

PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 13 November 2025

PRESENT: Councillor Gwilym O Jones (Vice-Chair in the Chair)

Councillors Non Dafydd, Douglas M Fowlie, Euryrn Morris, Derek Owen, Margaret Murley Roberts, Ken Taylor, Sonia Williams and Liz Wood (left the meeting at 10.45 am)

Councillor Dafydd Roberts – Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language

Co-opted Members

Mr John Tierney (The Catholic Church,
Ms Kathryn Seeney – Parent Governor – Primary School Sector,
Ms Christina Williams – Parent Governor – Secondary School Sector and ALN.

IN ATTENDANCE: Deputy Chief Executive,
Director of Education, Skills and Young People,
Head of Democracy,
Strategic Leader (Secondary) (ED),
Scrutiny Officer (EA),
Committee Officer (MEH),
Webcasting Committee Services Officer (FT).

APOLOGIES: Councillors Pip O'Neill and Dylan Rees

Chief Executive
Councillor Alun Roberts – Portfolio Member for Leisure, Tourism, Maritime and Property

ALSO PRESENT: Portfolio Members

Councillor Neville Evans – Portfolio Member for Adults' Services,
Councillor Robin Williams – Deputy Leader of the Council and
Portfolio Member for Finance, Corporate Business and Customer Experience

As the Chair had apologised for the meeting the Vice-Chair, Councillor Gwilym O Jones was in the Chair.

Councillor Sonia Williams was appointed Vice-Chair for this meeting only.

1 APOLOGIES

As noted above.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 October, 2025 were confirmed as correct, subject to an amendment that Councillor Fowlie did not raise a question at the Aberffraw Community Council that Menter Môn sold Cegin Lllys Llewelyn to fund the gap in pensions, but another County Councillor raised the matter.

Action points arising from the meeting held on 14 October, 2025:-

Item 4 – Strategic Partnership – Menter Môn

Action 1 – To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of working with Menter Môn and Local Members to strengthen and formalise the process, noting improvements areas.

Following discussions with the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and the Managing Director of Menter Môn, the matter was raised at the Group Leaders meeting thereafter. It was accepted that information needs to be shared with Members of their Group to strengthen understanding of the needs and opportunities within local communities.

Item 5 – Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership Annual Report 2024/2025

Action 1 – To include the dashboard in the next Annual Report to measure and show the progress and effect of projects, comparing the performance at the start and end of the year with the Senior Community Safety Operational Officer for Gwynedd and Anglesey.

The Senior Community Safety Operational Officer has confirmed that the information will be included, as noted above, within the next Annual Report.

Action 2 – To provide an update to Committee Members following a meeting with the Health Board on 7 November, 2025 in relation to the proposed reductions in Occupational Therapy services across the Island due to funding limitations.

ACTION IN PROGRESS

Action 3 – The Chief Executive to engage with the Director of Social Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder to ensure that concerns regarding the effect on the proposed reductions to Occupational Services across many surgeries on Anglesey are reflected in the consultation process. **ACTION IN PROGRESS**

4 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GUIDANCE : FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION, IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The report of the Director of Education, Skills and Young People outlining the School Improvement Guidance : framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability was presented for the Committee's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language said that since GwE has come to an end the school support service is the responsibility of the Learning Service. The emphasis is on self-evaluating and peer to peer working and work has already taken place within the Learning Service as good practices have been established.

The Strategic Leader (Secondary) gave a brief presentation to the meeting on the Strategic Improvement Guidance which will be implemented in March 2026. He noted that the document underlines the importance of the collaboration of Tim Môn on Anglesey. It was noted that the aims and objectives of the document is :-

- Raise awareness of the contents of the report
- Outline the expectations on schools and Governing Bodies
- Outline of the services new structure and how to support the schools
- Local Authority responsibilities

