

<b>ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL Scrutiny Report Template</b>	
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> September, 2019</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Schools' Progress Review Panel</b>
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>Progress update on the work of the Schools' Progress Review Panel</b>
<b>Scrutiny Chair:</b>	<b>Cllr Gwilym Owen Jones</b>
<b>Portfolio Holder(s):</b>	<b>Cllr R Meirion Jones</b>
<b>Head of Service:</b>	<b>Rhys H Hughes, Director of Education, Skills and Young People</b>
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<b>Local Members:</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>

### **1 - Recommendation/s**

The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is requested:

#### **R1 To note:**

- Progress made to date with the work of the Schools' Progress Review Panel in terms of achieving its current work programme which includes robust challenge on individual schools' performance
- Areas of work covered thus far by the newly introduced GwE shadowing arrangements
- The outcomes of the recent self-evaluation to measure impact and added value of the Panel
- The need to revise the terms of reference of the Panel to ensure continued alignment with corporate priorities

#### **R2 Recommend that:**

- It agrees that the Panel continues to provide robust challenge on individual schools' performance
- The Panel includes monitoring of the following work streams in its forward work programme:
  - i. implementation of the Learning Service improvement plan
  - ii. Non-maintained Years (early years) provision
- The Committee comes to a view about the robustness of the Panel's monitoring thus far.

### **2 – Link to Council Plan / Other Corporate Priorities**

Direct link with the Council Plan / transformation priorities. The Council Plan includes the ambition to work with the people of Anglesey, their communities and with partners to ensure the delivery of the best available services that will improve quality of life for everyone across the Island. One of the 3 aims of the Plan is to "create conditions that

will enable everyone to reach their full potential.” The work of the Panel is key to supporting schools and the Council to fully realise this aim.

### **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**

At the request of the Panel:

1. Is the Scrutiny Committee satisfied with the work completed by the Panel thus far?
2. Are the actions of the Panel to date sufficiently robust and at an appropriate pace?
3. Are there any suggestions to further strengthen the work of the Panel?
4. Are there any other areas that need to be scrutinised by the Panel?

### **5 – Background / Context**

#### **1. CONTEXT**

As previously reported, Members will be aware that scrutiny has developed over the past 2 years through the work of 3 scrutiny panels. This report summarises progress made to date as regards the **Schools’ Progress Review Panel**.

#### **Panel Governance Arrangements**

Members will be aware of the robust governance arrangements in place to underpin the work of the Panel<sup>1</sup> and in moving forward, it is intended to continue to convene monthly Panel meetings. A process is in place for quarterly progress reporting by Cllr Gwilym Owen Jones, the Panel Chair.

Membership of the Panel remains as reported to the Committee during the last quarter<sup>2</sup> namely:

<sup>1</sup> Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee convened on 20<sup>th</sup> April and 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2017

<sup>2</sup> Meeting of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee convened on 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2019

<b>Schools' Progress Review Panel: Membership</b>	
<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Scrutiny Committee</b>
Gwilym Owen Jones (chair)	Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
Margaret M Roberts	
Kenneth P Hughes	
Vaughan Hughes	
Alun Roberts (vice-chair)	Corporate Scrutiny Committee
John Arwel Roberts	
Richard Griffiths	
<b>Co-opted Member of the Scrutiny Committees</b>	
Mr Keith R Roberts	Corporate Scrutiny Committee

**2. FOCUS OF WORK OF THE SCHOOLS' PROGRESS REVIEW PANEL**

This progress report includes reference to the last 3 meetings of the Schools' Progress Review Panel - thus covering the period **May** → **July, 2019**:

- **Reflections and forward planning** – the Panel meeting in May<sup>3</sup> received verbal feedback and reflections from Members in light of the first GwE shadowing activities. These initial reflections enabled the Panel to refine arrangements with GwE for the coming period, including introduction of a feedback proforma for completion at the end of each shadowing visit. This process will further strengthen the governance arrangements underpinning this work stream, providing collective evidence of Members' impressions and reflections as well as a mechanism for escalating key messages for further consideration by the Panel
- **Working together in the Foundation Phase to raise standards** – in June<sup>4</sup> the Panel had an opportunity to see the work of pupils in the Foundation Phase and to scrutinise the impact of a collaboration project on standards. The collaboration project straddled across 4 primary schools with the Panel being afforded an opportunity to observe pupils' work via a comprehensive exhibition. The Panel were advised of the unique elements to this collaborative model → individual catchment areas taking responsibility themselves for raising standards. Also, a model of collaboration working across two secondary catchment areas. This is an example of the Council building on its experience through further self – assessment and introducing an innovative method of undertaking scrutiny activity<sup>5</sup>
- **GwE Shadowing arrangements** – Members will be aware that arrangements are now in place for members of the Panel to shadow GwE activities. These arrangements have been introduced in light of a decision by the Committee<sup>6</sup>:

