

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL Scrutiny Report Template

Committee:	Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
Date:	19 June 2018
Subject:	Progress Report by the Scrutiny Panel: School Progress Review
Purpose of Report:	To report on the Panel's work from 6/2/18 to 11/6/18
Scrutiny Chair:	Councillor Gwilym Jones
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor R Meirion Jones
Head of Service:	Arwyn Williams
Report Author:	Gwyneth Mon Hughes and Geraint W Roberts
Tel:	01248 752908
Email:	GwynethHughes@ynysmon.gov.uk
Local Members:	Not Ward Specific

1 - Recommendation/s

The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is requested to :

- Note the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Panel;
- Approve the amended Panel's Terms of Reference as shown in Appendix 1 (the amendments highlighted in red);
- Approve that the key messages in this report be brought to the attention of the Portfolio Holder (Education, Libraries, Culture and Youth) and Head of Service-Learning.

2 – Link to Council Plan / Other Corporate Priorities

The County Council Plan 2017-2022 has the ambition to work with the people of Anglesey, their communities and partnerships to ensure we deliver best available services that will improve quality of life for everyone across the Island. One of three aims is the plan to 'Create conditions that will enable everyone to reach their potential' The work of the Scrutiny Panel -School Progress Review (the Panel) is one way to promote schools to reach that ambition and objective.

3 – Guiding Principles for Scrutiny Members

To assist Members when scrutinising the topic:-

3.1 Impact the matter has on individuals and communities **[focus on customer/citizen]**

3.2 A look at the efficiency & effectiveness of any proposed change – both financially and in terms of quality **[focus on value]**

3.3 A look at any risks **[focus on risk]**

3.4 Scrutiny taking a performance monitoring or quality assurance role **[focus on performance & quality]**

3.5 Looking at plans and proposals from a perspective of:

- Long term
- Prevention
- Integration
- Collaboration
- Involvement

[focus on wellbeing]

4 - Key Scrutiny Questions

- Is the Committee satisfied with the work undertaken by the Panel?
- Are there any suggestions to strengthen the work of the Panel?
- Are there areas that need to be scrutinised by the Panel?

5 – Background / Context

5.1 Members will be aware that 3 Scrutiny Panels have been established, namely :

- **Scrutiny Panel: Finance** (reports to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee).
- **Scrutiny Panel: Children's Services** (reports to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee).
- **Scrutiny Panel: Schools Progress Review** (reports to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, please note the Panel consists of 4 Members of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and 4 Members of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee).

5.2 This report summaries the work of the Scrutiny Panel-School Progress Review (the Panel), from 6 February 2018 to 11 June 2018.

5.3 The Education and Leisure Scrutiny Committee established the Panel on the 21 November 2012. It arose from recommendations made by Estyn on the quality of education services for children and young people on Anglesey. The Senior School Standards and Inclusion Manager provides guidance to the Panel about schools that may be appropriate to invite to appear before it. The criterion used to select schools are based on the national school categorisation framework, school performance and Estyn reports and the aim is to have a good mix of small, medium, large and primary/secondary schools

5.4 The Panel can invite schools to reappear before them if there are matters that need to be re-visited later.

5.5 Since the last Progress Report, submitted to the Committee on the 6 February 2018, the Panel has met on 5 occasions:-

- 9 February 2018
- 16 March 2018
- 20 April 2018
- 22 May 2018
- 8 June 2018

5.6 The Panel has focused on the following matters since 6th February 2018 :

- Consideration four primary schools performance and one secondary school (various dates).
- Before every meeting, the panel are given school's performance data and a written summery report from the Senior Standards and Inclusion Officer with suggested relevant questions. The panel also makes good use of information received by GwE's Officer who

is available in each meeting to discuss the support given to the schools to address underperformance. The intelligence gathered before the meeting supports the panel to focus on specific areas of inquiries that needs to improve by the school.

- On 9th February, the Panel received essential updates regarding WG policy on development of Welsh throughout the Education system. The Panel received an overview of the challenges facing certain schools, together with summary of steps taken to meet the department Welsh in Education Action Plan 2017-2021. The Panel was given an overview of support work carried out in schools that face the most challenges and with this knowledge in mind, the panel was better able to challenge certain schools on their ability to improve. Panel Members also attended an Estyn led training session, on raising awareness about Estyn's expectations and requirement in relation to the Welsh Language. As part of its ongoing work the Panel is committed to ensure that all schools on Anglesey follow the Welsh Government's Welsh First Language Curriculum.
- On 20th April, the Panel considered challenges and lessons to be learnt in opening new schools. The Panel was greatly reassured that the two newly opened schools, although faced many oppositions and negativity during the early consultation stages, were now popular fully subscribed and the pride of the local community.
- On 8th June, the Panel reviewed improvements of a school that was first seen in October 2017. The Panel was reassured that the school was on track to make good progress against the six recommendations identified by Estyn Summer 2017. An honest account by the Head Teacher of the improvements journey so far reflected evidence given by GwE 's officer.
- The Panel has identified key messages to submit to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 19 June 2018.

5.7 The Panel concluded that the following key messages needed to be reported on the 19/6/18 to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee:

KEY MESSAGES:

- **Learning Services Delivery / Improvement Plan**

- The Panel considers it appropriate that it monitors the Learning Services Delivery / Improvement Plan. In order to emphasise this aspect of the Panel's work, it considers that its Terms of Reference will need to be strengthened. The strengthened Terms of Reference is attached as **APPENDIX 1**, with the addition of new paragraph 2.2 highlighted in red. It is the intention of the Panel to monitor implementation of the Delivery / Improvement Plan at future meetings.

