (individual) needs.	Support is aligned to needs, enabling schools and education settings to make progress.	The broad range of collaborative networks and activity support the development of a self-improving system.
Outputs	Governance reports Policies and processes External research and review PL resources and guidance	EAS Website Case studies Supporting Our Schools Site	Impact capture reports Meeting minutes Partnership documentation
Activities	**School Improvement:** Bespoke support to schools and education settings which is aligned to their needs. Create and facilitate collaborative networks of professional practice.		
	Leadership and Teaching Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.	**Curriculum for Wales** Professional learning and support for curriculum for Wales.	**Health, Wellbeing and Equity** Professional learning and support to improve health and wellbeing, with a practical focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
	Governors: Provide a broad range of professional learning support.		

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Assumptions

- We are able to operate with integrity, honesty and objectivity.
- Partners understand our role in the education system.
- Professional learning has a positive impact on practice and behaviour.
- We are one part of a much wider system.
- Schools/education settings positively engage with us.
- Schools / education settings use funding effectively.
- We have the capacity and resources to undertake our activity effectively.
- When the conditions in schools/education settings can secure improvement, readiness for support results in positive change.
- Our partners provide us with timely and appropriate information.
- We work with schools / education settings to ensure priorities for improvement are based on robust, accurate self-evaluation.

Foundations

- We are passionately committed to Wales – helping our staff, schools and education settings succeed.
- We are an agile, timely and responsive organisation.
- We are sensitive, flexible, and empathetic to system needs.
- The way we work is informed, drawing on research from a global perspective.
- We welcome challenge and review and draw on expertise to improve our delivery.
- We have effective systems and processes for self-evaluation, risk and financial management.
- We operate a clear and effective governance model.
- We have positive relationships with a range of partners and stakeholders.
- We adhere to all legislative requirements.
- We communicate clearly.
- We support the wellbeing and professional learning of staff.
- Our work is well planned and managed to deliver the best for our schools and education settings.

Section 4: EAS Business Plan Activities 2022-2023

The support across all areas is interrelated and should not be viewed in isolation.

School Improvement: Bespoke support to schools and educational settings aligned to need. Create and facilitate collaborative networks of professional practice.
Universal Provision
• Facilitate professional discussions to identify support aligned to improvement priorities and resource allocation, highlighting good practice to share more widely. • Undertake supported self-evaluation activities alongside leaders, focusing on the progress of learners including vulnerable groups. • Provide professional learning for improvement and self-evaluation processes, including supporting the roll out of the National Resource for Evaluation and Improvement. • Provide opportunities for peer working. • Work with local authorities to complement existing education HR services and continue to develop a consistent approach to school improvement related HR matters across the region. • Provide recruitment support for the appointment of Headteachers. • Provide support as a panel member for Headteacher Performance Management.
Targeted Provision
• Provide additional support to undertake self-evaluation activities alongside leaders. • Facilitate professional learning or support for specific areas identified by the school or educational setting. • Facilitate opportunities for peer-to-peer networks. • Support recruitment at key senior leadership positions. • Support targeted professional learning for Governing Bodies. • School Improvement Partners provide enhanced support for new and acting Headteachers.
Bespoke Provision
• Allocate additional EAS support for schools and educational settings requiring higher levels of support. • Broker EAS school to school intensive support to undertake professional learning and supported self-evaluation activities alongside leaders. • Working in close partnership with LAs and other partners to monitor the progress schools and or educational settings are making against their identified priorities. Review the impact of support and amend as needed via the Team Around the School and Multi-Agency processes.

Leadership and Teaching: Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.
Universal Provision
• Enable the entire workforce to access professional learning that supports the development of secure high quality teaching and learning and the realisation of the curriculum for Wales. • Provide support for the leadership of teaching in the development of a whole school teaching and learning strategy, underpinned by the National Professional Teaching and Leading Assisting Teaching Standards. • Provide practical examples of teaching and learning approaches used successfully in a variety of settings and schools. • Provide a National Professional Learning offer for statutory induction, including support for Newly Qualified Teachers, School based Induction Mentors, External Verifiers. • Provide a progressive pathway of professional learning to support the role of Teaching Assistants and Higher Level Teaching Assistants. • Support leaders to develop their schools as effective learning organisations. • Continue to offer a national professional leadership development programme, including coaching and mentoring for leaders at all levels.

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- Identify and develop a sustainable supply of diverse, high-quality, agile leaders to innovate and lead effective 21st century schools.
- Continue to work in partnership with Initial Teacher Education partners in securing high quality teacher education.

Targeted Provision
• Targeted support for the development of whole school teaching and leadership. This may include specific targeted support over a limited time period to include a particular aspect of leadership and/or teaching e.g. targeted support to support assessment across a whole school, support for a group of leaders, Schools as Learning Organisations development. • Provide a comprehensive package of national and regional professional learning for School Improvement Partners to support them in their system leadership role.
Bespoke Provision
• Intensive and bespoke support exploring all aspects/ relevant needs of teaching and leadership and how the entire workforce supports the improvement journey.

