

Scrutiny Report



Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Part 1

Date: 12 March 2018

Subject Education Achievement Service (EAS) Business Plan 2018 - 2021

Author Overview and Scrutiny Officer

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Area / Role / Subject
Sarah Morgan	Chief Education Officer
Debbie Hartevelde, Managing Director;	Education Achievement Service (EAS) Representative

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

- 1.1 Note the priorities contained within the Submission of Evidence (**Appendix 1**), EAS Business Plan (**Appendix 2**) and the Local Authority Specific Annex (**Appendix 3**);
- 1.2 Consider the impact of the expected outcomes and the specific programme that will be implemented during 2018-19 for Newport (contained within **Appendix 3**);
- 1.3 Determine if it wishes to make any comment to the Cabinet Member on the Business Plan, or any of the specific actions for Newport;
- 1.4 Acknowledge that as the Performance Scrutiny Committee- People has the role of monitoring education performance, the **Local Authority Annex (Appendix 3)** would be shared with that Committee;
- 1.5 Continue with the EAS reports scheduled for the remainder of this Committee's FWP up to June and consider how the Scrutiny Committee should be involved with monitoring the implementation of this plan and Newport's progress against the EAS Business plan during 2018-19, when considering the Annual Forward Work Programme for next year at the Committee meeting in July.

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 The EAS is the school improvement service for the five Local Authorities in the consortium (Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen). The role of the EAS is to support, monitor and challenge schools with the purpose of raising education standards in South East Wales.
- 2.2 The Education Advisory Service (EAS) is required to submit an annual overarching regional Business Plan with accompanying annexes for each of the five Local Authorities (LAs). This Business Plan (2018-2021) outlines the programme of work that is required to continue to accelerate outcomes for children and young people across all schools in South East Wales. The plan focuses on the urgent need to raise aspiration and accelerate improvement in pupil outcomes, improve the quality of teaching and leadership and build a self-improving system within and across schools and settings. The priorities for the Business Plan 2018-2019 have been derived from the progress that has been made towards the previous Business Plan and progress made across the region with the areas that have been identified as requiring improvements through self-evaluation processes and feedback from Estyn on the inspection of the EAS.

Previous Consideration of EAS Business Plan

- 2.2 Previously, the Education Advisory Service Business Plan for 2017-20 was reported to the Learning Caring and Leisure Scrutiny Committee held on 22 March 2017.

At that meeting, the Principal Challenge Adviser for Newport presented the Education Achievement Service Business Plan for 2017-20, including the specific local targets for Newport.

The following points were discussed:

- It was confirmed that the table on page 7 of the business plan (Key Stage 4 L2 including E/W & M results 2012-2016) was drawn from raw data, not “value added” figures. Members suggested that including additional information to reflect the achievement of pupils, as well as their attainment, would provide a more rounded picture of progress.
- A general comment was made regarding the focus on performance indicators, and the need to provide meaningful data in reviewing school performance. It was suggested that the interpretation of educational standards needed to be re-considered, for measures to reflect more accurately the performance of schools in improving achievement levels.
- Concerns were raised that Newport had been performing below the Welsh average for pupil attainment for the last 5 years. Officers highlighted that other factors also needed to be taken into account when considering school performance, for example the higher than average rate of pupils in receipt of free school meals. Welsh Government also set “modelled expectations” for each authority, which took into consideration a wider range of factors such as the progress made by pupils. It was reported that Newport was currently performing at 1% below its modelled expectations.
- Queries were made regarding the percentages of free school meals pupils in specific schools in Newport. Officers agreed to report back with this detail.
- It was confirmed that the FPI targets for foundation phase were lower for 2017 because they were cohort-specific. It was noted that standards for foundation phase are already high.
- It was noted that St Andrews Primary was no longer in an Estyn follow-up category.

- The officers explained how progress against the Business Plan was monitored and reported, through an on-going self-evaluation process, and regular communication and challenge between the EAS Principal Challenge Advisor for Newport and NCC's Education Management Team. This was fed in to scrutiny through the annual EAS reports, and also the Education service plan monitoring reports.
- In response to queries around risk monitoring, Members were directed to the full risk information published on the EAS website. It was also suggested that the minutes and associated papers from the EAS Audit and Risk Committee could be circulated for information to Scrutiny Members in future, to share information and give further context to discussions.

Resolutions and Actions from the Meeting of Learning Caring and Leisure Scrutiny Committee held on 22 March 2017:

The Principal Challenge Adviser **agreed** to report back to the EAS management team on the Committee's suggestion to include "value added" data within the Business Plan.

The Committee **requested** that Free School Meal percentage figures for all Newport Schools be circulated to Committee Members, to give context to future discussions on school performance statistics.

No further monitoring was agreed as this would be a matter for the new Committee following the election, however annual monitoring of the EAS Business Plan would be included in the suggested work programme to be agreed after May. The suggestion to circulate the EAS Audit and Risk Committee papers for information would also be included.

2.3 Partnership Committee Terms of Reference

At the AGM meeting of Council held on 16 May 2017 a new Scrutiny Committee Structure was agreed including the Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships, the remit of which includes:

Holding partnerships to account for their performance.

To include - EAS, Newport Live, Norse, SRS and Joint Commissioning arrangements:

- Performance of the partners against agreed objectives;
- Effectiveness of governance structures;
- Undertake formal consultation on key documents as required.

The Committee should therefore focus its questioning on how the consortium is working together to create and implement its Business Plan 2018-21

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

3.1 The following information is attached for the Committees consideration:

Appendix 1 – Submission of Evidence to Scrutiny - Managing Director EAS;

Appendix 2 - EAS Business Plan 2018 - 21;

Appendix 3 - Newport Local Authority Specific Annex 2018 - 2019;

Appendix 4 - Mid Year Review of Newport Annex 2017 - 2018 (for information only).

