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**THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND**

15th June 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

**EDUCATION AND LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee will be held in virtually via Microsoft Teams - if you would like to attend this meeting live via Microsoft Teams please contact committee.services@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk on Tuesday, 22nd June, 2021 at 10.00 am.

***Please note that a pre and post meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start and following the conclusion of the meeting for members of the committee.***

Yours faithfully

Michelle Morris  
Managing Director

**AGENDA**

**Pages**

**1. SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION**

You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required

We welcome correspondence in the medium of Welsh or English. / Croesawn ohebiaith trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg.

should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

**2. APOLOGIES**

To receive.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

To consider any declarations of interests and dispensations made.

**4. TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

To consider.

**5. SPECIAL EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES 5 - 12**

To receive the Minutes of the Special Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee held on the 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2021.

(Please note the Minutes are submitted for points of accuracy only).

**6. EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES 13 - 26**

To receive the Minutes of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee held on the 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.

(Please note the Minutes are submitted for points of accuracy only).

**7. ACTION SHEET - 20TH APRIL 2021 27 - 40**

To receive the Action Sheet.

**8. PROPOSED SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2021-22 41 - 52**

To consider the report.

**9. EDUCATION DIRECTORATE – RECOVERY AND RENEWAL PLAN 53 - 80**

To consider the report of the Head of School Improvement and the Service Manager, Education Transformation and Business Change.

**10. ANEURIN LEISURE TRUST PERFORMANCE AND MONITORING REPORT (APRIL 2020 – MARCH 2021)** 81 - 92

To consider the report of the Corporate Director Education.

**11. IMPROVING SCHOOLS PROGRAMME 2021** 93 - 116

To consider the report of the Corporate Director Education.

To: Councillor H. Trollope (Chair)  
Councillor J. Holt (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor D. Bevan  
Councillor G. Collier  
Councillor M. Cook  
Councillor M. Day  
Councillor L. Elias  
Councillor S. Healy  
Councillor J. Hill  
Councillor C. Meredith  
Councillor J. C. Morgan  
Councillor J. P. Morgan  
Councillor T. Smith  
Councillor B. Summers  
Councillor D. Wilkshire  
T. Baxter

All other Members (for information)  
Manager Director  
Chief Officers

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**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT: SPECIAL EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL, 2021**

**REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR H. TROLLOPE (CHAIR)**

Councillors: J. Holt  
 D. Bevan  
 M. Cook  
 M. Day  
 L. Elias  
 J. Hill  
 C. Meredith  
 J.C. Morgan  
 J.P. Morgan  
 L. Parsons  
 T. Smith  
 B. Summers

**Co-opted Member**

A. Williams

**AND:** Corporate Director of Education  
 Education Transformation Manager  
 Head of School Improvement & Inclusion  
 Press & Publicity Officer  
 Scrutiny & Democratic Officer / Advisor

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<p><b><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	

<p><b>No. 2</b></p>	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. Collier and D. Wilkshire.</p> <p><b><u>Co-opted Member</u></b> Tim Baxter</p> <p>Service Manager Inclusion</p>	
<p><b>No. 3</b></p>	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
	<p><b><u>VERBAL UPDATE - COVID-19 PANDEMIC</u></b></p> <p>At the request of the Chair, the Corporate Director of Education provided the latest update on the Directorate's response to the Covid-19 Pandemic.</p> <p>The Welsh Government announced on the 5th March that more pupils were to return to face to face learning. The Directorate worked closely with Headteachers to adopt a common approach across the school estate for the wider return of learners and from 15<sup>th</sup> March that included all primary pupils attending their school full time. Year 11 learners attended from the same date, but there was a degree of flexibility for an element of remote learning and that was determined by the individual school and communicated to parents appropriately. There was also provision for year 10 pupils in preparation for Key Stage 4 assessments during the summer term. In addition to that all year 7, 8 and 9 learners were offered a full day check in session prior to the Easter holiday period to check on their progress and general well-being.</p> <p>In relation to the position around positive Covid-19 cases, there were 5 schools that were affected, the number of positive cases for pupils was 5 and the number of positive staff cases, including one member of staff from Second Chances, was 4. Prior to the end of the spring term, the number of people affected due to self-isolation because they were categorised as being part of a contact group was 180 learners. The Director was anticipating an</p>	

	<p>announcement from Welsh Government around a full return for face to face learning for all learners from 12<sup>th</sup> April. He confirmed that schools were well prepared for such a decision post Easter break and all schools had received the outstanding lateral flow tests for staff.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding mobile testing units, the Director of Education confirmed the intention to bring mobile testing units back into Blaenau Gwent, he explained that it was likely there would be an increase in positive cases due to the Easter bank holiday and the return to face to face learning but assured Members that schools were well prepared and Covid secure risk assessments were in place.</p>	
<p><b>No. 5</b></p>	<p><b><u>ACTION SHEET - 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2021</u></b></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the meeting of the Education &amp; Learning Scrutiny Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 was submitted, whereupon:-</p> <p><b><u>Grant funds awarded to the Education Directorate</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that, due to an error, Appendix 2 would be replaced on the Modern.Gov system following the meeting.</p> <p>With regard to Tranche funding, the Director of Education advised that he would liaise with finance colleagues and provide an update for Members.</p> <p>A Member enquired why PDG funding was not listed on Appendix 2, the Director of Education explained that Appendix 2 only listed funding received directly from the Welsh Government as per the original request, the PDG was administered through the EAS.</p> <p>The Member felt that it was important to have information on the PDG's funding as it was now assessed every 3 years and schools could see a significant decrease. The Director of Education advised Members that information would be provided regarding PDG funding for the years 2019/20 and 2020/21 for the next meeting via the Action Sheet and reiterated that it was administered by the EAS regionally. The Director explained that it was Welsh Government criteria that the PDG was issued through the regional</p>	<p>Director of Education</p> <p>Director of Education</p>