Curriculum for Wales: Professional learning and support for Curriculum for Wales.
Universal Provision
• Provide access to access to national professional learning programmes to realise the Curriculum for Wales. • Provide access for the entire workforce to collaborative networks of support for Curriculum for Wales and Areas of Learning and Experience (and subject disciplines). • Provide access to strategic support and professional learning for the development of approaches to bilingualism and the Welsh language. • Provide access to professional learning to support the development of subject knowledge across the curriculum. • Provide access to professional learning and guidance to support curriculum design (including progression and assessment), working with a range of international experts. • Provide access to professional learning for skills development across the curriculum as a feature of high-quality curriculum design.
Targeted Provision
• The School Improvement Partner will work alongside the school or education setting to broker targeted support to meet identified professional learning requirements.
Bespoke Provision
• Allocate additional EAS support for schools and educational settings requiring higher levels of support. • Broker EAS school to school intensive support to undertake professional learning in Areas of Learning and Experiences (AoLEs) / subject disciplines • Delivery of specific professional learning activity at a school or cluster level.

Health Wellbeing and Equity: Professional learning and support for health, wellbeing, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
Universal Provision
• Support to build the capacity within schools and educational setting to create an effective whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing. • Provide strategic support for the development of approaches to the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning. • Support to develop strategic approaches to developing UNCRC and Human Rights. • Support the development of a tiered approach to the provision and teaching for disadvantaged and vulnerable learners. • Support the development of provision for learners whose circumstances have changed during the pandemic.

- Support for the development of language, social, emotional, physical and cognitive development in early years for those adversely affected by Covid.
- Offer a tiered approach to the professional learning programme: Raising the Achievement of Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY).
- Support for the development of strategic approaches to embedding Diversity.
- Work in partnership with local authorities with Inclusions Leads and Looked After Children Education (LACEs) to analyse and use attendance and exclusions data for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners.
- Provide guidance and support for the effective use of the Pupil Development Grant (PDG).
- Deliver the National Programme on Teaching and Learning (Mike Gershon).
- Provide support and guidance for schools to become Family and Community Friendly.

Targeted Provision

- Deliver the Vulnerable Learner Lead Programme.
- Deliver the Wellbeing Lead Professional Learning Programme.
- Provide 'WELL' Toolkit to support schools to review their tiered approach to Wellbeing.
- Continue leadership support for key roles, to include: More Able and Talented (MAT) Lead, Family and Community Engagement (FaCE), Seren Leads.

Bespoke Provision

- Seren Network (secondary only).
- Allocate additional EAS support for schools and educational settings requiring higher levels of support.
- Provide Wellbeing Coaching on a need's basis.

School Governors: A broad range of professional learning and support for school governors.

Universal Provision

- Provide a professional learning programme for Governors, including Welsh Government mandated training, the core role of the governor and support for understanding the role of the governing body and their contribution to school development priorities.
- Provide all governing bodies and individual governors with advice, support and guidance in relation to their roles and responsibilities.
- Provide networking opportunities for groups of governors, to discuss best practice, identify common issues and explore solutions.
- Offer all governing bodies a clerking service through the optional adoption of a Service Level Agreement.
- Continue to provide a range of specialist HR professional learning for governors.

Targeted Provision

- Deliver optional programmes to further develop governors' skills and knowledge, enabling them to deepen their understanding of their role, to effectively support and challenge their schools.
- Provide these programmes as part of a targeted Governor Pathway, aimed at specific groups of governors.
- Provide targeted networking opportunities for specific groups of governors, to address specific issues.

Bespoke Provision

- Provide additional specific professional learning for individual governing bodies, clusters of governing bodies or individual governors.
- Broker support for newly appointed Chairs of Governors, who would benefit from the support of an experienced mentor.
- Provide opportunities for more experienced chairs of governors to further develop their skills and knowledge of governance.

EAS Foundations:

Business delivery

- A clear EAS vision is articulated to schools and partners.
- Review and refine the hybrid working model and develop a balanced approach to Professional Learning delivery that incorporates the benefits of the virtual environment alongside face-to-face delivery where appropriate.
- Embed the EAS evaluation model, continuing to welcome external challenge and support, including engagement with research partners to evaluate current programmes and inform future developments.
- Use the Investors in People (IIP) development programme to support service improvements.
- Continue to develop and refine the broad range of ICT systems that support the business model and review the systems that enable the delivery of support for governors.
- Develop an effective communications strategy that meaningfully engage with all key stakeholders
- Continue to engage with other consortia and middle-tier organisations, such as Estyn, to realise efficiencies in programme development and delivery.
- Support and advise local authorities, as appropriate, in the delivery of their statutory functions for the regional Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACREs) and the development of individual Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP).

Staff Development

- To maintain high levels of staff morale and wellbeing in the context of reduced funding and workforce planning.
- Implement new performance management processes to reflect individual and service needs.
- Continue to develop collaborative ways in which the EAS team contribute to decision-making processes and are recognised more systematically for their successes.
- Provide all staff with the professional learning opportunities that enable them to undertake their role and develop professionally and personally ensuring all mandatory professional learning is undertaken.
- Recruit, develop and retain a skilled, professional, well informed, and motivated workforce that represents the values and vision of the EAS.

Funding and Resources

- Work with key partners to secure a more sustainable deliverable funding model, aligned with workforce planning.
- Secure an updated Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA) with local authority partners, that recognises change management funding.

Section 5: Delivery arrangements and resources for 2022-2023

Governance

The EAS is subject to a robust governance model that is underpinned by the Articles of Association and a Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA).