<sup>3</sup> Meeting of the Schools' Progress Review Panel convened on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2019

<sup>4</sup> Meeting of the Schools' Progress Review Panel convened on 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2019

<sup>5</sup> Wales Audit Office review of Isle of Anglesey County Council scrutiny entitled Overview and Scrutiny – Fit for the Future? October, 2018

<sup>6</sup> Meeting of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee convened on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2018

“(RESOLVED) To arrange for Members to shadow the work of GwE once necessary arrangements have been put in place by GwE in consultation with the Learning Service.”

The governance framework underpinning these shadowing arrangements includes reporting arrangements by Members following individual shadowing activities, with the following objectives:

- i. Bring the Panel closer to pupils’ work and also standards in schools
- ii. Create the conditions for Members to fully appreciate the complexity and challenges of teaching eg by meeting front line teaching staff to discuss issues in general
- iii. Support the Panel to further develop its work programme

During this period, Members reported back on 8 key areas covered in shadowing activities in the Spring and Summer terms:

- ❖ **Meeting of School Heads – track progress (25/03/19)**
- ❖ **Shirley Clarke Project – overview (29/03/19)**
- ❖ **Numeracy Learning Journey (05/06/19)**
- ❖ **New Curriculum: primary schools in David Hughes catchment area (08/06/19)**
- ❖ **‘Camu’ Leadership Group meeting (11/06/19)**
- ❖ **Tier 2 Formative Assessment Action Research Project: Shirley Clarke (25/06/19)**
- ❖ **Tier 2 Review meeting – Shirley Clarke Project (28/06/19)**
- ❖ **Priority Planning Meeting, Ysgol David Hughes catchment area (logic model) (08/07/19)**

It can be concluded that the Panel has prioritised time over recent months to introduce shadowing of GwE activities in order to ensure conditions that are conducive to effective Elected Member scrutiny. In moving forward, the Panel will resume with its programme of challenge on individual schools’ performance building on its work over the past few years. Below is a resume of this work over the past 10 months, per sector:

**Panel Programme of Challenge on Individual Schools’ Performance  
October, 2018 → February, 2019**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>When</b>
Primary	Green	October, 2018
Primary	Yellow	
Primary	Green	November, 2018
Primary	Yellow	
Secondary	Yellow	December, 2018
Primary	Amber	January, 2019
Primary	Green	February, 2019
Primary	Amber	

- **Estyn (24/06/19)** – in July<sup>7</sup>, the Panel received a verbal report by the Panel chair and vice-chair on a meeting that they had attended with Estyn in June, 2019. The following matters were noted in particular:
  - ❖ The contribution of the Schools' Progress Review Panel was a theme during the meeting as were the advantages of Members shadowing GwE
  - ❖ Estyn referred to the fact that the Non-Maintained Years provision (early years) is not currently included in the scope of the Panel's work programme
  - ❖ Estyn noted that more attention is required to support SACRE.

It is proposed that the Panel should include monitoring of the following in its work programme:

- i. Summary of Estyn inspection reports published for schools on the Island
- ii. Profile of the Local Education Authority against Estyn standards
- iii. Summary of Estyn inspection reports published for Non-Maintained Years (early years) provision on Anglesey.

### **3. MEASURING OUTCOMES AND IMPACT OF THE PANEL**

#### **3.1 Context**

As previously reported, capturing and assessing the impact of Scrutiny is a challenge to achieve as the outcomes of scrutiny activities are not always tangible and often do not lend themselves to being measured in a systematic way. Also, it is not easy to measure the effectiveness of Scrutiny's ability to influence decision makers through discussion and debate. The journey of this Panel is however an example of where the input of scrutiny has added value and influenced the way in which proposals have been implemented by the Council.