	<p>consortia, however, the EAS used the information that was presented from the Council in relation to the number of pupils who were eligible for free school meals to determine the level of PDG issued to the Council. There had been an increase in the number of learners eligible for free school meals and the number who were receiving direct payments was approximately 1,700. The process was monitored weekly and application runs launched in line with requests from schools and liaising regularly with parents in order to meet the needs of the families.</p> <p>A Member enquired if administration fees were taken from the grants listed. The Director said the Welsh Government did offer a very small amount of funding for the administration of the grant. The overall amount of delegated budget that was transferred directly to schools was approximately 86%.</p> <p>The Chair referred to Appendix 1 and raised concern regarding the small amount of grants received for projects such as School Counselling and Schools Summer Activity Project. The Director of Education clarified that this amount was in addition to the Welsh Government funding already received for the School Counselling service, it recognised the extra demand against the service and would complement the budget already received. In relation to the £6,000 Schools Summer Activity Project this was linked to the School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP) to support learners in school holiday periods. The Education Transformation Manager would share the outcome report from last year's initiative to demonstrate some of the work that had been undertaken.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the action sheet be noted.</p>	<p>Education Transformation Manager</p>
<p><b>No. 6</b></p>	<p><b><u>PROPOSAL TO CONSULT ON PEN Y CWM CAPACITY INCREASE</u></b></p> <p>A Member referred to a conflict of interest as some Members of this Committee were also Members of the Planning, Regulatory &amp; General Licensing Committee. The Director of Education said that, in his opinion, there would not be a conflict of interest as the discussion would cover the potential for remodelling of the current Pen y Cwm</p>	



School building but would not focus on details from a planning perspective and felt that Members could engage and offer their views and opinions around the proposal.

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Education which was presented to seek the views of Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee, in relation to the proposal to extend the capacity of Pen y Cwm Special School from 120 to 175 pupils, accommodating the demand for places. Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee will be a statutory consultee, should proposal to proceed to consultation be granted by Executive Committee.

The Director of Education introduced the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.

The Director of Education highlighted an amendment in the report to paragraph 2.13 in that the consultation is to conclude on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2021, not 6<sup>th</sup> May as identified in the report.

A Member enquired regarding additional staff if the school reached its fully capacity. The Director of Education said any additional staffing implications could be dealt with in the potential differential between the current budget and the proposed budget, which would be an additional £575,000, dependent upon the needs of learners, that component of budget would potentially need to fund additional staff to support learners in the setting.

A Member raised concerns regarding the small number of out of county placements being accommodated. The Education Transformation Manager said that the initial review had been undertaken by the Inclusion team, however, a more detailed review would be required going forward. Out of county placements were determined upon the needs and circumstances associated with each individual pupil and upon the initial review it was anticipated that the maximum number, at this point in time, that could be brought back into the Local Authority was 5. Where there was capacity and the individual pupil's needs could be met within the Local Authority then the team would look to bring more out of county placements back to the Local Authority.

In relation to capacity the Director of Education informed Members that in the short term capacity was 175 pupils, phase 2 would consider the more medium to long term arrangements and the potential to further increase capacity in subsequent years.

A Member enquired if the capacity of 175 pupils would be sufficient in the near future or would the school be oversubscribed again with the increase in the number of ALN pupils. The Director of Education said the focus was on dealing with demand in the foreseeable future, but moving forward capacity at the school would need to be reviewed as part of phase 2. The Education Transformation Manager added that the focus was on immediate priorities and addressing the work that the school had already undertaken around reconfiguring the teaching and learning environment. With regard to increasing capacity for the school in line with potential future demand, there were a series of options being considered such as potential expansion or extension of the school, or satellite locations with schools with sufficient capacity to accommodate this. She reiterated that the focus was on addressing short to medium term issues which had occurred as a result of the increases in demand that were currently projected, then looking at long term with a sustainable and best solution for Pen y Cwm.

In relation to the building suitability categorisation, the Education Transformation Manager explained that one key factor to achieve an A categorisation, would be that capacity would need to be extended as the school was currently over-subscribed and not offering the level of provision that was offered previously, as some specialist areas, such as technology and art areas, had been reconfigured to be used as teaching and learning spaces as opposed to being used as specialist areas. She confirmed that if the proposal to increase capacity at Pen y Cwm School was approved the building suitability categorisation would change to A.

A Member referred to the 20 out of county placements and enquired what issues prevented Pen y Cwm School taking more of these placements. The Education Transformation Manager explained that this fell under the Inclusion team's remit, but one potential barrier could be regarding Children

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Looked After who may require out of county placements due to their individual circumstances. The Directorate were committed to a full review of those pupils' needs and if their needs were associated with facilities, capacity or something that could be developed more locally then that would be taken forward.

In response to a Member's question regarding capital costs circa £250,000, the Director of Education clarified that there were capital costs associated with the remodelling, however, these would be funded via Welsh Government grants that had been allocated so there was no direct impact upon the Council's capital programme.