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 this 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.
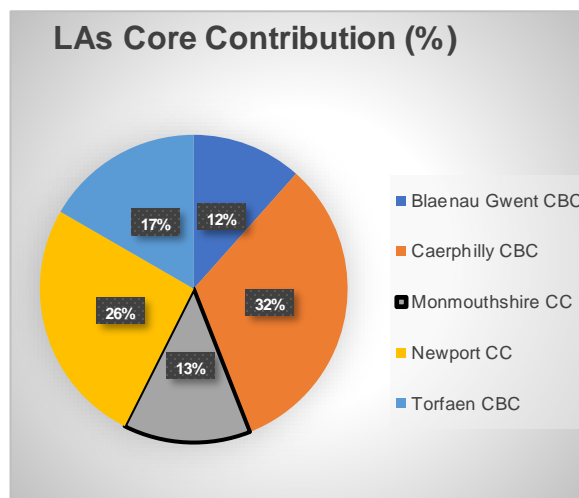
The delegation rate to schools increased to 95.5% in 2021/22, whilst the EAS staff profile has reduced by 53.1% since 2012.

As recipients of public funding, it is important that budgets are allocated and spent wisely. The EAS will continually strive to provide value for money through the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes.

Local authority contributions 2022-2023

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 local authorities' indicative figures for 2022-2023 are as follows:

Local Authority (to be agreed)	£
Blaenau Gwent CBC	£350,046
Caerphilly CBC	£980,663
Monmouthshire CC	£403,815
Newport CC	£783,291
Torfaen CBC	£503,498
Total	**£3,021,313**

LAs Core Contribution (%)

- Blaenau Gwent CBC — 12%
- Caerphilly CBC — 32%
- Monmouthshire CC — 13%
- Newport CC — 26%
- Torfaen CBC — 17%

In terms of the above £0.99m of this figure is used to secure capacity within the EAS team from current serving headteachers and schools and £0.18m 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 to be followed for all regional school improvement grants received into the region from Welsh Government. Before the grant can be accepted approval to funding distribution is required from the local authority Chief Education Officers / Directors of Education with a follow up ratification from JEG members.

Grant Name (To be updated when information on grants is received from Welsh Government)	Grant Total	Amount delegated to schools	Delegation* Rate	Regionally Retained
Indicative Calculation 2022-2023				
	£	£		£
Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG)				
- Education Improvement Grant	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
- Professional Learning for Teachers	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
- Other grant initiatives	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Pupil Development Grant (PDG)	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
PDG (Lead Regional PDG Adviser)	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Seren Pre 16	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Seren Post 16	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Total	**TBC**	**TBC**	**TBC**	**TBC**

*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.

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 to support governing bodies to deliver their responsibilities.

The optional clerking service is provided through a service level agreement with an option to buy into a clerking service and then additionally a statutory committee clerking service, through a Service Level Agreement (SLA). From 2020 to 2022, 99% of schools opted into the SLA clerking service, with 51% of schools choosing the additional statutory committee service. From April 2022 the service is being offered on a 3-year basis, which aligns with the revised Business Plan approach. The indicative funding for 2022/23 is £0.364m.

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Section 6: Additional supporting documents

This Business Plan is supported by the following documents:

- Local Authority Strategic Education Plans
- Detailed Business Plan 2022–2023
- Regional Grant Mapping Overview 2022–2023 (to follow once detailed received from WG)
- Regional Self-Evaluation Report (Executive Summary)
- EAS Risk Register (Executive Summary)
- Regional Professional Learning Offer 2022–2023

EAS - Integrated Impact Assessment   **Appendix C**

This Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) has been designed to assist to help support the EAS in making informed and effective decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

➢ Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
➢ Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
➢ Welsh Language Standards (Wales) 2015
➢ Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

PLEASE NOTE: Section *3 Socio-economic Duty* only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions.

1. Proposal Details

Lead Officer	Edward Pryce
SMT Approval	Geraint Willington
Service Area & Department	EAS Wide
Date	9/3/2023

This is a Strategy / Plan

What is the proposal to be assessed? *Provide brief details of the proposal and provide a link to any relevant report or documents.*
The EAS is required by Welsh Government to submit an annual overarching regional Business Plan on an annual basis. The EAS then delivers, through this plan, a wide range of school improvement services to all schools (all key stages, including all through schools and special schools), pupil referral units and funded non-maintained nursery settings on behalf of each LA. This plan supports the role LAs have in delivering their statutory function, addressing their individual improvement priorities and promoting improved pupil outcomes.
As an organisation we have reviewed how we have written the Business Plan and communicated this to our partners. We have undertaken consultation to help us articulate the changes and impact we want to make as the regional school improvement service for South-East Wales and the connections and actions needed that will allow that change and impact to be successfully achieved. This Business Plan spans a three-year period and will receive annual reviews each year. This report is the annual update for year 2.

2. Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

(The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have "due regard" to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups). Please note that an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

Protected Characteristics	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics and how?	If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Age *(people of all ages)*	Positive		The EAS Business Plan delivers school improvement services to all schools and settings. There is no direct work with the public and no direct support for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), as this remains within the remit of the Local Authority. Descriptions of the range of support and professional learning programmes, including elements on wellbeing and support for schools in developing and inclusive curriculum for all are included.
Disability *(people with disabilities/ long term conditions)*	Positive		The EAS Business Plan delivers school improvement services to all schools and settings. There is no direct work with the public and no direct support for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), as this remains within the remit of the Local Authority. Descriptions of the range of support and professional learning programmes, including elements on wellbeing and support for schools in developing and inclusive curriculum for all are included.

