

Minutes



Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Date: 6 March 2019

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors M Rahman (Chair), D Davies, Y Forsey, R Hayat, J Hughes, S Marshall, R Mogford, T Suller and K Whitehead

In Attendance: Meryl Lawrence (Scrutiny Adviser), Ann Hamlet (Lead Safeguarding Officer for Health (Head Safeguarding Services ABUHB)), Robert Hartshorn (VAWDASV Chair of Regional Partnership Board), Rebecca Haycock (Manager of the Gwent Regional VAWDASV Team), Ed Price (EAS Challenge Adviser) and Daniel Cooke (Scrutiny Adviser)

Apologies: None

1 Declarations of Interest

Councillor D Davies declared an interest as a Member of the Education Achievement Service Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 January 2019

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 9 January 2019 were **approved** as true and accurate record.

3 Education Achievement Service Business Plan 2019 - 2020

Attendees: Attendees:

- Sarah Morgan – Chief Education Officer
- Ed Price – EAS Challenge Adviser / Interim Service and Strategic Policy Lead
- Hayley Davies Edwards – EAS Principal Challenge Adviser - Newport

The Committee was advised that the Strategic Director – People was unable to attend the meeting and had asked that his apologies were offered at the meeting.

The Chief Education Officer informed the Committee that the Deputy Chief Education Officer was unable to attend the meeting today and offered his apologies.

The Education Achievement Service (EAS) Advisers presented an overview of the EAS Business Plan, drew the Committee's attention to the main points and invited the Committee to ask any questions they felt were relevant.

The Members asked the following questions;

- A Member enquired whether the "state of flux" referred to in the report in which the education system found itself would stabilise. The EAS Advisers explained that the new range of GCSE's would commence in 2023 following which there should be some stability. There was a high magnitude of change happening in particular around

accountability and curriculum, in schools and Education Departments. While generally positive about change high up and across the region, more detail is awaited.

The Chief Education Officer explained that some of the changes included: not being able to use Level Two results for accountability purposes, or; not being able to include BTEC results for measuring progress, due to which it would be difficult to gauge the difference and measure progress between schools. She advised that there would be an Elected Member Briefing on the subject to ensure all Councillors were made aware of the changes.

- A Member asked about the changing pressures upon schools. The Chief Education Officer advised the Committee that Newport City schools had the highest levels of engagement in the new curriculum workshops and learning. For this reason, Newport schools came out on top of the region. The EAS Advisers added that the reduction in Stage 3 Public Accountability Measures to remove requirement for Schools from Foundation to Key Stage Three to report at a local or regional level was designed to take some of the pressures away.
- A Member expressed concern about young people who leave primary schools that are categorised as Green with aspiration and move onto secondary schools categorised as Red or schools placed in Special Measures and asked how would the EAS improve Red and Special Measures schools over the next year.

The EAS Challenge Adviser explained that the EAS were involved in a project with Professor Waters upon the difference between Year 6 and Year 7 teaching. This work would have included collaboration between two primary schools and a secondary school to establish why there is that disconnect between Key Stage 2 and 3, and reaching the necessary foundation needed for Key Stage 4.

If a secondary school was struggling it needed to work within a Peer network to find support from its peers. Teaching and Leadership were everything when it came to a school performing well. The EAS Adviser referred to the Excellence in Teaching and Leadership Framework (ETLF), which was a self-evaluation toolkit being developed around excellence in teaching and leadership. Schools would use this toolkit to set a baseline and identify next steps for improvement by using a RAG rating across a number of different areas to show the school leaders where improvement was needed. Head and Deputy Head Teachers all attend workshops through the year to increase awareness of best practice. A copy of the Excellence in Teaching and Leadership Framework self-evaluation toolkit could be circulated to Members of the Committee when available.