The Chair enquired regarding how Health & Safety considerations would be managed in relation to pupils, staff and contractors whilst the remodelling work was being undertaken. The Director of Education said that most of the significant remodelling works would be undertaken outside of the times when learners were present, but this could mean an extension to the contract period post September 2021. The Education Transformation Manager said that a Project Management team would be established to oversee the construction phase, working closely with the school and the contractor. Works would be phased accordingly with the bulk of the works taking place in areas which were not currently used from a teaching and learning perspective. The works taking place in the main body of the building, that could potentially affect learners, could be undertaken outside of the school opening times. This could mean a slight extension to the contract, the Project Management team would liaise very closely with the school regarding temporary management solutions to minimise disruption to learners.

The Chair commented that with the increased capacity at the school had parking issues been considered. The Education Transformation Manager said that a transport impact assessment would be undertaken to look at the associated implications. The majority of pupils were transported to the school and the majority of pupils on the waiting list would also require home to school transport. Consideration was being given to reconfigure home to school transport by age as opposed to area. The school was looking to consult upon changes to session times i.e.

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primary pupils brought in separately to secondary and post 16 pupils to ensure a more efficient flow of traffic to the site. During Covid changes had been made to the regulations around the school days and school session times which had allowed the school to pilot the potential changes to session times, as this had worked well for the school they would look to take this forward subject to consultation.

The Chair suggested that an appropriate representative from Pen y Cwm Special School be invited to attend and engage in the consultation session. The Director of Education confirmed that a representative from the school would be invited to participate in the consultation session.

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that the report, associated document and course of action be accepted.

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**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO:** **THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT:** **EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2021**

**REPORT OF:** **DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER**

**PRESENT:** COUNCILLOR H. TROLLOPE (CHAIR)

Councillors: J. Holt  
 D. Bevan  
 M. Cook  
 M. Day  
 J. Hill  
 J.C. Morgan  
 J.P. Morgan  
 L. Parsons  
 T. Smith  
 B. Summers

**Co-opted Member**

T. Baxter

**AND:** Corporate Director of Education  
 Service Manager Inclusion  
 Service Manager - Education Transformation and Business Change  
 Head of School Improvement & Inclusion  
 Press & Publicity Officer  
 Scrutiny & Democratic Officer / Advisor

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
	<p><b><u>WELCOME</u></b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Luisa Munro-Morris as the new Head of School Improvement &amp; Inclusion to her first formal meeting of the Education &amp; Learning Scrutiny Committee.</p>	

No. 1	<p><b><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. Collier, L. Elias, C. Meredith and D. Wilkshire.</p> <p><b><u>Co-opted Member</u></b> A. Williams</p> <p>Strategic Education Improvement Manager</p>	
No. 3	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><b><u>EDUCATION &amp; LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></b></p> <p>The Minutes of the Education &amp; Learning Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 were submitted whereupon:-</p> <p>A Member requested that acronyms be shown in brackets after a title or phrase.</p> <p>The Chair requested that a list of acronyms be prepared for the first meeting of the Education &amp; Learning Scrutiny Committee for the next Committee cycle.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><b><u>ACTION SHEET – 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL, 2021</u></b></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the meeting of the Education &amp; Learning Scrutiny Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2021 was submitted, whereupon:-</p> <p><b><u>Welsh Government Grants</u></b></p> <p><b><u>School Summer Activity Project (SHEP programme)</u></b></p>	

	<p>A Member enquired if the scheme could be extended to other schools across the borough in the future. The Education Transformation Manager said there were strict rules around the grant spend and the criteria, for example, associated with free school meal status etc. and had undertaken engagement with a series of schools throughout the school estate. Moving forward she would look to engage with other schools in the borough regarding eligibility for the scheme.</p> <p>In relation to grants, a Member said that in the previous meeting he had requested an update on grants received from the Education Achievement Service (EAS) etc. He believed that nearly £2m had been received for Pupil Development Grant (PDG) etc. and felt it was important to have those figures. The Corporate Director of Education confirmed that finance officers were preparing a note for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee on the Pupil Development Grant (PDG). He advised that in broad terms the grant was to support the more disadvantaged learners, there were specific areas of spend and these would be included in the note to give Members a better understanding of where the grant money was planned and spent. He said it was a sizeable grant approaching £2m across the school estate and the Education Directorate needed to ensure that the grant was spent appropriately to ensure that through the schools; families, children and learners who were eligible for free school meals had the opportunity to take advantage of that funding to support their development.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the action sheet be noted.</p>	Director of Education
No. 6	<p><b><u>BLAENAU GWENT EDUCATION SERVICES SELF-EVALUATION AND BUSINESS PLANNING</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Education which was presented to provide Members of the Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to scrutinise the findings of ongoing self-evaluation and business planning processes undertaken within the Education Directorate, across the Council and with key partners.</p>	

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The Corporate Director of Education advised Members that this was a new report but some of the data would relate back to 2019-2020 as there had been a relaxation of the performance and data management arrangements, however, this was an updated report on the current position from a self-evaluation perspective.

The Corporate Director of Education spoke to the report and highlighted areas where good progress had been made and where further improvement was required.

A Member referred to scrutinising 2019 data and enquired regarding the reason for this, as he felt that this data had already been scrutinised in a previous report. The Corporate Director of Education reiterated there had been a relaxation in reporting arrangements. A report had been presented to Scrutiny on the Key Stage 4 results, in particular within secondary schools, however, they were based on Centre Assessment Grades (CAGs). He pointed out that it was not possible to undertake stringent benchmarking linked to the fact that they were not externally verified results.

The Member raised concerns regarding the different methods of assessments and felt it was important that schools did not fall into a false sense of security moving forward.

