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

**Date: 6th September 2023**

To Whom It May Concern,

A multi-locational meeting of the **Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee** will be held in Penallta House, and via Microsoft Teams on **Tuesday, 12th September, 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>

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Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chrissy'.

**Christina Harrhy**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

## A G E N D A

Pages

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



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.

3 Consideration of any matter referred to this Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

4 Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

1 - 14

5 To receive and consider the following Cabinet reports\*:-

1. Youth Forum Priority – 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023;
2. Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Proposal – Update on Pupil Referral Unit, Pontllanfraith (Centre for Vulnerable Learners) – 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023;
3. Supplementary Payment for Residential/Nursing Care Homes to Support Increased Costs of Amenities and Food Costs – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023;
4. Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Programme – Phase 3 Proposal – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023;
5. Revisions to the South East Wales Education Achievement Service Collaboration and Members Agreement (The Cama) – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023;
6. Annual Corporate Safeguarding Reports 2022-2023 – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023;
7. Free School Meal Holiday Payments – Summer Holiday 2023 – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023;
8. Day Opportunities – 26<sup>th</sup> July 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, 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023.*

To receive and consider the following Scrutiny reports:-

6 School Organisation Code 2018 - Proposal for the Closure of Cwm Glas Infant School.

15 - 20

7 Update on Progress against NEETS-Reduction Actions and Current Issues of Significance.

21 - 24

**Circulation:**

**Councillors** Mrs E.M. Aldworth, C. Bishop, A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson, D. Cushing, Mrs P. Cook, M. Evans, A. Farina-Childs, C.J. Gordon, T. Heron, A. Leonard, B. Miles (Vice Chair), T. Parry (Chair), J.E. Roberts, J. Simmonds, S. Skivens, 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) Tracy Millington (Parent Governor Representative) and Mr G. James (Parent Governor Representative)

**Outside Body Representatives** (without voting rights)

Mrs P. Ireland (NEU) and Mrs J. Havard (NEU)

**Caerphilly Governors Association** (without voting rights)

Mr D Davies

**Users and Carers - Vacant**

And Appropriate Officers

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## **EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023**

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

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

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report the Education and Social Services 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 and Social Services Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the Education Scrutiny Committee meeting on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023, and the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period September 2023 until March 2024.
- 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. The 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 and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1, which presents the current status as at 21<sup>st</sup> August 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 jacqu@carphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive

Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services  
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer  
Gareth Jenkins, Assistant Director – Children’s Services  
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services/ Monitoring Officer  
Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer,  
Legal Services  
VACANT, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee  
Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Education and Social Services 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 and Social Services

