



EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 15TH FEBRUARY 2022

**SUBJECT: DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT SIX MONTH
UPDATE 2021/22**

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

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Scrutiny with the 6-month Education Service Performance Assessment which is part of the Council's Performance Management Framework.
- 1.2 The Performance Assessment (referred to hereafter as the DPA) is the Directorate's self-assessment and forms part of the Council's overall self-assessment activity. It provides information and analysis for 6-month period April – September 2021. Members are invited to discuss, challenge, and scrutinise the range of information in the DPA.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council's revised Performance Framework was endorsed by Cabinet in February 2020 and this report introduces one of the key components of the Framework, the Directorate Performance Assessment (DPA). The DPA is a 'self-assessment' of Directorate's progress across a wide range of information types and meets our 'duty as a principal council to keep our performance under review'
- 2.2 DPA's are an opportunity to bring together a range of information and intelligence into one picture to answer the self-assessment questions of 'how well are we performing, how do we know? And what and how can we do better? Appendix 1 is the Education Services Performance Assessment 6-month update 2021/22.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members review the attached document (appendix 1) and discuss, challenge, and scrutinise the information contained within.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Scrutiny Members are involved in the 'self-assessment' process by scrutinising the information within the Directorate Performance Assessment. This also supports the principles within the new section (Part 6, Chapter 1) of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act which provides for a new performance and governance regime for principal councils.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Performance Framework has been developed to meet several strategic and operational needs as well as to meet the legislation and further the Council's desire to be a high performing learning organisation focused on meeting the needs of its residents. The framework was piloted in 2019 and endorsed by Cabinet February 2020 and now is reported as a regular part of scrutiny committees. This report introduces and shares the Education dashboard (the DPA) 6-month update 2021/22.
- 5.2 The spirit of the DPA (appendix 1) is about providing learning. The DPA is less about performance and targets (though they have their place) and is more so to provide a wider picture of performance that will support reflective and challenging conversations and scrutiny that will ultimately lead to learning and further improvement.
- 5.3 **Summary:**

The covid-19 pandemic has continued to cause frequent disruption to schools, with particular challenges around resource management. As a result, schools' priorities have largely focused on maintaining continuity of learning. Schools maintain their strong commitment to providing the very best education provision, acknowledging the requirement to re-engage pupils with their learning and implement a recovery curriculum to address gaps in learning. Where required, service areas across the education directorate have repurposed their duties to offer support to schools. For example, the finance team prioritised support for schools and parents in the distribution of the Pupil Development Grant access fund.

Recent achievements over the last term include:

- There have very few class closures, despite high levels of staff absence;
- The LA and EAS have continued to support schools to stay on track in preparation for both Additional Learning Needs and Curriculum for Wales reform;
- There has been very positive feedback from the LA Leadership Coaching Programme;
- There are currently no secondary schools in statutory categories. The two primary schools in these categories are making good progress and will be revisited by Estyn in 2022;
- The Inclusion Strategy is beginning to have a positive impact upon exclusion rates;
- Good progress is being made in regard to development of the PRU portfolio;
- Feedback from young people on the support provided by the Youth Service during the pandemic is very positive;
- Following extensive collaboration and consultation, the new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 with an overarching ambitious target to support 26% of year 1 learners in Welsh medium Education by 2032, has been submitted to Welsh Government;

- Schools have continued to work tirelessly to effectively implement many iterations of risk assessments.

In response to the challenges faced during the covid pandemic, all service areas across the education directorate are reflecting upon recent events and considering how service re-shaping could address current and future challenges.

The Service Improvement Plan priorities have been agreed for the 2021-22 academic year. These priorities are:

- Re-ignite, recover and reform in order to raise standards of learning;
- Improve the aspiration, engagement and progress of vulnerable learners;
- Further develop the strategic vision for EOTAS;
- Further reduce the number of NEET young people at the point of leaving compulsory education and beyond;
- Improve pupil attendance;
- Effective Management and Implementation of the 21st Century Schools Programme.
- Ensure that all disadvantaged learners make the same progress as their peers

Individual action plans have been developed across service areas that integrate priorities, whilst also acknowledging objectives in the corporate plan, cabinet objectives, MTFP principles and recommendations from the last Estyn inspection. The Service Improvement Plan is the first step towards the development of a revised Education Strategy that aims to meet the need of all learners and address the impact of Covid on standards, provision, pedagogy and wellbeing.

The Local Authority appreciates the importance of clear and timely communication. We have learned to ensure comprehensive co-construction and consultation to ensure buy-in and increase the pace of implementation. This was exemplified in the rescheduling of the Inclusion Strategy, delayed in order to extend discussions with stakeholders. When it comes to planning work programmes, we need to be sensitive to the pressures upon schools and be mindful of not overloading agendas for change.

5.4 **Conclusion**

It has been another incredibly challenging year for our school communities and the services that support them. It is a testament to the determination and resilience of those involved that our focus has remained the wellbeing of our learners, staff and wider communities. Some incredible challenges have been overcome during this time that have built on the collective #TeamCaerphilly ethos.

This DPA covers the period April 2021 to September 2021, Appendix 1. There is considerable detail in Appendix 1 which identifies what went well and what we would like to improve across a range of different topics.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 There are no assumptions thought to be required within this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report is for information only and on this basis an integrated impact assessment is not required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications within this report, however the DPA (appendix 1) has a section on resources including relevant budget outturns as part of the overall self-assessment of the directorate.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications within this report, although the DPA (appendix 1) has a section called 'resources' which provides data on a range of workforce aspects.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 Any consultation responses have been included with in this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Directorate Performance Assessment (6-month update 2021/22)