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- Consider and provide comments on the Business Plan as part of the consultation process;
- Consider the **main strengths** and **areas for development** within Newport, as detailed in the Local Authority Annex and to consider how Local Authority services can be aligned to meet the ambitious targets within the Business Plan, therefore ensuring all pupils meet their full potential;
- Consider how well the consortium is working in partnership on a regional level.

Suggested Lines of Enquiry

4.1 *In considering / evaluating the EAS Business Plan, the Committee may wish to consider focusing questions on:*

- How the Consortium sets targets and whether they are robust and achievable?
- Where targets are not met in the previous year, what is the process that the Consortium uses to reset them for future years?
- What barriers and challenges to improving performance does the Consortium encounter and how will these be addressed?
- How will progress against the Business Plan be monitored and scrutinised?
- What are the resource implications of delivering on the plan and how does collaborative working as a consortium maximise the resources available?
- What is the process for the approval of the final Business Plan by each LA Partner?
- How does the Consortium work together as partners to mitigate risks to delivery of the Business Plan?

4.2 Estyn Inspections

In May 2016, Estyn inspected the school improvement services provided by the EAS. In September 2017, Estyn visited the EAS to review the progress made by the consortium in relation to the recommendations identified in the inspection. A summary of the judgments made by [Estyn's 2017 Inspection Report](#) upon the progress made towards the recommendations made in their 2016 Report, is set out below:

Recommendation	Estyn Progress Judgement
R1 Consider the use of a wider range of performance indicators at school and regional level to ensure that the progress of all groups of learners is challenged and supported	Satisfactory Progress
R2 Improve consistency in the quality of evaluation of school improvement activities throughout the service	Strong Progress
R3 Identify and manage risks more effectively	Very Good Progress

In evaluating progress for each recommendation Estyn considered the following questions and Members of the Committee may wish to focus on these areas in formulating their questions:

- Has the consortium understood the reasons behind the recommendation?
- Has the consortium taken reasonable action to address the recommendation successfully, taking into account its starting point, the time between inspection and follow-up visit as well as the complexity of the issues to be addressed?
- Has the consortium been appropriately supported in addressing the recommendations by its partner local authorities?
- Has the consortium ensured that changes arising from its progress in addressing each recommendation have become embedded enough within its working practices to secure sustained improvement?

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Supporting Information

5.1 [‘Qualified for life’](#) - the national Education Improvement Strategy (2014)

‘Aim: that every child and young person should benefit from excellent teaching and learning.

To deliver this aim the document sets out four strategic objectives:

1. An excellent professional workforce with strong pedagogy based on an understanding of what works.
2. A curriculum which is engaging and attractive to children and young people and which develops within them an independent ability to apply knowledge and skills.
3. The qualifications young people achieve are nationally and internationally respected and act as a credible passport to their future learning and employment.
4. Leaders of education at every level working together in a self-improving system, providing mutual support and challenge to raise standards in all schools.

6 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

6.1 The Council’s Corporate Plan 2017 – 2022; **Building on Success - Building a Better Newport** sets out the following:

Well-being Objectives	Promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment	Improve skills, educational outcomes & employment opportunities	Enable people to be healthy, independent & resilient	Build cohesive & sustainable communities
Corporate Plan Commitments	Thriving City	Aspirational People		Resilient Communities
Supporting Function	Modernised Council			

The **Aspirational People Commitments** within the Corporate Plan that relate to this report are as follows:

Ref No.	Commitment:
6	The Newport Children's Charter sets out our commitment to children and families, including headlines commitments to children in care and care leavers
7	Three new state of the art schools will be built, tangibly improving student choice and the educational offer in the city.
8	The annual Newport Work Discovery week is established bringing together residents, employers and the public sector to connect and raise aspirations. The council commits to 15 apprenticeships per year as part of this city-wide drive.
9	Increasing educational and social care capacity, so that fewer than ten children will be educated out of the city, and the number of out of county social care placements will reduce by 25%
10	Newport will improve the number of pupils achieving at least five GCSEs A*-C including English and Maths in line with the Welsh average.

7 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

7.1 General questions

- How is this Business Plan affected by the new legislation?
- How will this plan impact upon future generations? What is the long term impact?
- What evidence is provided to demonstrate WFGA has been / is being considered?
- Evidence from Community Profiles / other data?
- (When published:) Evidence of links to Wellbeing Assessment / Objectives / Plan?

7.2 Wellbeing Goals

- How are the Wellbeing goals reflected in the Business Plan?
 - *A prosperous Wales*
 - *A resilient Wales*
 - *A healthier Wales*
 - *A more equal Wales*
 - *A Wales of cohesive communities*
 - *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language*
 - *A globally responsible Wales*

7.3 Sustainable Development Principles

- Does the Plan demonstrate how as an Authority we are working in accordance with the sustainable development principles from the act when planning services?
 - **Long Term**
The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs
 - **Prevention**
How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives
 - **Integration**
Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies
 - **Collaboration**
Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives
 - **Involvement**
The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

8. Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan](#)
- [Report](#) and [Minutes](#) of the Learning Caring and Leisure Scrutiny Committee 22 March 2017
- [EAS Website](#)
- [Estyn's 2017 Inspection Report](#)
- Welsh Government action plan for Education in Wales: [Education in Wales: Our National Mission 2017 - 21](#)
- [Report to Annual Council 16 May 2017 upon New Scrutiny Committee Structures](#)

Report Completed: 6 March 2018