Gender Reassignment *(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth)*	Neutral		The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.
Marriage or Civil Partnership *(people who are married or in a civil partnership)*	Neutral		The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.
Pregnancy and Maternity *(women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)*	Neutral		The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.
Race *(people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds)*	Positive		The EAS Business Plan delivers school improvement services to all schools and settings. There is no direct work with the public and no direct support for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), as this remains within the remit of the Local Authority. Descriptions of the range of support and professional learning programmes, including elements on wellbeing and support for schools in developing and inclusive curriculum for all are included.

	Neutral		The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.
Religion or Belief *(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)*	Neutral		The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.
Sex *(women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender)*	Neutral		The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.
Sexual Orientation *(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual)*	Neutral		The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.

3. Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)
(The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services)

Please consider these additional vulnerable groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

- Single parents and vulnerable families
- People with low literacy/numeracy
- Pensioners
- Looked after children (LAC / CLA)
- Homeless people

- Carers
- Armed Forces Community
- Students
- Single adult households
- People misusing substances

- People who have experienced the asylum system
- People of all ages leaving a care setting
- People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)
- People involved in the criminal justice system

Socio-economic Disadvantage	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral	If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?	What evidence has been used to support this view?

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	impacts on the following and how?		
Low Income / Income Poverty *(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)*	Section not applicable, as this Business Plan is not a strategic decision. However the plan describes a range of support for schools related to reducing socio-economic impact, particularly for learners who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) or those who are looked after (LAC/CLA)		
Low and/or No Wealth *(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)*			
Material Deprivation *(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)*			
Area Deprivation *(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport)*			
Socio-economic Background *(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)*			
Socio-economic Disadvantage *(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or*			

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vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)			

4. Well-being Objectives
(How does your proposal deliver against regional Councils' Well-being Objectives? Which in turn support the national well-being goals for Wales as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Are there any impacts (positive, negative or neutral? If there are negative impacts how have these been mitigated?)

Improving education opportunities for all	The EAS delivers, through an agreed Business Plan, a wide range of school improvement services to all schools (all key stages, including all through schools and special schools), pupil referral units and funded non-maintained nursery settings on behalf of each LA. This plan supports the role LAs have in delivering their statutory function, addressing their individual improvement priorities and promoting improved pupil outcomes. Plan priorities include: Ensuring that the wellbeing of practitioners and learners in schools and settings remains paramount. Regional professional learning will be provided to support the social and emotional needs of the workforce and learners. Continuing to provide support to school leaders on the identification and support for specific groups of disadvantaged and vulnerable learners including those who have been disproportionality affected by school closures.
Enabling employment	Improved educational outcomes are linked to improved employment prospects.
Housing objectives	n/a
Transport / environment impact	n/a
Healthy lifestyle / sustainable development principle within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	n/a
Wellbeing objectives	n/a

5. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)
(Also known as the sustainable development principles. The Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)

Ways of Working	How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?
Long Term	This is a three-year business plan with one-year updates as stipulated by Welsh Government. The plan however supports the development of a self-improving school system and all Welsh Government long term strategic objectives in relation to school improvement. Longer term projections are not possible due to significant proportions of EAS work being funded by Welsh Government Regional grants for schools which are only known on a one year basis.
Prevention	The plan is designed to support the development and growth of schools, as part of a self improving system.
Integration	This Business Plan has been completed in consultation and collaboration with all five Local Authorities, and been informed by a broad ranging consultation exercise. Individual councils will need to consider how the business plan links to other council services
Collaboration	This Business Plan has been completed in consultation and collaboration with all five Local Authorities, and been informed by a broad ranging consultation exercise. Individual councils will need to consider how the business plan links to other council services.
Involvement	This Business Plan has been completed in consultation and collaboration with all five Local Authorities, and been informed by a broad ranging consultation exercise across all stakeholder groups.

6. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Wellbeing Goals	Does the proposal maximise council's contribution to the Well-being Goals and how?
A Prosperous Wales *An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work*	The plan will deliver a wide range of school improvement services to all schools (all key stages, including all through schools and special schools), pupil referral units and funded non-maintained nursery settings on behalf of each LA. This will contribute, through schools and partners in the Local Authority to a skilled and well-educated population. High quality education is a fundamental of ensuring future local and national prosperity through the provision of an informed and well-educated workforce and society. The Local Authority's statutory role to support, monitor and evaluate school performance and the quality of provision is essential.
A Resilient Wales *A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for climate change)*	n/a
A Healthier Wales *A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood*	The EAS has placed wellbeing at the forefront of its work and will continue to provide a range of professional learning to schools and settings that has provided support to the social and emotional needs of the workforce and learners.
A More Equal Wales *A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances)*	The plan supports the development of strategies in schools that support equity and equality, including continuing to provide support to school leaders on the identification and support for specific groups of disadvantaged and vulnerable learners including those who have been disproportionality affected by school closures.

Well-being Goals	Does the proposal maximise our contribution to the Well-being Goal and how?
A Wales of Cohesive Communities *Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities*	n/a
A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language *A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation*	All schools are required to promote Welsh culture and heritage through the Cwricwlwm Cymreig and to ensure that pupils are able to learn and practice the Welsh Language. Support for both is a kye strand of the business plan.
A Globally Responsible Wales *A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being*	Ensuring high quality education is fundamental to securing the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of future generations. The Business Plan focuses support for all schools appropriately schools. The school curriculum includes focus on social, environmental and cultural well-being, and these aspects are support as part of the plan.

7. Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards

(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council s to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact a proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language and ensuring the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language). Whilst not bound by this standard the EAS Welsh Language Policy explains how this duty is complied with to the same level.

Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?	If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Links with Welsh Government's [Cymraeg 2050 Strategy](#) and Local Authority's Welsh Language Strategies	The EAS has an updated (September 2021) Welsh Language Policy in place and Welsh language support for schools development of the language is included in the plan.	Positive	EAS Welsh Language Policy (Sept 2021) EAS Welsh Language Strategy included within the Business Plan (2022-2025)
Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards	Promoted through the EAS Welsh Language Policy	Positive	Compliance with the policy Section within the EAS Annual Headteacher / other staff stakeholder survey
Opportunities to promote the Welsh language *e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community*	Promoted through the EAS Welsh Language Policy. All materials for schools are bilingual.	Positive	Compliance with the policy Section within the EAS Annual Headteacher / other staff stakeholder survey
Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language *e.g. staff, residents and visitors*	Promoted through the EAS Welsh Language Policy. All materials for schools are bilingual, and all schools / governors have opportunity for a response by a Welsh speaking member of staff where requested.	Positive	Compliance with the policy Section within the EAS Annual Headteacher / other staff stakeholder survey

Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language	Promoted through the EAS Welsh Language Policy. All materials for schools are bilingual, and all schools / governors have opportunity for a response by a Welsh speaking member of staff where requested.	Positive	Compliance with the policy Section within the EAS Annual Headteacher / other staff stakeholder survey

7a. Having considered the impacts above, how has the proposal been developed so that there are positive effects, or increased positive effects on (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

The EAS Welsh Language Policy (Updated September 2021) describes in full the ways in which the EAS complies with the Welsh Language Measure (2015), including accesses to all materials bilingually, actively promotes the use of the language and offers an ever a range of services and support through the medium of Welsh for those who require them.

8. Data and Information
(What data or other evidence has been used to inform the development of the proposal? Evidence may include the outcome of previous consultations, existing databases, pilot projects, review of customer complaints and compliments and or other service user feedback, national and regional data, academic publications and consultants' reports etc.)

Data/evidence *(Please provide link to report if appropriate)*	Key relevant findings	How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?
Please note that a mid-year evaluation of the current revised Covid Business Plan (2020/21) has been submitted to each of the EAS governance groups and has been available for local authorities to share as appropriate within their own democratic processes.	A full analysis of feedback from consultations will be incorporated into the final plan.	The plan has also been informed by a broad range of visioning sessions available for all stakeholders and is informed by a range of stakeholder surveys whose outcomes have been analysed across 2021-2022.

Were there any gaps identified in the evidence and data used to develop this proposal and how will these gaps be filled?
Details of further consultation can be included in Section 9.

No

9. Consultation
(In some instances, there is a legal requirement to consult. In others, even where there is no legal obligation, there may be a legitimate expectation from people that a consultation will take place.

Briefly describe any recent or planned consultations paying particular attention to evidencing the Gunning Principles.

The Business Plan has been through a consultation process. The Consultees are noted 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
- 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
- EAS Supporting School Trade Union Group (SSTU Group)

When were they consulted did the consultation take place at the formative stage and was adequate time given for consultees to consider and respond?
From October – December 2021

Was sufficient information provided to consultees to allow them to make an informed decision on the proposal?
The full draft Business Plan was shared with all consultees.

What were the key findings?
All feedback has been considered and where appropriate incorporated into the final Business Plan.

How have the consultation findings been taken into account?
All feedback has been considered and where appropriate incorporated into the final Business Plan.

10. Monitoring and Review

How will the implementation and the impact of the proposal be monitored, including implementation of any amendments?	There are many ways of capturing and sharing what the EAS does which are exemplified in this model as outputs. The progress on the implementation and impact of the Business Plan will be reported to the Joint Executive Group and Company Board. 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 approach will be aligned to the national changes in the accountability system.
What are the practical arrangements for monitoring?	Bi-monthly meetings of EAS Joint Executive Group, Company Board and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, all of whom have council representatives. All groups are chaired by an elected member.
How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?	In the same way that this business plan has been informed by previous business plans. Through a comprehensive evaluation and subsequent consultation process.
When is the proposal due to be reviewed?	Bi-monthly internally to governance groups.
Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?	Overall EAS Managing Director supported by broader Senior Leadership Team

11. Recommendation and Reasoning

☑   Implement proposal with no amendments

        Implement proposal taking account of the mitigating actions outlined

        Reject the proposal due to disproportionate impact on equality, poverty and socio-economic disadvantage

12. Reason(s) for Recommendation
(Provide below a summary of the Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment.

The EAS is required to submit an annual overarching regional Business Plan on an annual basis. The three year business plan 2022-2025 (which commenced on 1 April 2022, following consultation from January to early March) was approved by each Local Authority's Cabinet prior to submission to Welsh Government. This is the annual update for Year 2 of this three year period.

The plan provides support for school improvement services directly to schools across the region. The plan does not include changes to the services, or delivery methods for any particular group or groups. It is therefore at least neutral in its impact with many positive benefits, particularly in relation to wellbeing goals and support for disadvantaged learners.