The EAS Representative explained that there was research stating that young people become more susceptible to peer pressure from the age of 8 or 9 and primary schools managed this well, but as a young person joined a secondary school it becomes much more difficult. There was also the fact that young people reach adolescence around the same time as they join secondary school.

- A Member of the Committee asked about the transition from Primary to Secondary schools when pupils were joining from Green, Amber or Red categorised primary schools, whether this placed some young people at a disadvantage and what was being done to support the young people.

The Officer explained that the same protocols are available for each cohort of young people, with the focus being on one element at a time, for instance attendance levels. The EAS Advisers clarified that research had been undertaken on how the clusters work

and what made them successful and the EAS was working upon creating data profiles for each cluster and the data transfer between schools, which was identified as important in the Manchester University report commissioned by the EAS. Schools categorised as Red were provided with more support than other schools, which equated to 25 days a year. The support provided by the EAS and other local schools was all directed at improving the outcomes for the young people.

- The Committee discussed providing each school with aspirational achievements, which could be used to show the way towards a higher categorisation. The Chief Education Officer clarified that schools that are in the Red, are so because of Estyn's judgement and they will remain in the Red until Estyn decides otherwise. The EAS Advisers added that the aspirational achievements would be difficult to measure.
- The Committee requested explanation for the terms Step One, Two and Three to be provided. The EAS Advisers explained that Step One was a data driven judgement that groups schools together based on their performance but Welsh Government had changed, Step Two was related to the school's ability to improve (rated A to D), and Step Three concerns the support category of the school (Green to Red). Step One was an issue because WG states that at a local or regional level Key Performance Indicators could not be used for accountability purposes.
- A Member enquired who was responsible for a school in the Red category. The Chief Education Officer explained that at an individual school level the responsibility lies with the leadership team in that school. The Central Education Department provides challenge to the school for under-performance, using warning notices, statutory powers and sometimes replacing Chairs of Governors and commissions the EAS to promote those standards, but the corporate responsibility remains with the Local Authority. There were monthly meetings between EAS and the Deputy Chief Education Officer to discuss a wide range of items and this was a frequent item.
- A Member expressed concern that the changes to the education system in Wales might leave young people with Additional Learning Needs behind. The EAS Advisers stated that it was their role to rationalise the curriculum change for all young people including those with additional learning needs to ensure that didn't happen. While the curriculum change would affect learners with additional learning needs, there were other changes in legislation happening, that would further support young people with additional learning needs.
- A Member enquired about what defined a young person as a 'vulnerable' learner. The EAS Advisers explained that a young person who was not performing to the best of their ability would be classed as vulnerable, including: learners with additional learning needs; Looked after Children; Young Carers; young people in receipt of Free School Meals; young people who have specific needs that maybe only a school know about, and included young people who should be excelling but do not.
- A Member expressed concern that the EAS Business Plan did not contain enough about the delivery of Welsh in relation to the Welsh Language Charter and the disconnect between what's contained in the Business Plan and what's happening in schools. He asked what the EAS was doing to ensure Welsh was taught appropriately in schools.

The EAS Advisers informed the Committee that Estyn had stated that the outcomes relating to the Welsh language education in English speaking schools were strong and the EAS had a team to deliver support Welsh as a second language delivery in schools. The team feed into and share best practice on a national level which is driving forward

progress. Newport faces a challenge due to its geographical location near the English border and the demographical make up of its citizens.

- A Member of the Committee wished to know the method of categorising a school. The EAS Representative explained that EAS use a grid of qualities rated from A to D and Green to Red. The EAS Challenge Adviser and other education professionals rate the school on 30 to 40 different items. This information was then fed into the grid to produce a categorisation for the school. Leadership and teaching are the two most important aspects, and if there was no clear vision for a school then a Red category could result. The EAS would provide a link to be circulated to Members of the Committee for information.

The Chief Education Officer clarified that there needed to be qualifying work done to ensure the validity of the ratings provided by the EAS Challenge Adviser and education professionals. This was done by a Gwent based board, and again by a national board in Cardiff and there had been a very low proportion of judgements challenged and no judgements changed at any of the boards.