The Corporate Director of Education said that the results achieved at Key Stage 4 were in line with targets set in the School Development Plans. Future reports could include a connection between performance at Key Stage 4 against the School Development Plan, but the Council had to be cautious against holding schools to account against that data at this juncture.

A Member referred to paragraph 6.2 – Schools Causing Concern (SCC) and felt that the improvement work that these schools had undertaken over the last two years had not been recognised as Estyn had not been undertaking normal monitoring activity for some time. The Corporate Director of Education said that both schools had raised this issue as Estyn monitoring visits had been put on hold, which meant that both schools continued to be in an Estyn category for a period of time. Schools Causing Concern

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meetings had been held and had highlighted that satisfactory progress had been made. A meeting with Estyn had been planned and they had strongly indicated, dependent on any potential increases related to Covid, that monitoring visits would recommence in the autumn term, which would provide both schools with the opportunity to have their progress assessed by the Inspectorate.

A Member enquired regarding the areas for improvement, in particular, poor language acquisition skills in very young children and suggested a possible solution would be to increase pre-school and nursery provision across the borough. He also enquired regarding the key area for improvement on school exclusions and commented that if school exclusions continued to rise and the number of pupils opting to self-educate increased, following Covid, it would be very difficult to improve attendance rates.

With regard to nursery provision and early years the Director of Education said that appropriate Early Years provision was fundamental for strong acquisition of language at an early age to enable children to have a good start, which would impact on their education throughout all key stages. The Director gave an example of one of the initiatives being taken forward, i.e. the new Glyncoed development as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools had attached Early Years provision. Work was also being undertaken with schools, as part of the wider transformation programme, to ensure that Early Years provision was available across most of the school estate.

With regard to exclusions and attendance, the Director said that the type of approach used was important to retain learners within school settings. There were parameters in place but exclusions were necessary on occasion, but only as a last resort. He felt the most appropriate approach was around positive behaviour management and good policies and practices within schools and believed that consideration of a preventative approach to exclusions could have a positive impact on attendance across the board.

The Service Manager Inclusion commented that the Children's Commissioners report looked at how exclusions at Foundation Phase could be significantly reduced across

Wales. In Blaenau Gwent, Primary school exclusions had increased over the last 3 years, and they were now looking at how to take the Children's Commissioners report forward. In relation to the connection between attendance and exclusions, the Service Manager said that exclusions did impact upon attendance figures. The team were currently looking at a regional exclusion approach and taking some of the practices that were in place across the region to see how they could develop these practices for the benefit of Blaenau Gwent schools.

The Head of School Improvement & Inclusion added that regarding the development of the recovery and renewal plan, a key priority was to engage with young people, including those at risk of being excluded, to understand their circumstances and draw from that experience to help and support them to not become excluded.

In response to a Member's question regarding double counting absenteeism, the Service Manager reassured Members that where a pupil was dual registered the attendance would only be recorded at the setting they attended on that day.

A Member referred to the low numbers of pupils who sat A levels last year and enquired if there was a percentage regarding the number of pupils sitting A levels that the Authority should be aiming towards. The Director of Education said that as part of a Member Briefing session, Coleg Gwent had presented their overall data across the last three years, which demonstrated an increase in both the amount of learners who had undertaken A levels and also the amount of learners who had pursued vocational courses of study, he felt that one of the advantages of a tertiary model was the broad range of curriculum on offer. There would be close monitoring of the amount of A level provision available with Coleg Gwent and that would feature as part of the Post 16 Partnership Board agenda. He felt that the data Coleg Gwent had presented was encouraging and showed an increase in the amount of post 16 participation across the board and also recognised and acknowledged the amount of young people within Blaenau Gwent who were pursuing more vocational based learning provision.

	<p>With regard to the learners choosing to take A levels, the Director of Education said there was a pattern across Wales, whereby the amount of learners choosing the A level route had reduced, so this was not unique to Blaenau Gwent. This would form part of the monitoring arrangements with the Post 16 Partnership Board and would ensure that data was brought back to Members as part of the Forward Work Programme via the Member Development section.</p> <p>A Member referred to the gender gap and enquired why this was not an area for improvement. The Director of Education explained that the list of areas for improvement was not exhaustive, the report provided a high level narrative of overall performance. There was more work to be undertaken in relation to the gender participation gap and gender performance gap. Males tended to perform less well in certain subjects and moving forward there would be a focus on a curriculum that is accessible to all learners e.g. STEM subjects i.e. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and the Directorate were working closely with Primary and Secondary schools and Post 16 to ensure that an attractive curriculum offer meets the needs and interests of both males and females moving forward.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that the report be accepted as presented.</p>	
<p><b>No. 7</b></p>	<p><b><u>EDUCATION DIRECTORATE - RESPONSE TO COVID-19</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Education which was presented to provide Members with an opportunity to scrutinise the Education Directorate’s response to the COVID-19 situation, particularly supporting the schools during the emergency period.</p> <p>The Corporate Director of Education spoke to the report and highlighted that verbal updates regarding the Education Directorate’s response to Covid-19 had been provided at Committee meetings to ensure that Members were appraised of the latest developments. This report reflected</p>	

on the activity for both the autumn and spring terms and covered the most pertinent up-to-date information.

The Head of School Improvement and Inclusion commented, that as a Headteacher and from colleagues' experiences also, they all felt extremely supported by Blaenau Gwent and included in all discussions in terms of reopening schools and then the further lockdown, and also how they were going to get young people back into school safely.