13. Version Control
(The IIA should be used in the early stages of the proposal development process. The IIA can be strengthened as time progresses to help shape the proposal. The Version Control section will act as an audit trail to evidence how the IIA has been developed over time)

Version No.	Author	Brief description of the amendments/update	Revision Date
1	Edward Pryce		13/1/2022

Integrated Impact Assessment Author	
Name:	**Edward Pryce**
Job Title:	**Assistant Director – Policy and Strategy**
Date:	**9/3/2023**

EAS SMT Approval			
Name:	**Geraint Willington**		
Job Title:	**Director**		
Signature:		**Date:**	**9/3/2023**

**EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE -
28ᵀᴴ MARCH 2023**

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS**

REPORT BY: **JONATHAN KEOHANE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, EAS**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform members of the school improvement work undertaken in Caerphilly schools from September 2022 – December 2023

1.2 To seek members' views on the school improvement work.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The Education Achievement Service provides school improvement support, on behalf of Caerphilly Local Authority. The information included in this report outlines the key aspects of the EAS work, along with key actions and responsibilities that of the Local Authority to support schools in Caerphilly. This work contributes to the Local Authority's Strategic plans and the contribution of the EAS through their regional Business Plan (2022-2025).

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the report and raise any questions or comments they may have of officers about the information contained within.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Members should be made aware of the support available to Caerphilly schools.

5. THE REPORT

Professional Discussions

5.1 During an academic year, the Local Authority (LA) and Educational Achievement Service (EAS) engage with schools through a professional discussion with each school. This is one of the key processes that enables the LA to know their schools well,

using an increasing range of first-hand evidence. Discussions focus on school priorities for improvement and the progress the school is making towards them. This process is cyclical and supports schools to determine and/or review their priorities in line with their self-evaluation processes. The discussion also helps to determine the ongoing support needs of the school from both the LA and EAS and identify where practice is worth sharing.

5.2   Since September 2022, 19 professional discussions have taken place.

Progress against School Development Priorities

5.3   On a termly basis, School Improvement Partners (SIPs) provide a commentary for all schools on the progress that they are making towards their school development plan priorities.

5.4   In the Autumn Term, most schools in Caerphilly are on track towards meeting their priorities. Where schools are not on track, the School Improvement Partner will provide, or broker additional support as required and these schools will be closely monitored by the LA.

5.5   There are currently 3 schools in Caerphilly who are working on a Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP). The PIAP addresses recommendations from an Estyn inspection and replaces the School Development Plan as the main driver for school improvement.

EAS Supported self-evaluation activity (SSE): Autumn Term 2022

5.6   Central to the School Improvement Partners (SIP) work is supporting leaders to develop processes for effective self-evaluation. This involves working alongside the Headteacher and senior leaders, as part of the school's established monitoring cycle, to help with any activities which the school uses to collect first-hand evidence to evaluate quality and impact. The approach provides a sounding board, quality assurance and moderation of evaluations made. The SIP will also help the school to use the outcomes of self-evaluation to develop priorities for improvement in the form of their School Development Plan (SDP) or to provide/broker bespoke professional learning based on the needs of whole school or individual staff.

Celebrate, Share, Support, Refine (CSSR) Teaching Approach

5.7   The Celebrate, Share, Support, Refine (CSSR) teaching approach is an extension of the supported self-evaluation activity. The CSSR has been designed to understand the key strengths and areas for development of teaching and learning, to enable the realisation of Curriculum for Wales. The process is voluntary and is led by schools.

5.8   During this period, 4 schools in Caerphilly volunteered and completed a CSSR activity.

5.9   A further 6 schools have come forward to undertake a CSSR activity in the Spring or Summer term.

5.10   More schools would benefit from engaging in this approach to enable a greater focus on improving the forensic elements of teaching. A number of schools have indicated

they would be willing to participate when the current period of industrial action has finished.

Team Around the School meetings (TAS)

5.11   Where a school requires targeted or intensive support to accelerate progress a Team Around the School meeting (TAS) is convened.

5.12   During the TAS meetings the LA holds the schools and the EAS to account for the progress that is being made and the effectiveness of the support that is being provided.

5.13   There are currently 13 schools who benefit from the TAS process in Caerphilly.

LA thematic focus for the Autumn Term 2022

5.14   At Caerphilly LA's request, in autumn 2022, wherever a supported self-evaluation activity was taking place in school, a specific focus was given to Digital Learning: Provision and Skills.

5.15   Nearly all schools in Caerphilly have an appropriate Information Communication Technology (ICT) / digital policy and a majority of schools have developed a digital vision. Where this is effective, the head teacher and senior leaders share a clear strategic digital vision which is well-known to all stakeholders, links with the whole-school vision and reflects Curriculum for Wales.

5.16   Many schools have referred to digital skills in their current school development plan. Many schools in Caerphilly have built the progressive application of digital skills into their Monitoring, Evaluation and Review (MER) cycle. Reviews involve a range of personnel including senior leaders, the digital lead, teachers, governors and pupils. Where effective practice was identified, in addition to tracking and monitoring digital provision and skills, learner progress is also tracked.

5.17   Where leaders have prioritised the development of digital provision and skills, regular professional learning opportunities are provided for staff, enabling them to share their digital expertise and supporting them to develop their digital knowledge and skills. Leaders have also given high priority to resourcing IT, investing in hardware and software.

5.18   A majority of schools in Caerphilly have identified that they use Hwb (the Welsh Government's online learning platform) as their main platform for delivering online provision. This is in-line with the average findings across the region. Where schools use Hwb they benefit from being aligned to the national platform and they are able to access a wide range of valuable resources to inform leadership, teaching and learning. Where schools were not using Hwb they indicated an alternative preferred platform

5.19   In the schools where good practice was identified, staff have high expectations of learners and they have the knowledge and understanding of the Digital Competency Framework (DCF) and the progressive development of digital skills to plan appropriate tasks and activities which use IT to enrich the curriculum e.g. in one school sampled, staff are also developing a digital planning tool with examples of activities in each progression step.