- The Committee enquired how the EAS knew that a young person would do equally as well in another school. The EAS Officers informed the Committee that this was something that they were considering to find a solution in part due to the end of the previously required data reporting. It was clarified that they still could track the distance travelled by a young person and their actual achievement distance a young person travels was always an indicator as to their success. The only young people that would not achieve were those with additional learning needs. Primary schools are so good that all young people would achieve to some extent. Going forwards the EAS and the Education Department would be using much more qualitative measures. Examples were provided of the education system in Finland that does not formally test young people until the age of 16 and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), both of which the Welsh Government were talking about.

The EAS Officers explained that half of schools would be below the average line and that over a six-year period the worst performing school will improve to do better than the best performing school 6 years ago. The Chief Education Officer explained that more needed to be learned from the self-evaluation and that this would lead to better performing education and schools in Newport.

The EAS Officers offered to return in the summer to provide a seminar to Members on the changes that have happened since they presented in July 2018.

The Chair thanked the Officers for attending and they were excused from the meeting.

Conclusions

The Committee **agreed** to forward this Minute as a detailed record of its consideration of the Draft EAS Business Plan 2019-20 to the Cabinet to consider alongside the Draft Plan in particular the following comments and recommendations:

- The Committee's overall conclusion upon the report was that standards and levels of teaching is maintained and progressed without the ability to use school level data.
- Following consideration of the evidence gathered through questioning the Officers upon the draft EAS Business Plan 2019-20 the impression from the EAS and Education Department is that they have a greater confidence that they know the level schools are at now, using a collaborative approach between the EAS, Education Department and

Schools and also the cluster approach to schools. There is also a greater understanding of the journey of the young person from primary to secondary.

- The Committee raised concerns about the transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3, which they felt was an area for improvement and requested that when completed Professor Waters' research into the difference between teaching in Year 6 and Year 7 be issued to the Committee for information.
- The Committee raised concerns relating to the reduction in staffing in EAS is now 44% smaller than in 2012, which is shifting the reliance for support onto other schools in the network and peers rather than the EAS. Over reliance upon other schools could impact upon them adversely.
- The Committee recommends that the EAS should have the confidence to push the Welsh Language forward in their Business Plan as a priority in accordance with the Welsh Language Charter.

The Committee formally requests the following from the Education Achievement Service to be circulated to Members of the Committee for information:

- The school categorisation matrix and supporting information;
- The Excellence in Teaching and Leadership Toolkit;
- The research into cluster based working by Manchester University, when completed;
- The EAS to provide an update seminar to the Committee upon the changes and progress made since July 2018, when the Committee received their first update on accountability and curriculum.

4 Delivering the Violence Against Women, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Strategy in Newport

Attendees:

- Mary Ryan – Safeguarding Manager
- Rebecca Haycock – Manager of the Gwent Regional VAWDASV Team
- Ann Hamlet – Lead Safeguarding Officer for Health (Head of Safeguarding Services ABUHB)
- Robert Hartshorn – VAWDASV Chair of the Regional Partnership Board

The Safeguarding Manager presented an overview of how the six strategic priorities within the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Strategy were being delivered in Newport, followed by the Attendees presenting upon the strategic priorities that aligned with their specific areas of expertise.

The Committee asked the following questions;

- A Member expressed concern that the VAWDASV training had only been delivered to 14% of school staff, whom they believed should have been a priority and asked what happened if school staff saw something that concerned them.

The Safeguarding Manager explained that the training to date had been successful and an unforeseen, but positive, result was a quarter of recipients had disclosed

incidence of domestic violence. The set of national indicators provided a percentage of the number of people trained but did not highlight the quality of the training provided. With regard to school staff, the 'Keeping Learning Safe' document which was part of the national learner framework was used to ensure teachers were aware of their duty of care for the young people they worked with.