The Chair thanked the officer for her comments and noted that the Committee welcomed the feedback from Headteachers' perspective.

A Member raised a question regarding pupils taking home IT equipment supplied by the Authority and pupils using their own devices in and out of school, and enquired how the Council would ensure that the pupils using their own equipment was adequate, and with face to face learning returning, would the children continue to be supplied with the IT equipment by the LA.

In response, the Director of Education said there would potentially be components of blended learning for the foreseeable future, in particular learners having the opportunity to learn in home settings with appropriate equipment was absolutely critical to making that successful. In relation to Bring Your Own Devices (BYOD) the Directorate were working closely with SRS to ensure that any learner using equipment that it was secure and did not create any potential risks for them, this was part of the wider infrastructure and connectivity project. There had been approximately 1,600 devices released to learners and a number of them had benefited from blended learning, he felt there were strong elements of learning that had taken place over the last year that could be built upon moving forward.

The Service Manager - Education Transformation and Business Change added that the team had been working closely with schools looking at the needs of digitally disadvantaged learners, the current plan was for the devices that had been distributed to be retained by the learners until the summer term, this would include laptops and mi-fi units which enable connectivity. This would be

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reviewed going forward but the Authority was committed to providing support for the remainder of the academic year. Currently the team were working with schools, the EAS and SRS on the development of the ICT Strategy looking at how best to enable learners to have access across the board both at home and in school. There was approximately 1 device to every learner throughout the school estate and the aspiration was to retain and possibly increase this wherever possible. With the Hwb Ed-Tech initiative and Welsh Government funding associated with that, this would allow the team to look at the replacement of approximately 25% of end of life devices throughout the school estate and this was being looked at as part of the sustainability planning in line with the ICT Strategy.

A Member raised a question regarding loaned devices and whether maintenance of those devices remained the responsibility of the Council.

The Service Manager explained that at this point in time they were still very much owned and maintained by the Local Authority and if there were any issues with those devices then the Authority would respond immediately, both the schools and the SRS were working with the Local Education Authority to respond to any issues, there would be a review of requirements and a plan developed throughout the summer term. The Directorate was working with the Welsh Government to look at their plans around funding and also working closely with schools to look at their plans around delivery. At this point in time there was no formalised plan, however, a plan would be established over the course of the summer term which would come into effect from the beginning of the autumn term which would enable learners to maintain full inclusion both at home and at school.

A Member referred to the class bubble arrangement that schools were operating within and hoped that this arrangement would not be relaxed too soon and schools regress. The Director of Education said this had not been relaxed as the latest Welsh Government guidance had been released and it retained the same type of practices around creating class bubbles. He felt that it was still a precarious position and relaxation of class bubbles too early would have a detrimental impact on the overall cases.

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	<p>The Service Manager - Education Transformation and Business Change added that they were extremely mindful around relaxation of rules and the management of risks, bubbles had worked well to date and they hoped to retain those arrangements for the remainder of the summer with a view to undertaking a full scale review around the operational arrangements for September in line with Welsh Government and Public Health Wales guidance.</p> <p>In response to a Member’s question regarding refurbishing devices, the Service Manager - Education Transformation and Business Change responded that a significant amount of work had been undertaken to build and re-purpose the devices so they could be distributed, that had been done on a staggered basis over the course of the last academic session in line with new and emergent digitally disadvantaged learners. At this stage, the laptops and the software that was on the devices was fit for purpose, there were monitoring procedures in place whereby any issues that arose, the device could be returned. They were working with the SRS to look at whether or not further work needed to be undertaken on those devices and if so, would be proactive in ensuring there was timely collection and redistribution of those devices. The Directorate was aware of potential risks around further spikes but would maintain the device distribution for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that the report be accepted as presented.</p>	
<p><b>No. 8</b></p>	<p><b><u>SCHOOL ORGANISATION POLICY (2021/24)</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Education which was presented to seek the views of Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee in relation to the review of the School Organisation Policy (2021-24), prior to presenting the policy to the Council’s Executive Committee. It is proposed that the revised policy is adopted and implemented from the start of new academic year 2021/22.</p>	

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The Service Manager - Education Transformation and Business Change spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.

A Member enquired if an aspect of well-being could be included in the policy. The Service Manager said that the policy focused on school organisation priorities such as the management and vision for the school estate going forward, the well-being aspect would form a key part of the recovery plan and could look to potentially include that in the policy in line with education recovery plans.

In response to a Member's question regarding federation models, the Service Manager said they would consider this as one of the options associated with the Welsh-medium school. The Director of Education said that several years ago Blaenau Gwent was one of the first Local Authority's to have a federation school i.e. Briery Hill School, in line with the Ebbw Fawr Learning Community. He felt that across the school estate there were highly effective Headteachers and Leaders which well placed the Authority to consider federation models going forward to have quality leadership spread across the school estate. He pointed out that Federation models could be taken forward in two approaches; a Local Authority led federation model or by Governing Bodies, and felt there were opportunities going forward, particularly in supporting schools with low pupil population numbers. In relation to 6<sup>th</sup> Form collaborations the Director said there had been a number of federated models across Wales for post 16 provision because of the relatively small number of pupils that schools catered for. Within the context of Blaenau Gwent, however, a tertiary model had been established with Coleg Gwent in the County Borough. With regard to the Welsh-medium school the preferred option would be to have collaboration between Ysgol Bro Helyg and the new school once it was developed but this would form part of the consultation exercise.