He noted that the draft School Improvement Guidance was published in 2022, but following the termination of the School Improvement Consortia an updated draft was published outlining the responsibilities transferring to the Local Authority. The aim of the document and Welsh Government is that schools operate as Learning Communities, and that they self-improve which leads to less dependency on central support. School clusters already work together on Anglesey and collaboration plans have been put in place with Head Teachers and staff scrutinising each other and provide feedback. The Local Authority focused on support for behaviour, emotional and mental health well-being, ALN, attendances, HR, finance, buildings, Welsh language development and commissioning support for teaching and learning, leadership development and curriculum planning. The expectations for the implementation of the report by March 2026 were outlined to the Committee and it was noted that substantial work has already been undertaken by the Local Authority to address the expectations within the report. The emphasis is that schools self-improve and make better use of resources available. Framework states that schools are held directly accountable for quality of provision and progress of learners by Governing Bodies and Estyn. Estyn reporting and frequency of inspections is changing with core inspection every 6 years together with an interim inspection every 3 years to inspect progress. Close working relationships between schools and the Local Authority will provide support based on School Development Plans for improvement priorities. Effective self-evaluation will be undertaken to gauge continuous progress and improvements and to ensure that schools identify the correct priorities; School Governors have an essential part to ensure that priorities are identified. The accountability and the role of the Local Authority together with the key messages was highlighted to the Committee which was included in the presentation.

In considering the report, the Committee discussed the following main matters :-

- Reference was made that more responsibilities will be put on Governors of schools due to the new School Improvement Guidance. Questions were raised whether additional training will be afforded to Governors and whether they are aware of the additional responsibility they will be undertaking. The Strategic Leader (Secondary) responded that a comprehensive training programme is available to School Governors. He noted that the Learning Service could attend Governor's meetings to highlight the expectations within the School Improvement Guidance.
- Questions were raised as to whether the voice of the pupils, parents and the community been considered within the Guidance. The Strategic Leader (Secondary) responded that promoting schools that focuses on communities is a key part of the document to ensure that schools foster strong partnerships with families and communities and support and promote inclusion. The document highlights the need to engage with children and young people and parents to create a relationship. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People said that there is a clear expectation on the Head Teachers to engage with the community, parents and stakeholders.
- Questions were raised whether the new provision will be adequate to address the needs of schools following GwE's provision coming to an end. The Strategic Leader (Secondary) responded that some staff have transferred from GwE to the Local Authority. He noted that the Local Authority's staff will continue to visit schools and if additional expertise is required the resource can be provided and a professional development programme is currently being undertaken.
- Questions were raised whether the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision will be addressed when the collaboration between Gwynedd and Anglesey will come to an end. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People responded that the new service under the Local Authority will be established and operational by September 2026, and details will be afforded in due course. The Deputy Chief Executive said that the ALN provision is a considerable challenge for the Local Authority and plans will be put in place to address the provision. Further reference was made that Canolfan Addysg y Bont is full; many children with ALN and intensive needs are within the mainstream schools. It was considered that the matter needs to be addressed urgently. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People responded that processes are in place to locate children with ALN in Canolfan Addysg y Bont, for eligible pupils, however, ALN provision is a national challenge. The Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language said that additional resources are required from Welsh Government to address the pressure on Local Authorities with regards to ALN provision. The Deputy Chief Executive said that the Authority will need to put in place a provision for ALN before the joint working with Gwynedd and Anglesey will come to an end in August 2026. Discussions have undertaken with the Welsh Government Minister for Education raising the issues of ALN provision and funding requirements.
- Reference was made that Teaching Assistants are having to provide assistance to a child with ALN requirements together with children that require shared assistance in schools. It was considered that Teaching Assistants need to be employed for more than a year as children with ALN needs stability. Questions

were raised as to how the Local Authority is planning to address the shortfall of financial resources to address the need to employ staff on a more permanent basis. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People responded that funding is a cause of concern, and the matter has been raised in the WLGA and with the Welsh Government Minister for Education. He said that the Committee had already written to Welsh Government on the matter. He noted that every pupil should have the same opportunity to reach their full potential.

- Reference was made that a high number of new staff have been employed within the Learning Service recently and there is a need for clarity as to whom is responsible for different provisions within the service. Questions were raised as to whether it is clear who is responsible for certain provision within the Learning Service and could a lack of clarity effect communication and service provision. Further questions were raised whether there have been staff changes within the Welfare Officers posts within the Learning Service as there is a need for consistency whilst dealing with pupils. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People responded that information is being given to schools as regards the changes within the Learning Service. He noted that there has been changes with Welfare Officers posts as staff have left the service.