The Safeguarding Manager informed the Committee that the Local Authority's Safeguarding Champions had been launched the previous month. These individuals would be taking the training back to their own team meetings. The Champions were nominated by their peers, or volunteered during Safeguarding week. The Champions would be receiving full training in the summer, from which they would be able to support people in their teams to seek and reach out for support needed.

There were a number of places where an individual or someone with concerns for the welfare of another could seek support or make a referral. These included a national helpline and a number of Third Sector organisations, including Newport Women's Aid and the Newport City Council Safeguarding Hub. The Police could be contacted for high risk cases.

The Safeguarding Manager explained that the e-learning Training would be rolled out to all Members over the summer of 2019. The upskilling of people in the community was also on the agenda, the hope would have been that by doing this there would have been more people to ask the right questions and to then appropriately deal with the information.

The Committee agreed that all Members would benefit from training.

- A Member asked about the methods of communication used by the VAWDASV team, particularly on social media and what joint working opportunities the team had pursued?

The Attendees explained that the Act was still relatively new and that they would focus on public sector organisations first, then private organisations and then the Third Sector. The VAWDASV team had been researching the options for communicating with the public and other professionals and the reach and impact of the options.

- Members and Attendees discussed how the Act aims to provide a strategic focus to prevention, protection and support for all individuals affected by such violence and abuse. These individuals include male, female and transgender people. The VAWDASV team worked with victims but also perpetrators to establish why the violence happened and what can be done to prevent it happening in the future.
- A Member questioned the RAG status as there was no explanation of what constitutes Red Amber or Green status.

The Committee were advised Welsh Government was consulting on national indicators and the information needed to set benchmarks and targets for each of the measures and actions would stem from this. Currently, Red Actions and Measures were considered to be really concerning, those that were Amber were problems that could be addressed. The Actions and Measures were reviewed at each quarterly board meeting and things changed relatively quickly.

The Committee that an action plan be developed indicating how each Red and Amber measures would be moved to the Green category after the Welsh Government consultation finishes and the results are published.

- The Committee enquired as to what the Attendees meant when they said the term mandatory training and what was its aim. The Attendees explained that the training was to be used to raise awareness and how to best act if an issue was brought to your attention or you had concerns. The statutory responsibility relating to training was two-fold, the first was the e-learning package which was used to raise awareness of the VAWDASV Act. In this context mandatory means that all staff and volunteers must complete the e-learning training. The second statutory aspect was the 'ask and act' training, which takes place over a morning and the purpose is much more role specific to the individuals undertaking the course. Both training packages were suited to the local needs of Newport.
- The Members enquired whether resources would be made available to meet an increase in the number of referrals increased drastically from a large number of people becoming more aware. The Members continued to state that it would not have been fair if the quality of service declined when the people needed it the most.

The Safeguarding Manager explained that the number of referrals they received was closely monitored and that additional resources would need to be sourced if there was a demand. The nature of the domestic violence dictated what additional resources would be required to provide the service.

There were four domestic homicides in Newport, which was the highest of any Local Authority in Wales. Domestic homicides in Gwent were not monitored by any service until this board was established.

- The Committee queried the factors causing the rise in domestic violence. The Attendees stated that the increase was related to young people. Government research had found that by the age of 21, what you have experienced will show in your behavioural traits. Domestic Violence was becoming more visible and was considered normal by some people.

The team had worked in partnership with a Merthyr Tydfil based project that taught young people about healthy relationships. The Attendees went onto clarify that while domestic violence was increasing with young people it is an issue in all cultures and all economic backgrounds.

- The Members asked if there was anything that they could have been doing in the Community.

The Attendees explained that it was being looked at across Gwent and a lot of work was involved in preparing people to have those discussions with people who they thought might be at risk. There was a campaign that increased awareness of male violence against women which was being rolled out across Gwent. A whole school approach was also something that the Attendees believed would enable young people to obtain the support needed.

