

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

Scrutiny Report Template

Committee :	Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
Date :	21st January, 2020
Subject:	Schools' Progress Review Panel
Purpose of Report:	An update on the progress of the Schools' Progress Review Panel
Scrutiny Chair:	Cllr Gwilym Owen Jones
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr R Meirion Jones
Head of Service:	Rhys H Hughes, Director of Education, Skills and Young People
Report Author :	Anwen Davies, Scrutiny Manager
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Local Members :	Not applicable

1 - Recommendation(s)

The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is requested to :

R1 To note:

- The progress made to date in terms of the delivery of the Schools Progress Review Panel's work programme which includes robust challenge of individual school performance
- The areas of work addressed through the new arrangements introduced during the shadowing of GwE
- Outcomes of the recent taking stock and forward planning exercise undertaken by the Panel
- The need to revise the Panel's terms of reference to ensure ongoing alignment with corporate priorities and the outcomes of the taking stock exercise.

R2 Recommend that the Committee reaches a conclusion on the robustness of the Panel's monitoring to date.

2 - Link to Council Plan / Other Corporate Priorities

Direct link to the Council Plan / transformation priorities. The Council's Plan includes an ambition to work with the people of Anglesey, their communities and with partners to ensure the provision of the best possible services that will improve the quality of life for everyone throughout the Island. One of the Plan's 3 aims is to "create conditions that will enable everyone to fulfil their full potential." The work of the Panel is crucial in supporting schools and the Council in achieving that 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

At the Panel's request:

1. Is the Scrutiny Committee satisfied with the work done by the Panel to date?
2. Are the actions taken by the Panel to date sufficiently robust and is the pace of work appropriate?
3. Are there any suggestions for further strengthening of the Panel's work?
4. Are there any other areas that the Panel needs to scrutinize?

5 - Background / Context

2.1. CONTEXT

As reported previously, Members will be aware that scrutiny has developed during the past two years through the work of the 3 scrutiny panels. This report summarizes the progress made to date in relation to **the Schools Progress Review Panel**.

The Panel's Governance Arrangements

The Members will be aware of the robust governance arrangements in place to underpin the work of the Panel¹ and it is intended to continue to hold monthly meetings of the Panel in the future. The Chairman of the Panel, Cllr. Gwilym Owen Jones, has established a process of reporting on progress quarterly.

The membership of the Panel remains as reported to the Committee during the last quarter²

Schools Progress Review Panel : Membership

Councillor	Scrutiny Committee
Gwilym Owen Jones (Chairman)	

¹ Meeting of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 20 April and 27 June 2017

² Meeting of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 11 September, 2019.

Margaret M Roberts	Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
Kenneth P Hughes	
Vaughan Hughes	
Alun Roberts (Vice-Chair)	Corporate Scrutiny Committee
John Arwel Roberts	
Richard Griffiths	
Co-opted Member of the Scrutiny Committees	
Mr Keith Roberts	Corporate Scrutiny Committee

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

This progress report contains a reference to the 3 last meetings of the Schools Progress Review Panel - and consequently covers the period **September** → **December, 2019** :

- **Taking stock and forward planning** – the last progress report to this Committee³ referred to the need to review the Panel's terms of reference to ensure continued alignment with our corporate priorities. With that task in mind, a development workshop for Panel members was held in September⁴. The main objective of the workshop was to agree the following elements as a basis for developing revised terms of reference for the Panel:
 - i. Confirm the boundaries to the role and purpose of the Panel
 - ii. Key areas for inclusion in the work programme
 - iii. The priorities in the Panel's forward work programme - short term, medium term

The development workshop looked at the Panel's development journey to date (strengths and areas for development), Regulators' expectations and priorities for the next period. It was concluded that there was considerable scope for the Panel to develop further and the following areas for development were prioritized for the next period:





Heading	Development Area
School Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop supportive conditions and a sense of partnership / team working when scrutinizing standards in individual schools • Monitoring of standards in

³ Progress report for May → July, 2019 submitted to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 11 September, 2019




⁴ School Progress Review Panel Development workshop, 27/09/19.