- **School Transformation**

- Good practice was evident and used by both Head Teachers in ensuring consistency through agreed curriculum planning and agreed expectations in standards were discussed with all relevant stakeholders in the months before moving to the new build.
- School to school work were strengthened in the months leading up to new schools opening so that the Head Teachers and teachers had good current knowledge of pupils' attainments and needs.
- Head teachers of new schools in recruiting staff face specific challenges. Complicated employment law and procedures can restrict the available pool of potential recruits.
- It is important that relevant advice and training are provided to Head teachers and Governors regarding essential policies and processes to be followed such as the capability process should the need arise . The Council needs to continue to work with Human Resources and GwE to provide support to new schools in this area so that high standards of delivery are consistent in all classes.

- When opening a new school strengthen further communication between the appointed Head teacher and Council in order that mitigation action can be undertaken in a timely manner, to deal with such matters as staffing arrangements. Future school budget (the actual cost of running a new school can be higher than originally anticipated) and any unforeseen construction difficulties could delay opening of a new school.
- As far as practical the Council should avoid school transformation being caught up in a circle of stop and start, this causes uncertainty for schools, parents and the wider community.

- **Welsh Language**

- The Council's Education Policy in respect of the Welsh Language are implemented fully by most schools on the Island.
- The Welsh Charter has given school deliberate focus on ensuring Welsh becomes the everyday language of choice.
- The percentage of first language Welsh pupils on all schools invited during this academic year have been less than 40%. In a few schools the number was much lower and a challenge for teachers and head teachers. However all school agreed the Charter had a positive effect on raising awareness of the Welsh language and culture.
- Three schools face greater challenges in ensuring they fully meet the new expectations regarding the Welsh Policy however all schools are taking tentative steps to change.
- Extra support are given to schools who face greater challenges through specific grants that are managed by GwE.
- Welsh Government Policy expects all schools to follow the Welsh First Language Curriculum. Second Language Welsh qualification will not be available in future years.

6 – Equality Impact Assessment [including impacts on the Welsh Language]
Not applicable

7 – Financial Implications
none

8 – Appendix:
1. Terms of Reference of the Scrutiny Panel : School Progress Review

9 - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):
-

APPENDIX 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SCRUTINY PANEL: SCHOOL PROGRESS REVIEW

The purpose of this document is to set the overall terms of reference.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Panel was established on the 21 November 2012 by the Education and Leisure Scrutiny Committee. It arose from recommendations made by Estyn on the quality of education services for children and young people on Anglesey.
- 1.2 The Head of Learning and Senior School Standards and Inclusion Manager provides guidance to the Panel about schools that may be appropriate to invite to appear before it. The criterion used to select schools is based on the national school categorisation framework, school performance and Estyn reports and the aim is to have a good mix of small, medium, large and primary/secondary schools.
- 1.3 The Panel can invite schools to reappear before them if there are matters that need to be revisited at a later date.

2.0 ROLE OF THE PANEL

- 2.1 To improve performance of all schools on Anglesey by providing robust challenge on individual school's performance.
- 2.2 **To Monitor the Learning Services Delivery/Improvement Plan (together with successor or associated action plans).**
- 2.3 To encourage the sharing of good practice between schools, taking on board lessons learnt and individual school's experience.
- 2.4 To enhance local members knowledge about key performance drivers and challenges that face schools on Anglesey.
- 2.5 To give confidence to the Senior Leadership Team, Scrutiny, Council Executive and regulators that school performance is being monitored by members.
- 2.6 To assist the learning Service with overall educational programmes and projects and increase knowledge of joint working arrangements between the Council and GwE (School Effectiveness and Improvement Service for North Wales) to raise standards.

3.0 PROCESS AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 To receive reports by the Head of Learning and Senior School Standards on individual school performance.
- 3.2 To receive reports by relevant school challenge and support advisor (GwE) on individual school performance.
- 3.3 To receive reports from head teachers on school performance together with procedures adopted that have led to improved performance.
- 3.4 To make recommendations or raise any issue of concern to the attention of the Head of Learning and relevant Portfolio Holder where necessary.
- 3.5 To escalate matters to scrutiny where necessary.

3.6 To submit progress reports to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee each calendar year.

4.0 MEMBERSHIP

4.1 The Panel to consist of 8 members (the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee to nominate 4 members and the Corporate Scrutiny Committee to nominate 4 members).

4.2 If any nominated member resigns from the Panel or is no longer able to stay as a member on the Panel (for whatever reason), the parent scrutiny committee will nominate another member as a replacement.

5.0 FREQUENCY AND ADMINISTRATION

5.1 The Panel will aim to consider the performance of ~~40~~ 15 schools in each calendar year.

5.2 All Panel meetings will have a written agenda with members having the opportunity to propose agenda items in advance of the meeting.

5.3 All Panel meetings will have minutes taken consisting of a summary record of key discussion points and any actions agreed.

5.4 The Panel does not require a minimum number of members in attendance to proceed, but serious consideration be given to adjourning the meeting if fewer than three members are in attendance.

6.0 REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

6.1 The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by the Panel. Any proposed changes to be submitted to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for formal approval.