#### **3.2 Schools' Progress Review Panel**

Scrutiny of schools' progress has matured significantly over recent years through the input of the Schools' Progress Review Panel. In March<sup>8</sup>, Panel members undertook a self-evaluation of its impact and reviewed 4 aspects of its work:

- What worked well
- Identify what impact the Panel has had
- Areas for improvement
- Member development needs

#### **3.3 Outcomes of the Self-evaluation by Members of the Schools' Progress Review Panel**

3.3.1 The following questions were used as a framework to enable Members to evaluate the contribution of the Panel:

**Q1** In terms of the work of the Panel, what were the highlights for you as individual Panel members during the past year?

**Q2** In your opinion, what impact did the Panel have in challenging and holding schools to account?

**Q3** Are there any aspects of the Panel's work that could be undertaken differently in moving forward?

**Q4** What development needs do you have in order to support you in your role?

**Q5** Any general observations on the influence and / or impact of the work of the Panel on decision-making processes?

<sup>7</sup> Meeting of the Schools' Progress Review Panel convened on 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2019

<sup>8</sup> Meeting of the Schools' Progress Review Panel convened on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2019

3.4 This work stream has evidenced the following positive outcomes:

- A team of Members, drawn from across the political parties and groups, who have developed a high level of knowledge about the complexities of education and schools and a level of expertise in the service area
- Development of a model of working that focuses on a smaller group, encouraging good attendance and teamwork
- Creating conditions that are conducive to effective Scrutiny eg there has been a tangible improvement in the level and depth of questioning by the Panel
- Scrutiny activity is well planned, efficient and objective and based on evidence from a range of sources
- Better understanding by Elected Members of the complexities and risks in schools in order to be able to effectively scrutinise, hold to account and identify priorities in moving forward

3.5 Development areas were identified by Panel members as part of the self-evaluation and these have been summarised under 7 key themes:

- ✚ Shadowing GwE activities
- ✚ Panel forward work programme
- ✚ Terms of reference
- ✚ Frequency of meetings
- ✚ Member development needs
- ✚ Link with Member Briefing Sessions
- ✚ Measuring scrutiny outcomes and impact

These themes have been included in the Panel's forward work programme and progress will continue to be reported to this Committee on a quarterly basis.

A copy of the report on the self-evaluation is attached (**Appendix 1**).

#### **4. MATTER TO BE ESCALATED FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PARENT COMMITTEE**

The following matter be escalated for consideration by the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee:

- 4.1 The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is requested to come to a view about the robustness of the Panel's monitoring thus far.

#### **6 – Equality Impact Assessment [including impacts on the Welsh Language]**

N/A

#### **7 – Financial Implications**

N/a

#### **8 – Appendices:**

Report on the Schools' Progress Review Panel self-evaluation

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

Anwen Davies, Scrutiny Manager, Isle of Anglesey County Council, Council Offices, Llangefni. LL77 7TW

**Cllr Gwilym Owen Jones**  
**Chair of the Schools Progress Review Panel**  
**Date: 13/08/19**



## **MEASURING THE IMPACT OF SCRUTINY**

### **SELF-EVALUATION BY MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOLS PROGRESS REVIEW SCRUTINY PANEL**

Scrutiny Panel - 22 March 2019





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## **1. Background**

- 1.1 A report on the quality of Local Authority Education Services for children and young people on Anglesey published by Estyn during July 2012. Then the overall judgement on the quality of services noted as unsatisfactory.
- 1.2 In the report, seven recommendations made to the Authority with a requirement that it had to produce a Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP). A PIAP submitted to full Council on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2012.
- 1.3 On the 21 November 2012, the Education and Leisure Scrutiny Committee established the Schools Review Progress Scrutiny Panel (the Panel).
- 1.4 The Panel has been meeting since 2012. The Panel established as a way for Members to enhance their understanding of education matters and to contribute to the accountability of Head Teachers and School Governors for school performance.
- 1.5 The Panel has eight Members. The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee nominates four Members and the Corporate Scrutiny Committee nominates four Members.
- 1.6 The Panel submits a progress report to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny committee on a regular basis.