It was RESOLVED :-

- **To note the implications of the national guidance and expectations upon local authorities in contributing to school improvement especially the role of scrutiny;**
- **To note the key functions of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee (as the designated scrutiny for education matters) to focus its scrutiny activity (through the Education Scrutiny Panel) on measuring the impact of support provided to schools by the Learning Service.**

5 EDUCATION SCRUTINY PANEL : PROGRESS REPORT

The Chair of the Education Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Gwilym O Jones said that this is the sixth progress report of the Panel which covers the period February – October 2025. He noted that the Panel met on three occasions together with field work were Members attending schools during this period following the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review in July 2024. He noted that the Panel considered the following matters:-

- Curriculum in Wales
- Self-evaluation of the Impact of the Education Scrutiny Panel
- Effective Transition – readiness to learn
- Corporate Safeguarding – schools' contribution
- Improving Attendances
- Scrutiny Panel Work Programme for the period February 2025 – October 2025

In considering the report, the Committee discussed the following main matters :-

- Questions were raised whether the Education Scrutiny Panel will undertake a rolling programme of attending field work at every Primary and Secondary School on the Island. The Chair responded that the Members of the Education Scrutiny Panel are dedicated in their attendance in undertaking field work at the schools. It was noted that financial resources that is available to schools is one of the main issues when the Panel attends the schools. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People said that the Members of the Education Scrutiny Panel were already undertaking visits to schools before the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review. He anticipated that the Members would attend as many schools as possible in due course. However, Members will not visit the schools which they are Governors on those schools as part of their work. The Head of Democracy said that the Education Scrutiny Panel's role is to consider the scrutiny themes and not having to attend every school. The Panel will review samples of those themes whilst visiting a particular school.
- Reference was made to attendance statistics specifically in Secondary Schools. Questions were raised if the attendance statistics would improve if pupils with reasons i.e. health issue, were to be removed from those statistics. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People responded that the focus of the Education Scrutiny Panel is to review the service provided to schools to improve attendances. Work is undertaken by the Welfare Officers to gauge the reasons for such absences from the schools. He noted that it is appropriate for Governors to ask such questions at the School Governors Meetings. The Learning Service also works closely with the Children's and Families Team to support a child who is unable to attend school. The Deputy Chief Executive said that there is a role for individual school to highlight and address concerns as to attendances at their schools.
- Reference was made to the field work undertaken by the Education Scrutiny Panel in attending schools. It was considered that Members should be given the opportunity to attend the schools they are School Governors. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People responded that Members, in their role as Governors, should be attending their own schools and participating in self-evaluation. This is good practice.
- Reference was made that school staff are undertaking welfare work due to poverty within the schools. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People responded that tackling poverty is a matter for everyone and School Governors need to consider their school's priorities to mitigate poverty. Discussion will be undertaken by the Learning Service with schools ascertaining their strategies in tackling poverty in the new year.
- Questions were raised whilst the Education Scrutiny Panel has scrutinised the work of the Learning Service, what assurances can be given that the service considers and acts upon the recommendations of the Panel on a practical level and whether there will be follow up reports outlining the steps that has been taken in response to the issues raised. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People assured that matters raised by the Education Scrutiny Panel will be addressed and reported back to the Panel and the Portfolio Member.
- Reference was made that whilst several issues have been raised at the meeting it would be advantageous for a Briefing Session to be arranged to address the issues raised.

It was RESOLVED to note the progress made during the last period in terms of the work of the Education Scrutiny Panel.

6 COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2025/2026

The report of the Scrutiny Officer setting out the Partnership and Regeneration Committee's indicative Forward Work Programme for 2025/2026 was presented for consideration.

It was RESOLVED to agree the current version of the Forward Work Programme for 2025/2026, including the amendments noted.

The meeting concluded at 11.45 am

**COUNCILLOR GWILYM O JONES
VICE-CHAIR IN THE CHAIR**