		<p>individual schools: Elected Members to visit individual schools prior to inviting those schools before the Panel</p>
	Shadowing GwE	Develop the arrangements to include work in individual schools (as well as cluster / catchment area activities)
	The Panel's work programme	<p>Add the following areas to the Panel's work programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The voice of the child • Additional learning needs • Non-maintained provision (early years) • A new curriculum • The Learning Service's Self Evaluation - monitoring progress • Summary of Estyn inspection reports issued for schools on the Island • Profile of the Local Education Authority against Estyn standards • Summary of Estyn inspection reports published for Non-Maintained (early years) provision on Anglesey
	Communication	To cascade information on the role, contribution and outcomes of the Panel's work amongst all Members of the Council
	Closing the circle	Continue to maintain arrangements for the Panel's voice / contribution to reach the parent committee and the Executive Committee (adding value and measuring the impact of Scrutiny)
	School governors	Further strengthen the role of Elected Members as school

A progress report on the outcomes of the workshop was received at the October meeting⁵ of the Panel. The following areas were also determined:

-  Create a different model of working for the Panel that focuses on smaller groups of Elected Members concentrating on specific aspects, together with arrangements to rotate Members to afford everyone the opportunity to experience working on all aspects of the Panel's work.
 -  Prepare revised terms of reference for the Panel with the aim of ensuring alignment with the Council's corporate priorities.
- **Monitoring Individual School Standards** - in October⁶ the programme for monitoring standards in individual schools was discussed. In particular the following points were noted:
 - i. Critically important to continue to prioritize the monitoring of standards in individual schools in the Panel's forward work programme
 - ii. Going forward, vary the Panel's monitoring arrangements to include a visit by a representation of the Panel's Elected Members to the school concerned (prior to the Panel meeting)
 - iii. Sources of information: the following information should be available to the Panel when scrutinizing standards in individual schools -
 -  Information about the school from the Authority and GwE
 -  A presentation by the Head and chair of Governors
 - iv. Close the circle after monitoring standards in individual schools - by taking steps to confirm any comments from the Panel in the form of a letter in the name of the chair
 - v. Important to ensure effective communication arrangements are in place with Elected Members who are school governors. Also aim to offer a range of training and development opportunities for Panel members.

The Panel put in place a new programme to challenge the performance of individual schools, building on its work over recent years. At the November meeting⁷ the Panel reviewed standards and performance in one primary school (category: green). The following has been scheduled on the work programme for the coming months:

-  January, 2020 - primary school (category: amber)
-  March, 2020 – secondary school (category: yellow)
-  April, 2020 - additional learning needs (category: yellow)

⁵ Schools Progress Review Panel, 17/10/19

⁶ Schools Progress Review Panel, 17/10/19

⁷ Meeting of the Schools Progress Review Panel held on ?? November, 2019

- **Governance arrangements** - the Panel discussed the following aspects of governance arrangements at the October meeting:
 - i. Frequency of reporting to the parent committee by the Panel – confirmed the need to establish arrangements for the Panel to report every 3 months to this Committee on the progress of work programmes and the added value of the Panel. Introduce more frequent reporting if there is a specific risk to be addressed.
 - ii. Cascade information on the role, contribution and outcomes of the Panel - through a comprehensive item on the December agenda for the Members' Monthly Briefing Session⁸






- **The Role of Elected Members as School Governors** - the Panel discussed the role of councillors as governors and noted the following points:
 - i. Important to create the conditions for Elected Members to develop their role as critical friends
 - ii. Identifying the merits of an effective learning journey is an important part of a governor's role
 - iii. It would be helpful to develop a series of standard questions for Members' use when attending governor meetings - on the New Curriculum, the learning journey, contribution of the School Council, voice of children and young people

- **Shadowing GwE** - members will be aware of the arrangements in place for Panel members to shadow GwE activities.

The governance framework for these shadowing arrangements includes arrangements for Members to report back following individual shadowing activities, with the following objectives:

- i. Bringing the Panel closer to pupils' work and also standards in schools
- ii. Creating the conditions for Members to fully appreciate the complexities and challenges of teaching e.g. by meeting with frontline teaching staff to discuss issues generally
- iii. Supporting the Panel to further develop its work programme

In October, the Panel⁹ approved the revised version of the feedback form for use by Elected Members to report back on the following activities:

-  Shadowing GwE - cluster work
-  Shadowing GwE - individual schools
-  Shadowing GwE - training provided by GwE
-  Monitoring standards –visit to individual schools
-  Monitoring standards - Panel meeting

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

The following matter is referred for consideration by the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee :

⁸ Members' Monthly Briefing Sessions, 5/12/19

⁹ Meeting of the Schools Progress Review Panel held on 17 October, 2019

4.1 The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is requested to reach a conclusion on the robustness of the Panel's monitoring to date.

6 - Equality Impact Assessment [including impacts on the Welsh Language]

N / A

7 - Financial Implications

N / A

8 - Appendices

9 - Background Papers (please contact Report Author for any further information):

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

Cllr. Gwilym Owen Jones
Chair of the Schools Progress Review Panel
Date: 23/12 /19