Appendix 1

Date	Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member
12/09/23 17:30	Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme - Proposal for the closure of Cwm Glas Infants School	For Scrutiny Members to endorse a recommendation to consult on the proposal following the Statutory process as prescribed by the 'School Organisation Code 2018'.	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
12/09/23 17:30	Not in Education Employment or Training (NEETs)	Update on progress against the NEETs strategy actions and raise any issues of significance.	O'Neill, Paul;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
12/09/23 17:30	Information Item - 2023/24 Budget Monitoring Report (Month 3)		Jones, Mike;	Cllr. Forehead, Elaine;
12/09/23 17:30	Information Item - Annual Review of Complaints Received Under the Social Services Complaints Policy 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023		Evans, Nicola;	Cllr. Forehead, Elaine;
17/10/23 17:30	Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Proposal – Ysgol Y Lawnt / Upper Rhymney Primary	For Scrutiny Members to provide their views on the proposal for Ysgol Y Lawnt/Upper Rhymney Primary in line with the requirements of the 'School Organisation Code 2018'.	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
17/10/23 17:30	Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme - Proposal for the closure of Cwm Glas Infants School	For Scrutiny Members to provide their views on the proposal for Cwm Glas Infants School in line with the requirements of the 'School Organisation Code 2018'.	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
17/10/23 17:30	Information Item - Elective Home Education	Numbers of EHE young people Role of the EHE officer Type of work undertaken Links with other key areas of work Areas for development	Ellis, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
28/11/23 17:30	Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Proposal – Ysgol Y Lawnt / Upper Rhymney Primary	For Scrutiny Members to consider the Consultation Report and endorse the recommendation to proceed to the publication of a Statutory Notice	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
28/11/23 17:30	Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme - Proposal for the closure of Cwm Glas Infants School	For Scrutiny Members to consider the Consultation Report and endorse the recommendation to proceed to the publication of a Statutory Notice	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
28/11/23 17:30	Directors Annual Report For Social Services		Jenkins, Gareth;	Cllr. Forehead, Elaine;
28/11/23 17:30	Additional Support	Model of delegation Feedback from consultations	Ellis, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
30/01/24 17:30	Caerphilly Cares/ Employee volunteering scheme update and initial 6 months review		McMahon, Tina;	Cllr. Forehead, Elaine;
12/03/24 17:30	Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Proposal – Ysgol Y Lawnt / Upper Rhymney Primary	For Scrutiny Members to consider the Objection Report and endorse the recommendation to Cabinet to proceed to the Planning Application Stage and submission of a Full Business Case to Welsh Government	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
12/03/24 17:30	Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme - Proposal for the closure of Cwm Glas Infants School	For Scrutiny Members to consider the Objection Report and endorse the recommendation to Cabinet to proceed to closing the school	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
12/03/24 17:30	Winter Pressures		Street, Dave;	Cllr. Forehead, Carol;
12/03/24 17:30	Information Item - Welsh Education Scrutiny Plan (WESP) Action Plan		Mutch, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
23/04/24 17:30	Schools Causing Concern		Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
23/04/24 17:30	School Inspection Update		Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
23/04/24 17:30	Safeguarding	Critical areas of work undertaken Impact of the work Next steps	Ellis, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;

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## Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 6th September 2023

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
20/09/2023 13:00 p.m.	Development and Governance Strategy - Housing	For Cabinet to consider 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.	Nick Taylor-Williams/Jane Roberts-Waite	Cllr Shayne Cook
20/09/2023	Winter Service Plan Update	To provide an update to Cabinet on key winter service activities and priorities in relation to winter maintenance and flooding and to seek Cabinet endorsement of the updated Winter Service Plan.	Marcus Lloyd	Cllr Nigel George
20/09/2023	Corporate Performance Assessment	For Cabinet to agree the Corporate Performance Assessment for the year end 2022/23.	Sue Richards/Ros Roberts	Cllr Eluned Stenner
20/09/2023	Public Protection Enforcement Annual Report for 2022/23	For Cabinet to agree progress and performance.	Rob Hartshorn	Cllr. Philippa Leonard
20/09/2023	Proposal for the closure of Cwm Glas Infants School	For Cabinet to give approval to consult on the closure of Cwm Glas Infants School from September 2024 as outlined in the Welsh Government School Organisation Code 2018.	Sue Richards/Andrea West	Cllr. Carol Andrews
20/09/2023	Shared Prosperity Fund – SPF Programme Board and Terms of Reference	This report seeks Cabinet approval for the up to date Terms of Reference for the SPF Programme Board; and seeks	Rhian Kyte/Paul Hudson/Allan Dallimore/ Sue Richards	Cllr James Pritchard/ Cllr Eluned Stenner

## Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 6th September 2023

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
		appropriate delegation for the Board to make timely decisions on virement of funding within the Programme in recognition of the extremely tight time constraints associated with the delivery of the SPF Programme by March 2025.		
18/10/2023 13:00 p.m.	Support for pupils unable to attend school (formerly "Tuition" report).	To seek Cabinet approval for proposals for revising the model of support for pupils accessing tuition.	Keri Cole	Cllr Carol Andrews
18/10/2023	Revised Town Centre Management Model	For Cabinet to consider the outcomes of the trial of an alternative town centre management model and determine the preferred way forward.	Rhian Kyte/Jo Hillier Raikes	Cllr James Pritchard
18/10/2023	NRW CCBC Collaboration Agreement - Cwmcarn Forest Drive	To allow Cabinet to review the outcome of the 2-year pilot in respect of the CCBC management of the Cwmcarn Forest Drive and consider whether or not to extend the collaboration agreement for the continued management of the drive with Natural Resources Wales for a further 5 year period.	Antony Bolter/Allan Dallimore	Cllr James Pritchard
18/10/2023	Caerphilly Homes – Re-development of the Former Oakdale Comprehensive School	To seek Cabinet approval for the signing of a delivery agreement (DA) via SCAPE with Willmott Dixon to deliver an	Jane Roberts-Waite/Mark Noakes/Steve Wilcox	Cllr Shayne Cook

## Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 6th September 2023

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
		85 new home mixed tenure scheme.	and colleagues from Wilmott Dixon	
18/10/2023	Caerphilly Homes – Re-development of the Former Ty Darran Care Home, Risca	To seek Cabinet approval for the signing of a delivery agreement (DA) via SCAPE with Willmott Dixon to deliver a 46 new, affordable home later living scheme which will set the ambition for the future of later living accommodation in the county borough.	Jane Roberts-Waite/Mark Noakes/Steve Wilcox and colleagues from Wilmott Dixon	Cllr Shayne Cook
18/10/2023	Additional highway safety works - B4251 Gelligroes to Ynysddu	To seek cabinet approval for additional highway safety related works on the B4251, Gelligroes to Ynysddu	Chris Adams/Marcus Lloyd	Cllr Nigel George
18/10/2023	Corporate Plan (including Well-Being Objectives) 2023 to 2028	To consider the Councils Corporate Plan and Well-being Objectives 2023 to 2028	Christina Harrhy/Sue Richards/ Kath Peters	Leader/Cllr Eluned Stenner
18/10/2023	Exempt item - Ness Tar	Exempt item subject to Public Interest Test	Rhian Kyte	Cllr James Pritchard
15/11/2023 13:00 p.m.	Annual Report for Corporate Complaints 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023	To review and assess the effectiveness of complaints handling in respect of the annual data for 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 under the Corporate Complaints Policy.	Lisa Lane	Cllr Nigel George
13/12/2023 13:00 p.m.	Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Proposal – Ysgol Y Lawnt / Upper Rhymney Primary	For Cabinet to consider the Consultation Report and approve the publication of a Statutory Notice	Sue Richards/Andrea West	Cllr Carol Andrews

## Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 6th September 2023

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
13/12/2023	Proposal for the closure of Cwm Glas Infants School	For Cabinet to consider the Consultation Report and approve the publication of a Statutory Notice	Sue Richards/Andrea West	Cllr Carol Andrews
13/12/2023	Corporate Self Assessment	For Cabinet to consider the Council Self-Assessment report 2022/23	Sue Richards	Cllr Eluned Stenner
13/12/2023	HRA Budget Outturn Report 2023	For Cabinet to consider the HRA Budget Outturn Report for 2022/2023	Lesley Allen	Cllr Shayne Cook
13/12/2023	Housing Offices Rationalisation Report	As part of a review of how we provide housing services to our customers and communities, and following a comprehensive customer consultation exercise, we are seeking approval to permanently close all existing Housing Offices, replacing them with a centralised Housing Office in Penallta House. This will facilitate service modernisation and improvements by reducing the need for customers to travel to a housing office to receive services, making housing officers more available to our customers through working agilely within our communities, thereby increasing opportunities for access and engagement and	Fiona Wilkins/Julie Reynolds/Nick Taylor-Williams	Cllr Shayne Cook

## Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 6th September 2023

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
		building better relationships with our customers.		
13/12/2023	Greater Blackwood Masterplan	For Members to consider the Draft Greater Blackwood Masterplan. The report will seek the views of members prior to its presentation to Cabinet, where Cabinet will be asked to endorse the Draft Masterplan as the basis for a public consultation exercise.	Rhian Kyte	Cllr James Pritchard

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### Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme Prioritisation



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## **EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 12<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023**

**SUBJECT: SCHOOL ORGANISATION CODE 2018 - PROPOSAL FOR  
THE CLOSURE OF CWM GLAS INFANT SCHOOL**

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

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek Members endorsement on the recommendation to Cabinet to proceed to consultation in respect of the closure of Cwm Glas Infant School by July 2024.
- 1.2 To ensure Members are apprised of the rationale for the proposal and relay the views of the Head Teacher and School Governing Body.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Due to the falling rolls at Cwm Glas Infant school which are projected to decrease further in future years, a meeting was arranged by the Head Teacher and the Governing body with Local Authority representatives including the Chief Education Officer, to discuss the future viability of the school.
- 2.2 The conclusion of the meeting as outlined in 2.1, agreed the school could no longer maintain a balanced budget and an appropriate staffing level, therefore a decision was made by the Head Teacher and Governing Body of the School to pursue closure of Cwm Glas Infant School with effect from July 2024.
- 2.3 Currently Cwm Glas Infant School shares a catchment area with Coed Y Brain Primary School where pupils transition to at Key Stage 2 subject to parental preference.
- 2.4 This proposal seeks to transition the pupils at Foundation Phase, to deliver an inclusive all-through primary school provision. Subject to Cabinet approval, this will result in the proposed closure of Cwm Glas Infants School with effect from July 2024.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Prior to a report being presented to Cabinet, Scrutiny Members are asked to: -
- a) Note the contents of this report
  - b) Endorse the recommendation to Cabinet to proceed to consultation on the proposal to close Cwm Glas Infant School with effect from July 2024.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To seek Scrutiny Member endorsement to Cabinet to proceed to consultation stage in respect of the proposal to close Cwm Glas Infants School with effect from July 2024
- 4.2 To assist the Council in discharging its duties in line with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2018 where this statutory legislation applies.

### **5. THE REPORT**

#### **5.1 Cwm Glas Infants School**

- 5.1.1 Cwm Glas Infants School provides education to pupils between the ages of 3 and 7 and has a published capacity figure of 57 places with a published admission number of 19.
- 5.1.2 The current pupil roll is 33 pupils (Full Time Equivalent) with over 50% of these pupils residing outside of the catchment area of the school
- 5.1.3 Surplus places are currently at 47.37% rising to 56.14% in September 2024 and projected to increase in future years as the number of pupils predicted to attend the school is anticipated to decline linked to a reduction in live birth rates in the area and parental preference.
- 5.1.4 The projected pupil numbers and resultant financial outlook for the school provides a significant challenge to the ability of the Head and School Governors to agree a balanced budget to maintain the school and an appropriate staffing level which has led to a request to the local authority to consider closing the school from July 2024.
- 5.1.5 Under the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010, Individual school budgets are determined using a locally agreed funding formula in accordance with factors which are learner led. Schools must be able to demonstrate via a financial action plan that the school will work to deliver a balanced budget. However, the Head Teacher and Governing Body have acknowledged that Cwm Glas School is facing a significant financial deficit with pupil numbers projected to further decrease moving forward.
- 5.1.6 Reasonable alternatives to closure, such as reduction in the number of classes, collaboration, federation and colocation were considered by the Head Teacher and Governing Body in partnership with the Local Authority, but deemed not viable or sustainable.