A Member referred to secondary schools being no smaller than 600 places. The Service Manager - Education Transformation and Business Change said that they were in the process of establishing pupil projections and had undertaken an annual review of capacities. There were a few schools who were relatively close to this number but none that fell into this category at the moment. With the

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<p>annual review of capacities and the annual review of projections they would work closely with Secondary Headteachers to monitor this going forward.</p> <p>The Director commented that from a strategic perspective in line with the school organisation policy, they had undertaken significant secondary school reorganisation over the last 10 years and Blaenau Gwent was very much a four secondary school setting, and unless there was a dramatic change none of the secondary school settings were under significant review at this time, and he felt that was an appropriate level of provision moving forward that they anticipated the school estate requiring. He pointed out that part of the policy was having the right school, the right size in the right place.</p> <p>The Chair enquired regarding how to ensure best practice was passed on to other schools, the Head of School Improvement and Inclusion said that there was a lot of good information sharing across schools, particularly across clusters and the EAS had been instrumental in setting up those arrangements and partnerships. She was keen to ensure that message gets across to all schools in relation to the recovery and renewal plan, and part of this work was to develop school to school partnership working and sharing of best practice and that was factored into these plans moving forward. Further relationships across secondary schools and Coleg Gwent would be established and discussions held on how to develop partnership working and how to get provision from them into primary schools especially year 6 and transition year 7.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that the proposed changes to the Blaenau Gwent School Organisation Policy 2021 be agreed.</p>	
<p>As this was the last meeting in the Committee cycle the Chair thanked the Vice-Chair, Members and Officers for their support and contribution over a very challenging year. He felt this Committee had gone from strength to strength and hoped this would continue in the next Committee cycle.</p> <p>The Corporate Director of Education thanked the Chair for his positive comments and said that Estyn had made</p>	



	constructive comments on the effectiveness of Scrutiny in Blaenau Gwent.	
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**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**

**Action Sheet**

**Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee – 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action to be Taken</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
	A list of acronyms to be provided.	Lynn Phillips	See attachment 1.
5	<b><u>Grants Awarded to Education Directorate</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Members requested an update on the amount of Tranche Funding provided to schools.</li><li>• Members requested an update on the Pupil Development Grant to include figures and how the grant had been used by schools.</li></ul>	Lynn Phillips  Lynn Phillips	See attachment 2.  See attachments 3 and 4.

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## Acronyms:

ALN:	for pupils presenting with additional learning needs
Ass HT:	Assistant Headteacher
BYOD:	Bring Your Own Device
CfW:	Curriculum for Wales
CME:	Children Missing Education
CSI:	the core subject indicator which means pupils achieve the expected levels in all 3 core subjects of English, Maths and Science.
DCF:	Digital Competency Framework
DHT:	Deputy Headteacher
eFSM:	for pupils eligible for free school meals
EAS:	the commissioned regional Education Achievement Service
EHE:	when a parent decides to elect to home educate their child(ren) - elective home education
EIG:	Education Improvement Grant
EOTAS:	Educated Other Than At School
EP:	Educational Psychologist
ERT:	Emergency Response Team
ETLF:	the excellence in teaching and learning framework which helps support the development of high quality teaching and learning
ET:	Education Transformation Team
EWO:	Education Welfare Officer
FBC:	Full Business Case
FP:	Foundation Phase
FRA:	Fire Risk Assessment
GB:	Governing Body
HLTA:	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
HoSlaL	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion

HSE:	Health and Safety Executive
HT:	Headteacher
ICC:	an Improvement Case Conference
IP:	Intervention Panel
JCC:	Joint Consultative Committee
KS2:	Key Stage 2 for pupils between the age range 7 to 11 years of age.
KS3:	Key Stage 3 for pupils between the ages of 11 and 14 years of age.
KS4:	the pupils between the ages 14 to 16 years of age.
LAI:	Local Authority link Inspector
LGES:	a Council's Local Government Education Services. This is the framework used by ESTYN when inspecting the Local Government's Education Services
LNS:	a learning network school
LSA:	Learning Support Assistants working in learning settings
Non FSM:	for pupils who are not eligible for free school meals
OBC:	Outline Business Case
OEA:	Outdoor Education Adviser
PaC:	Pre-application Consultation
PDG:	Pupil Development Grant
PL:	Professional Learning
PoSP:	Planning of School Places
RPI:	Restrictive Physical Intervention
SCC:	Schools Causing Concern
SE:	a self-evaluation process whether in a school or Local Authority
SEM:	Safeguarding in Education Manager
SEIM:	Strategic Education Improvement Manager
SEN:	for pupils presenting with special educational needs
SER:	a Self-Evaluation Report

SEWC:	South East Wales Consortia
SI:	for a school placed in a statutory category of Significant Improvement
SIPs:	School Improvement Partners (formerly Challenge Advisers)
SLT:	Senior Leadership Team in a school
SM:	for a school placed in an ESTYN statutory follow-up category as requiring special measures
SOC:	Strategic Outline Case
SOP:	Strategic Outline Programme
SWN:	Statutory Warning Notice to Improve
TA:	Teaching Assistant
WEF:	Welsh Education Forum
WESP:	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
WLPS:	Welsh Language Promotion Strategy
YS:	Youth Service

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SMALL GRANTS SUMMARY 2020/21