Curriculum for Wales Cluster Working

5.20   The Curriculum for Wales places an emphasis on clusters of schools working together effectively to meet the needs of their learners by developing a cluster approach to curriculum provision.

5.21   During the autumn term 2022, nearly all schools began implementing Curriculum for Wales. The EAS provides significant support, professional learning and advice to all schools and to the LA on this key aspect of reform.

5.22   The EAS has commissioned Professor Mick Waters to work alongside clusters to complete an action research project focussing on securing a shared understanding of learner progress on a cluster basis. The long-term aspiration for this work is to develop approaches that support clusters to work collaboratively to support learner progress in key areas identified within their transition plan. This may include developing common approaches to planning and curriculum design and/or teaching in some Areas of Learning. The overall aim being to support progression in pupils' knowledge and skills as they move across the 3-16 learning continuum.

- 6 clusters are currently working with Professor Mick Waters on their curriculum offer.

- 4 clusters are on tranche 3 and will begin their work with Professor Mick Waters on 21st March 2023.

- 1 school is currently engaged in similar work with a group of Catholic schools in a neighbouring Local Authority

- 1 school opted out of the Professional Learning offer to work alongside Professor Mick Waters.

5.23   Clusters will have the opportunity to share their work with other clusters across the region during the Summer Term.

EAS 'Stats and Stories'

5.24   The EAS has provided two versions of the Stats and Stories over the past few terms (September 2022 and January 2023). These documents draw out the impact of The EAS' work in schools across Caerphilly and highlight where interventions have led to improvement and added capacity to build schools as learning organisations.

Conclusion

5.25   This report describes the agreed regional approach to supporting schools to meet the needs of the Local Authority's 'Pursuing Excellence Together' education strategy'.

6.   ASSUMPTIONS

6.1.   There are no specific assumptions.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 This report is for information only, therefore no Integrated Impact Assessment is required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 This work is funded through the EAS Business Plan, therefore there are no specific financial implications.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 The Consultees are noted below:

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, Children's Act 2004, Standards and Framework Act 1998

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Consultees:
Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
Dave Street, Corporate Director, Social Services
Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Jo Rao, Vice Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
Sue Richards, Head of Transformation and Education Planning and Strategy
Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN
Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Service and Monitoring Officer
Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Officer.

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EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE -
28TH MARCH 2023

SUBJECT: **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT DELEGATION**

REPORT BY: **CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   This report provides an update for Members regarding the progress of the Local Authority (LA) in relation to the delegation of additional support to schools.

2.   SUMMARY

2.1   A priority for the Education Directorate is ensuring compliance with the ALN Act and Code and ensuring that statutory duties for pupils with ALN are met. Neighbouring authorities and LAs across Wales have delegated additional support funding to schools. In Caerphilly funding for additional support for schools has historically been retained centrally.

2.2   Over time there have been attempts made to work with schools to model a scenario to distribute funding to schools.

2.3   The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act (2018) provides an ideal opportunity for the additional support allocation process to be refreshed.

2.4   The budget for additional support is currently £4.1 million; this includes the employment of centrally employed teaching assistants. Schools utilise the funding to support them to undertake their responsibility for ALN provision.

2.5   A working group with LA officers, Primary and Secondary Head Teachers was re-established in October 2022 to take this work forward. In order to gain support from schools for a model of delegation LA officers identified the need to increase funding in this area, thus demonstrating a recognition of the concerns raised by schools.

2.6   The Head Teachers in the working group have agreed an approach that will be shared more broadly with all Head Teachers with a view to potential implementation from September 2023 or April 2024, subject to further discussions and the required consultation process.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Scrutinise the contents of the report and, if they are so minded, support a recommendation to Cabinet of the LA's intended approach to the delegation of additional support funding to schools.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Members are asked to support the approach of the LA in order that the statutory duties of schools / education provisions and the LA are effectively met and all children with ALN have their needs identified and met with appropriate provision.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Ensuring compliance with responsibilities in relation to the ALN Act (2018) and associated Code is a priority for the Local Authority (LA) and schools.

5.2 LA currently retains a central budget of £4.2 million which includes the employment of centrally employed teaching assistants to support school to undertake their responsibility for ensuring ALN provision is in place to meet need.

5.3 The current model of support is managed by the LA though a robust panel process based on information provided by schools.

5.4 The principle of the group was to find solutions to barriers and inequities within the existing system enabling schools to:

- effectively plan and manage their resources
- respond flexibly to the identified needs of their school
- develop provision that is fit for purpose
- monitor and evaluate impact on pupil outcomes
- ensure value for money

5.5 The delegation of additional support group was established to re-explore a model for delegation with head teacher representatives from across primary and secondary phases. Over time there have been many different scenarios or formula's modelled to distribute this funding to schools. In all scenarios there are always some schools that appear to have less funding than allocated through the presenting funding system and some that will have more.

5.6 Year on year additional support has been overspending by around £500k, but this has in effect been funded by capacity in the out of county budget, with pupils remaining within the Authority's schools.

5.7 In addition to LA / Agency employed staff, schools have received devolved funding to support additional staff hours to support pupils. In 2021-22 £1.8m of funding devolved to schools (following panel decisions) supported staffing requirements. However, the rate that is devolved to schools is below the current hourly rate that centrally employed staff are employed at. This is a significant issue within schools and is being raised increasingly with LA Officers. Based on recent levels of devolved funding it is estimated that circa £1m would cover this differential. As part of the

Authority's budget planning for 2023/24, additional funding of £1m was recently approved by Council (23ʳᵈ February 2023 – Budget Report 2023/24).