- 5.1.7 Cwm Glas Infants School is a feeder school for Coed Y Brain Primary at Key Stage 2. Both schools share the same catchment area and are both located in Llanbradach within circa 1 mile of each other. Should the decision be taken to close Cwm Glas Infants School, based on current and future projections for both schools, all pupils could be accommodated within Coed Y Brain Primary School.
- 5.1.8 In order to progress the proposal for the closure of Cwm Glas Infants by July 2024, a consultation exercise is required in line with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2018.
- 5.1.9 Subject to Cabinet approval, a prescribed list of recipients as outlined in the code will be written to. A consultation document will be published in both hardcopy and electronically via the Authority's website based on the recommendation for closure. Reasonable access to information will be promoted from an Equalities perspective and other formats will be made available on request.
- 5.1.10 The consultation period will be for 42 days (with at least 20 of these being school days) to provide adequate time for consideration and response and conscientious consideration will be given to any responses received.
- 5.1.11 The principles of engagement outlined in the Local Authority's Consultation and Engagement Framework 2020 will also be acknowledged and the team will engage with any additional 'interested parties' as required, through appropriate channels to ensure the dissemination of information and provision of a suitable platform for the consultees to make their views known is made available.
- 5.1.12 Following the consultation period, a consultation report along with any responses received will be collated and reported back to Members, where a decision will be made as to whether to proceed with the proposal as outlined and publish a Statutory Notice.

## 5.2 **Conclusion**

Members are asked to note the information provided and give endorsement to Cabinet to proceed to consultation stage in respect of the proposal to close Cwm Glas Infants School with effect from July 2024.

## 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made in relation to this report.

## 7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 A full Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been completed in relation to each proposal to ensure compliance with the socio-economic duty, Sections 1 to 3 of Equality Act 2010 that came into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

Link to IIA

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Under the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010, Individual school budgets are determined using a locally agreed funding formula in accordance with factors which are learner led.
- 8.2 Schools must be able to demonstrate via a financial action plan that the school will work to deliver a balanced budget.
- 8.3 The Council's Education Finance Team have been working closely with the school for a number of years, however, the Head Teacher and Governing Body have acknowledged that Cwm Glas School is facing a significant financial deficit with pupil numbers projected to further decrease moving forward and are unable to demonstrate via a financial action plan their ability to reverse the deficit.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 This will be dependent on specific proposals and will be considered as part of the consultation process.
- 9.2 The Council's Human Resources Team will work closely with all relevant parties to ensure that processes are adhered to, and support is provided as required.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

- 10.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been reflected in this version of the report.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 School Organisation Code 2018 (Welsh Government)  
School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013

Author: Andrea West, Sustainable Communities for Learning Manager

Consultees: Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive  
Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive  
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services  
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment  
Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities  
Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee  
Sue Richards, Head of Transformation  
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer  
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer  
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  
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Ben Winstanley, Head of Land and Property Services  
Steve Pugh, Corporate Communications Manager

Background Papers:

None

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## EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 12<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON PROGRESS AGAINST NEETS-REDUCTION  
ACTIONS AND CURRENT ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**REPORT BY: SENIOR YOUTH SERVICE MANAGER**

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members on progress regarding Caerphilly's 2021/22 NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) results (published April 2023) in the context of the current 5-year target schedule.
- 1.2 Acknowledge the operational improvements contributing to the reduction of the number of NEET young people.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 NEETs performance is on track against the projected targets for the current five year period and the results for 2021/22 have met the stated target. The figures represent the total percentage of year 11 school leavers in July that do not have a formalised EET (Education, Employment or Training) destination by October 31<sup>st</sup> of that year.  
5 year target schedule -

Year	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27
Target %	3.0 (result = 2.8/54 individuals)	2.8	2.5	2.0	1.7	1.5

- 2.2 Education and other services combine well to identify those at risk of becoming NEET and Caerphilly is in the top three highest performing authorities in Wales in this regard.
- 2.3 CCBC's NEETs-reduction actions now require review and amendment to best meet the authority's ambitions and associated targets for the coming year(s)

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That members consider the content of the report.

### 4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To keep the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee updated on the progress regarding the Caerphilly's 2021/22 NEET results and the operational improvements contributing to the reduction of the number of NEET young people.