- The Members asked about the sustainability of funding the service in Gwent, as the Members felt that losing the services was not an option. The Attendees explained that they asked the same question to the Welsh Government at each Board meeting and would continue to ask.

- The Committee wished to know what the key issues face by the team from taking the Act forward, what level of Officers do the board engage with and do they see the regional partnership working? The Attendees explained that resources were needed and the ever changing culture can sometimes mean that the work being complete just missed the mark. Additional resources would also help with the complexity of regional working, as sometimes the work being done does not fit the key themes identified by the five local authorities. The Board works with Head of Service and Directors across the five local authorities and the regional partnership was working to deliver the Act.
- Members discussed the Council's Corporate Safeguarding responsibility, and noted that a report was being presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee next month on this matter. The Committee noted the links between Corporate Safeguarding and reducing domestic abuse as one component of this Corporate responsibility.

Conclusions

The Committee made the following comments and recommendations:

- The Committee welcomed the update report upon delivering the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy (VAWDASV) in Newport, which had many positives including the Home Office Recognition of the VAWDASV pilot in the Gwent Area.
- The Committee requested an update on the progress made to be brought back to the Committee in one years' time and that the report includes a clear ambition, action plans with clearly explained RAG status and more data to be included e.g. on prosecutions, etc.
- Further information on the Action Plan measures and targets to be provided to the Committee when available and an explanation of the RAG categorisation targets.
- The Committee expressed concern that sustainable funding was required otherwise limited resources could inhibit the work able to be done and the need to be mindful of the pressure of increasing work against limited funding resulting in only being able to light touch on a wide range of areas.
- The Committee agreed that all Members would benefit from VAWDASV Training.

5 Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update

The Chair presented a brief verbal update to the Committee upon the second meeting of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee which took place on 5 February 2019. Links to the Agenda, reports and Previous Minutes had been provided in the Background Papers of the Report and a link to the Minutes of the latest Meeting would be circulated when available.

He advised that Members of the JOSOC had attended a visit to the Semi- Conductor Site on the morning of the meeting, followed by the Joint Committee meeting in Beechwood House, Newport in the afternoon for the consideration of reports upon: CSC Foundry Building Report; the Joint Working Agreement Business Plan, and; Forward Work Programme, Training and Schedule of Meetings.

Members discussed whether the resources provided were sufficient to provide assurance that the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal was being scrutinised effectively.

Conclusions:

1. The Committee noted the update provided by the Chairperson following the meeting of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 5 February 2019.
2. The Scrutiny Adviser agreed to circulate the Minutes of the Joint Scrutiny Committee to Members of the Committee once they became available.
3. The Committee would continue to receive updates following future meetings of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

6 Scrutiny Adviser Reports

Attendee:

- M Lawrence (Scrutiny Adviser)

a) Forward Work Programme Update

The Scrutiny Adviser presented the Forward Work Programme, and informed the Committee of the topics due to be discussed at the next Committee meeting:

3 April 2019:

- Regional Area Plan 2018-19 Update - Gwent Regional Partnership Board
- Shared Resource Service Update

The Committee **agreed** the topics for the next meeting, as above.

b) Action Sheet

The Scrutiny Adviser presented the Action Sheet and advised the Committee that as indicated in the table, the item had been actioned.

c) Information Reports

The Scrutiny Adviser advised that the following report had been circulated to Members of the Committee as an Information Report and that no comments had been received:

- **WAO Service User Perspective Review, Flying Start – Newport City Council.**

d) Scrutiny Letters

The Scrutiny Adviser informed the Committee that a Scrutiny Letter had been sent to the Public Services Board scheduled for 12 March submitting the comments the Committee had made upon the Well-being Plan Mid-Year Update at the 9 January meeting. The Minutes of the that Public Services Board meeting would be circulated to the Committee for information when available.