5.8   Finance officers have developed models for the distribution of funding on the basis of an increase of £1.5m. This increase addresses the pressure on budgets in recent years. To confirm £1m equates to budgetary growth and £0.5m is the realignment of budget within the budget for Vulnerable Learners (£0.5m from the Out of County budget to the Additional Support Budget).

5.9   The group agreed delegation should be explored through modelling a number of formula options. LA officers developed options based on criteria including ALN, Free School Meals (FSM), vulnerability and pupil numbers. Modelling was based on comparisons to the 2021-22 actuals and included the additional £1.5m.

5.10   The models were shared with the group and modifications made based of feedback. The group also agreed an element of funding would be retained centrally as a contingency to address specific exceptional circumstances that may arise. Despite modelling many options there is no scenario within the financial envelope where all schools will receive funding greater than the benchmark used. That said the benchmark is based at a specific point in time and we recognise that the type and levels of support will change from year to year within a school.

5.11   The group identified several challenges through discussion:

- Establishing a clear & transparent model for delegation.
- A funding allocation as part of the school formula which would support effective planning and management of school resources for all pupils.
- Securing additional funding.
- Identifying issues of losses and gains and understanding any particular issues in those schools that need to be considered to inform the model.
- Identifying a rationale for managing losses and gains.
- Identifying and supporting any HR issues.
- Identifying the rationale and criteria for the use of contingency.
- Establishing a realistic timeline for implementation.
- Seeking a solution for the distribution other aspects of the secondary social need's calculation.

5.12   On the basis of the work with Head Teachers, four options were presented to the working group. In the options identified below, deprivation was discounted due to funding from other grant streams to support pupils.

- Option 1 – based on pupil population
- Option 2 – based on pupil population but prior to the distribution, a lump sum allocation to a small number of schools supporting a disproportionate number of pupils with Autistic Spectrum disorder and or Pathological Demand Avoidance
- Option 3 – based on pupil population but prior to the distribution, a lump sum allocation to schools under 90 pupils
- Option 4 – based on a combination of 1, 2 and 3

5.13   Head teachers identified benefits of option 1 and option 4 as appropriate methods of distribution. Anonymised figures shared indicated significant implications in terms of gains and losses leading to further work to scrutinise these particular issues at either

end of the distribution. Officers reviewed each school individually to further inform the model working on a proposal considering tapering percentages linked to three year average and pupil numbers. This is scheduled for further discussion with the group.

5.14   It is also proposed that the schools identified as receiving a reduced allocation could receive top up support for 12-month period which could equate to around £520k. This will require further discussion and the appropriate approval.

5.15   Based on discussions the group has identified several benefits in proceeding with either of the identified models:

- Flexibility for schools to manage budgets to ensure the needs of all pupils are met.
- A more responsive approach to resourcing provision to meet need.
- Opportunity to recruit and train staff.
- Less bureaucratic processes as the requirement for additional support discussions at panel will cease.
- Greater flexibility for staff time in schools and LA thus allowing LA time to be utilised differently to support schools.
- Helping to support schools to deliver their duties under the ALN Act / Code which states "In nearly all cases, the school should be able to provide, arrange and develop the provision required to meet the needs of ALN pupils using a more holistic / whole school approach".
- Takes into consideration circumstances of a school i.e. it's location, size, budget, experience could affect whether it would be reasonable for a school to secure the provision (as outlined within the ALN Code)
- Clear / consistent messages to parents/carers around the provision available in school.
- Quicker responses / resources to meet the needs of learners.

5.16   An update on the work to date has been provided for Trade Unions and this dialogue will continue as implications are identified. An update has also been provided to Education SMT.

5.17   A further meeting of the working group is scheduled to:

- Share the updated modelling
- Update regarding any agreement for additional funding
- Schedule discussions with HR to work through any identified staffing issues linked to the agreed model
- Agree a position by the end of March to take forward for wider consultation including implementation timescales.

5.18   **Conclusion**

5.19   LA Officers and Head Teachers, working together with HR have agreed to delegate additional support to schools and are currently finalising the approach through an agreed model.

5.20   The activity of the working group will be finalised and further consultation undertaken with all Head Teachers with a view to finalising staffing arrangement and timescales.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 In considering the recommendations the following assumptions have been made:

- Meeting the ALN of children and young people 0 – 25 years is a key statutory duty of the Council and as such developments must be reported to scrutiny to ensure that members are kept informed.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 This report is provided in order to ask Members to support the intended approach to delegation and support a recommendation to Cabinet. This work is ongoing and therefore an Integrated Impact Assessment has not been completed. An integrated impact assessment would be provided for the final Cabinet decision on completion of the work.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 As part of the Authority's 2023/24 budget planning, an additional £1m has been approved to support the pressures presented. In addition an amount of £0.5m will be realigned within the Education budget. In total an additional £1.5m will be added to the additional support budget in financial year 2023/24.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The delegation of additional support will have workforce implications and a potential associated cost. Work is ongoing with HR to identify any issues that arise as a result of the proposed or agreed model for delegation and the LA will continue to work with Officers and schools to ensure these implications are addressed.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 The report reflects with views of the consultees.

11. STATUTORY POWERS

11.1 Additional Learning Needs and Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018
Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
Education Act 1996
Equality Act 2010
Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014)
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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Angela Taylor, Head Teacher Pontllanfraith Primary School