SCHOOL	TOTAL
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1	BRYNMAWR FOUNDATION	£62,533.00
2	TREDEGAR COMPREHENSIVE	£126,931.00
3	ABERTILLERY LEARNING COMMUNITY	£69,782.00
4	EBBW FAWR LEARNING COMMUNITY	£177,027.00
5	ALL SAINTS R C PRIMARY	£17,063.52
6	BEAUFORT HILL PRIMARY	£12,592.00
7	BLAEN-Y-CWM PRIMARY	£32,530.54
8	BRYNBACH PRIMARY	£27,042.00
9	COED-Y-GARN PRIMARY	£18,631.00
10	CWM PRIMARY	£18,692.00
11	DEIGHTON PRIMARY	£22,467.05
12	GEORGETOWN PRIMARY	£15,087.00
13	GLANHOWY PRIMARY	£37,971.00
14	GLYNCOED PRIMARY	£13,906.00
15	RHOS Y FEDWEN PRIMARY	£14,281.00
16	SOFRYDD PRIMARY	£15,141.00
17	ST. ILLTYD'S PRIMARY	£26,059.00
18	ST. JOSEPHS R C PRIMARY	£12,173.00
19	ST. MARYS CIW PRIMARY	£11,211.00
20	ST MARY'S R C PRIMARY	£16,322.91
21	WILLOWTOWN PRIMARY	£41,254.00
22	YSGOL GYMRAEG BRO HELYG	£32,997.98
23	YSTRUTH PRIMARY	£17,479.00
24	PENYCWM SPECIAL	£32,377.28
25	RIVER CENTRE LC SPECIAL	£39,066.28
26	GWDI HW	£657.00
27	ACORNS	£0.00
28	CENTRAL EDUCATION	£8,689.00

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£919,963.56

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School	School Improvement Grant 2021/2022	Pupil Development Grant 2021/2022
Abertillery Learning Community	£394,023	£473,800
All Saints RC Primary	£78,884	£103,500
Beaufort Hill Primary	£91,338	£48,300
Blaen-Y-Cwm Primary	£110,923	£120,750
Brynbach Primary	£82,386	£51,750
Brynmawr Foundation School	£51,655	£174,800
Coed y Garn Primary	£83,178	£87,400
Cwm Primary	£75,821	£63,250
Deighton Primary	£88,734	£93,150
Ebbw Fawr Learning Community	£169,362	£350,750
Georgetown Primary	£156,752	£73,600
Glanhowy Primary	£115,260	£115,000
Glyncoed Primary	£130,562	£86,250
Pen-Y-Cwm Special	£29,307	£60,950
Rhos y Fedwen	£50,100	£55,200
River Centre 3-16 Learning Community	£25,219	£40,250
Sofrydd Primary	£65,175	£60,950
St Illtyd's Primary	£77,861	£67,850
St Joseph's RC Primary BG	£38,645	£49,450
St Mary's Brynmawr CIW Primary	£83,626	£23,000
St Mary's RC Primary Brynmawr	£75,941	£69,000
Tredegar Comprehensive	£50,673	£163,300
Willowtown Primary	£163,050	£149,500
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg	£97,848	£55,200
Ystruth Primary	£119,786	£86,250
	<b>£2,506,106</b>	<b>£2,723,200</b>

**distribution methods to each school**

total pupil population  
free school meal pupil population  
lump sum per category of school  
lump sum , for schools taught in  
the medium of Welsh

free school meal pupil population

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## **Pupil Development Grant**

### **1. Background**

In the Greater Gwent region, the Pupil Development Grant is administered by the Education Achievement Service (EAS).

### **2. Funding 2021/2022**

The attached spreadsheet provides a breakdown, on a school by school basis of the PDG and School Improvement Grant (SIG), which is also administered by the EAS.

The spreadsheet shows that BGCBC schools will receive £2.5m for SIG and £2.7m for PDG.

### **3. Areas of spend**

The grant award letter states that the purposes of the grant are as follows:-

The PDG will be allocated to support:

- learners who are eligible for free school meals and who are educated in maintained schools
  
- eligible learners who are singly-registered in pupil referral units (PRUs) and education other than at school (EOTAS)
  
- eligible learners in early years' settings where the Foundation Phase is delivered
  
- looked after children (LAC), and former LAC who have been adopted from care or who are subject to a special guardianship or residence order aged 3-15

The PDG Funding should be used to:

- develop staff, both teaching and support, in the use of practice such as growth mind-set and quality feedback, that are currently viewed to be the most effective for learners from deprived backgrounds.

- intervene early to address weakness, particularly in literacy and numeracy. This applies to early years but is also relevant at the start of secondary school and at any point that a weakness is observed.
- ensure that increased resources are targeted at Key Stage 3, both in the classroom and in enrichment activities and raising aspirations, while recognising the importance of Year 11 for all learners. In support of the principles of early intervention and prevention, the Minister for Education expects secondary schools to deliver an aspiration of 60% of PDG invested in Key Stage 3 learners.
- identify where and when support is required using appropriate diagnostic and tracking systems and what this looks like.

WG requires the EAS to set out how they will work with schools to ensure that effective use is made of the PDG to improve outcomes for learners who are eligible for free school meals (eFSM) in maintained schools. In particular, we want to know how you will ensure schools:

- monitor and evaluate the impact of the funding;
- adopt a more equitable approach to funding to ensure that greater investment is made at Key Stage 3;
- receive the necessary support to enable Head teachers to identify, use and evaluate chosen approaches to ensure continued effective improvement.

WG ask that the EAS continue to work with maintained and non-maintained early years' providers to ensure they are making effective use of the grant, whilst strengthening your links with the non-maintained settings. We ask you consider cluster models when determining the most effective use of funding to support the delivery of improved outcomes for disadvantaged learners.