## **2. Role of the Schools Progress Review Scrutiny Panel**

- To improve performance of all schools on Anglesey by providing robust challenge on Individual school's performance.
- To Monitor the Learning Services Delivery/Improvement Plan (together with successor Plans).
- To encourage the sharing of good practice between schools, taking on board lessons learnt and individual school's experience.
- To enhance local members knowledge about key performance drivers and challenges that face schools on Anglesey.
- To give confidence to the Senior Leadership Team, Scrutiny, Council Executive and regulators that school performance is being monitored by Members.
- 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. Measuring Outcomes and Impact of Scrutiny

- 3.1 Capturing and assessing the impact of Scrutiny is a challenge to achieve as the outcomes of scrutiny activities are not always tangible and often do not lend themselves to being measured in a systematic way. In addition, it is not easy to measure the effectiveness of Scrutiny's ability to influence decision makers through discussion and debate.
- 3.2 Scrutiny of schools, Learning Service and GwE has matured through the input and work of Schools Progress Review Scrutiny Panel. The Panel has been able to meet with Head teachers, Chairs of School Governing Bodies together with officers from GwE and the Learning Service.
- 3.3 The Learning Service Action Plan (SIP) submitted to the Panel and attention drawn to matters requiring attention and action. Key matters arising included:
- Ensure that each governing body adopts the Partnership Agreement between them and GwE/Learning Department.
  - Ensure that schools implement the Digital Inclusion Framework appropriately
  - Ensure that governing bodies achieve their statutory responsibilities in relation to operating as a critical friend by challenging Head Teachers and ensuring accountability
  - Self-evaluation review of the Learning Service [in line with Estyn guidelines]
  - Modernising the Amlwch Catchment Area and the Sixth Form
  - Continue to strengthen contacts and accountability with the Additional learning Service and Anglesey and Gwynedd Councils.
  - Prepare for implementing the new Additional Learning Needs legislation
- 3.4 The purpose of this self-evaluation was therefore to provide a framework for Panel Members to review four aspects:

What worked well

Identify what impact the Panel had

Areas for improvement

Member development needs

## 4. Self-Evaluation Questions

4.1 Members of the Panel used five questions as a framework to enable them to evaluate the work of the Schools Progress Review Scrutiny Panel:

- Q1. In terms of the work of the Panel, what were the highlights for you as individual Panel members during the past year?
- Q2. In your opinion, what impact did the Panel have in challenging and holding Schools to account?
- Q3. Are there any aspects of the Panel's work that could be undertaken differently in moving forward?
- Q4. What development needs do you have in order to support you in your role?
- Q5. Any general observations on the influence and / or impact of the work of the Panel on decision-making processes?

## 5. Conclusions

5.1 During October 2018, the Wales Audit Office published a report on scrutiny in the Council. It concluded that:

- *“...the Council has strengthened its overview and scrutiny function and is making arrangements to meet future challenges. We came to this conclusion because:-*
  - the Council is supportive of overview and scrutiny, and arrangements necessary to help overview and scrutiny members meet future challenges are being put in place;*
  - overview and scrutiny committee practice is improving, the range of evidence sources they draw on has increased, and scrutiny committees forward work programmes align with the work of the Executive; and*
  - the overview and scrutiny function is contributing to improvements in performance and decision-making, and the Council regularly evaluates its effectiveness...”*

5.2 On the 22 March 2019, Panel Members had an opportunity to provide observations on the Schools Progress Review Scrutiny Panel. Key points arising from the session were :

**Q1. In terms of the work of the Panel, what were the highlights for you as individual Panel members during the past year?**

Meeting and hearing directly from school Headteachers on a regular basis about the performance of specific schools.

Meeting with Headteachers, Chair of Governors and officers from GwE. The information provided is very useful to gain an overview of how school performance is supported and monitored.

Comparing approaches taken by different Head teachers and Chairs of Governors.

The Panel has undertaken its role in a competent and professional manner and I believe it has had a positive effect on developing links and an understanding between Members and Head teachers.

Being able to meet with a variety of Head teachers and Chair of Governors. The Panel is able to meet with schools categorised in the Red, Amber, Yellow and Green categories.

Being able to consider school performance and matters affecting schools on the Island with my fellow Councillors in an open and frank way.