### 5. THE REPORT

5.1 Caerphilly's Engagement and Progression Framework partnership, hosted by Caerphilly Youth Service, oversees cross-authority NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) reduction and NEETs-resolution activity. The framework partnership is coordinated centrally and brokers support to those young people identified with NEETs-related vulnerabilities via school/LA RAG assessment – those logged as Red are deemed most at risk and are prioritised for intervention. The subsequent progress of individuals (to Amber or Green categories or into employment, other education or training at the point of leaving compulsory education) is tracked, as is the incidence of those with NEET vulnerabilities across all secondary schools.

5.2 The out-turn NEETs result for the year 2021/22 is 2.8% and therefore within the target of 3%. To provide context, the table below shows NEETs performance over the previous 5 years – an overall improving trend until 2020/21, including for the initial pandemic period, when young people were more easily contactable due to being locked down at home.

Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Result	1.9%	2.6%	2.2%	1.7 %	2.2%
Number NEET	38	51	40	33	41

5.3 Overall conditions for the identification and engagement of those potentially NEET have become more challenging since 2020/21 due to the consequences of Covid 19 and high levels of absenteeism.

5.4 The authority's Engagement and Progression Framework and associated structures is actively addressing the current challenges, including for example by recruiting the number of associated organisations to work together to reduce NEETs.

5.5 The Youth Service's NEETs activity directly links with and supports the current education strategy objectives –

- *Accelerate the progress of vulnerable learners - Reduce the number of young people post-16 without access to education, employment or training (NEETS).*
- *Further improve provision and support for young people (post-16).*

5.6 The proportion of Year 11 leavers recorded as not having a destination (and are therefore characterised as being NEET) has been increasing and Caerphilly's figures are slightly above the Welsh average. However, the NEET figure for Caerphilly in real terms is low due to the Progression and Engagement framework's ability to reach out and identify those whose NEET status would otherwise be unknown - the accuracy of each authority's NEETs figures is contingent upon being able to verify the NEETs status of young people. The increased number of young people with unknown status at the data cut-off date of 31<sup>st</sup> October each year, the less reliable any overall NEETs performance result at authority level becomes. Caerphilly's reporting is therefore considered to be reliable by stakeholders, including Welsh Government. With NEETs performance adjusted to accommodate the number of 'unknowns', Caerphilly is one of the highest performing (third best) authorities.

5.7 The low level of 'unknown' young people may be considered to be a direct outcome of the combined efforts of CCBC's Youth Engagement and Progression Officer and associated framework of external services, Education's Inspire team (now enjoying an extension and refinement of operations due to successfully attracting financial support via the Shared Prosperity Fund until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025), Education Welfare and family liaison officers and other colleagues working hard to track down and account for as many Year 11 pupils (at risk of becoming NEET) as possible. Much time, effort, commitment and perseverance is required to follow through and finally make contact with young people who have not been engaging with school or other relevant services.

An important contribution to the reduction of NEETS via engagement at Key Stage 3 has been by the Inspire2Achieve (from now on known simply as Inspire) team. This team has worked with a cohort of identified pupils to help regain their focus on attendance, attainment and behaviour by offering bespoke one to one or small group support. From September 2023, this team will have a dedicated support officer based in each secondary school. During the 2023 school summer break, Inspire officers supported Year 11 leavers to secure appropriate destinations in employment or training.

## **6. ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 None

## **7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 Should any proposal requiring a decision go forward as a consequence of this report, an IIA will be available at that time.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no financial implications with respect to this report, though it can be noted that the continuation of the Inspire team's contribution to NEETs reduction in the coming year has come about by the securing of Shared Prosperity Funding.

**9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no personnel implications with respect to this report.

**10. CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 All responses from the consultations have been incorporated in the report. consultee

**11. STRATEGY POWERS**

11.1 N/A

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Services  
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