**Q2. In your opinion, what impact did the Panel have in challenging and holding Schools to account?**

The Panel has contributed to monitoring the performance of Schools. It has been able to provide constructive views directly to Headteachers and Chair of Governors on the performance of Schools.

The Panel is able to hear first-hand from GwE and the Learning Service who monitor and support schools performance. The officers do listen to Members concern and the link between the Panel, Learning Service, GWE and the schools allows matters to be addressed quickly which would otherwise be delayed.

By its nature school, performance is ultimately the responsibility of Headteacher and Governing Body. To address performance issues it requires a partnership between the Learning Service, GwE and Schools. I think the Panel provided a forum for everybody to focus on getting on with the job in hand.

The Panel is able to able to escalate matters to the attention of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee if it considers appropriate. The Panel provides regular progress reports to the committee

**Q3. Are there any aspects of the Panel's work that could be undertaken differently in moving forward?**

Members do greatly value the opportunity to question School Headteachers at formal Panel meetings. Attending schools would give Members an opportunity to see schools operate in practice but not at the expense of not having any formal Panel meetings.

There is a need to hear from the pupils at schools to hear what they think.

I am willing to attend activities arranged by GwE in order for me to enhance my understanding of education matters.

**Q4. What development needs do you have in order to support you in your role?**

A need to know about the new Well National School Curriculum

Development sessions provided by the Senior Manager (School Standards and inclusion) since July 2017 has been very good. We should continue doing the same.

As well as being Panel Members, all of us are also School Governors. I think more development on the role of school Governors would be appropriate

It would be useful to receive a development session on how funding is allocated to schools and how the schools set their annual budgets.

**Q5. Any general observations on the influence and / or impact of the work of the Panel on decision-making processes?**

The Panel is working well. There is always a need to adapt but Members are open to suggestions.

I am aware now of the important role GwE plays in supporting schools.

The work of the Panel has to continue. Education is a vital service and Members need a forum like this to encourage and, if necessary, insist on specific steps to be undertaken to achieve improvement.

Partnership working between schools, Learning Service and GwE is vital. I think the best performing schools appreciate this. The Panel has a role to play in making sure everybody works together.

## 6. NEXT STEPS

6.1 The Panel's overriding duty is to help schools in providing learners with the best possible education. To enable the Panel to undertake its duty it requires information on a wide variety of matters affecting schools together with a practical, knowledge as to what is happening on the ground.

6.2 The focus of the Panel's work adapt to meet the new Education Curriculum in Wales. The introduction of the new curriculum will be an ongoing process between now and 2022. The curriculum will have more emphasis on equipping young people for life. It will build their ability to learn new skills and apply their subject knowledge more positively and creatively. A new digital competence framework is also to be introduced to prepare pupils to the opportunities and risks that an online world presents. Another important aim of the new curriculum is that teachers will have more freedom to teach in ways they feel will have the best outcomes for their pupils.

6.3 The Panel will continue to meet but will develop shadowing arrangements with GwE and visit to schools.

THEME	HOW
<b>Link with Monthly Member Briefing Sessions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the link between work of Panel and Member Briefing Sessions</li> </ul>
<b>Shadowing GwE activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members to attend activities as per the circulated schedule (Spring Term 2019).</li> <li>Updated schedule to be circulated to Panel Members on activities during Summer Term 2019.</li> </ul>
<b>Panel Forward Work Programme</b>	Add the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback by Members following attendance at GwE shadowing activities.</li> <li>Learning Services delivery/Improvement Plan</li> <li>Information on the New Education Curriculum in Wales</li> <li>Hear from pupils perspective via school visits</li> <li>Panel to continue to meet with school Head teachers and Chair Governors but to include more visits to schools</li> </ul>
<b>Panel Terms of Reference</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Panel's Terms of Reference</li> </ul>
<b>Frequency of Meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedule a review of frequency of Panel meetings from May 2019 to April 2020</li> </ul>
<b>Member Development Needs</b>	Potential Panel development session topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Education Curriculum in Wales</li> <li>Role of School Governors</li> <li>Performance monitoring of schools ( continuation)</li> <li>Financial Pressure on Schools</li> <li>Developing Welsh language skills of pupils</li> </ul>
<b>Measuring Scrutiny Outcomes and Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a further self-evaluation by the Panel's Elected Members within the next 12 months</li> </ul>