The Welsh Government acknowledges new schools will come on stream after the data collection period. We would expect you to continue to manage funding of schools that are closing; amalgamating or new in a strategic and planned manner as you have done previously. We also ask that you manage your Consortia led funding allocation as per the terms set out in the Grant Invitation Letter.

The looked after children element of the PDG, which supports the educational attainment of looked after children and other related groups who have similar needs, will continue to be managed regionally by the consortia. This will allow for continued strategic use of the grant, and you should consider how you will plan, set targets and support learners who are looked after, adopted and subject to care orders through effective use of the grant.

In line with the Welsh Government's looked after children education plan (Raising the ambitions and educational attainment of children who are looked after in Wales) the PDG should be used to meet the costs of identifying a lead coordinator who will retain strategic focus on looked after children in education and ensure the delivery of an agreed, strategic programme of work.

The lead coordinators in each consortium should work with local authorities and schools to identify and share good practice via the National Delivery Group for looked after children.

In addition to the PDG allocation for schools and settings, £100,000 per annum is provided to retain the services of the strategic advisers. This role is supplementary to the role of the looked after children lead coordinator and as such needs to be reflected in the structure of the posts and any administrative support. This will cover costs associated with the role, including travel and subsistence (in recognition of the geographical spread and the need to work with schools right across the region and the need to meet each half-term with the Welsh Government and Raising Attainment Advocate (although these meetings are expected to take place virtually in the short term at least)), and administrative support (to enable the lead to operate effectively at a strategic level).

Where the PDG strategic adviser and PDG-LAC lead coordinator roles are combined, evidence is expected to be provided to satisfy us that the Funding provided for the two distinct roles is being used solely and fully for the Purposes outlined. Where the two roles are combined and being performed by one member of staff, wider consortia resources and support will need to be put in place to facilitate the effective delivery of both roles.

PDG strategic advisers and PDG-LAC coordinators should provide robust, constructive challenge and high quality support to enable headteachers and governing bodies to improve the attainment of disadvantaged learners. This equitable approach will strengthen regional leadership arrangements and ensure greater national consistency in supporting disadvantaged learners across Wales.

PDG strategic advisers and PDG-LAC coordinators should facilitate a partnership approach to PDG and raising the attainment of disadvantaged learners across the region and collaboration and consistency at a national level.

PDG strategic advisers and PDG-LAC coordinators will work with the Welsh Government and our Raising Attainment Advocate, Sir Alasdair Macdonald, to strengthen collaboration across Wales and ensure that good practice is shared and built upon. They will be expected to have a strong knowledge of all settings (including non-maintained settings) in the region, including understanding the associated data, to allow them to identify schools that need support to improve and identify best practice so that this is shared regionally and nationally.

Building networks through identification of key leads within every school and establishing a regional 'network of leaders' to support and drive progress will be critical.

Strategic advisers and coordinators will be the point of contact for all schools and settings on effective and evidence based interventions. They will be expected to provide extra support and guidance advising on:

- appropriate interventions based on the latest evidence;
- using whole school approaches;
- the benefits of tracking;
- supporting evaluation of current practices; and
- facilitating regional support networks.



# Agenda Item 8

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021**

Report Subject: **Proposed Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme 2021-22**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Joanne Collins, Executive Member Education**

Report Submitted by: **Councillor Haydn Trollope, Chair of Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
May 2021	27.5.21	11.06.21			22.06.21	Executive FWP – 16.06.21	Council FWP – 29.7.21	

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 To present the Education and Learning Scrutiny Work Programme for 2021-22 (Appendix 1) and to seek approval from Committee.
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 The Scrutiny Work Programmes are key aspects of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and support the requirements of the Constitution.
  - 2.2 The topics set out in the Forward Work Programme link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's Corporate Plan, agreed by the Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020, corporate documents and supporting business plans.
  - 2.3 The Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programmes are also aligned to the Governance and Audit Committee, Executive Committee and Council Forward Work Programmes.
  - 2.4 The Work Programme is a fluid document and there is flexibility to allow for regular review between the Chair and the Committee.
  - 2.5 The Work Programmes have been discussed with Chairs and Vice-Chairs of individual committees, prior to presentation to the respective scrutiny committees for consideration and approval.
3. **Options for Recommendation**
  - 3.1 The work programmes have been endorsed by the relevant departments of the Council.

3.2 **Option 1**

To agree the Forward Work Programme for the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee.

**Option 2**

To suggest any amendments prior to agreeing the Forward Work Programme.

## Draft Education and Learning Forward Work Programme

TBC Date	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Executive / Council
<p><b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021</b></p> <p><b>Deadline: Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021</b></p>	1. Recovery and Renewal	<p><b>Performance Monitoring</b> To ensure that Members are aware of arrangements to support schools and learners recovery and renewal activity from the pandemic and to monitor progress (Strategy overview).</p>	Luisa Munro-Morris / Claire Gardner/ Michelle Jones	Executive – 21.07.21
	2. Aneurin Leisure Trust Performance Monitoring	<p><b>Performance Monitoring</b> Members to scrutinise the content of the six monthly ALT performance report and to discuss areas for future monitoring arrangements.</p>	Joanne Sims  <i>Invitee: ALT</i>	Executive – 21.07.21
	3. Improving Schools and School Inspections	<p><b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide Members with an overview of inspection arrangements, an update on any inspection report findings (when available) and progress within schools which are school causing concern or subject to Council intervention.</p>	Lynn Phillips/ Luisa Munro-Morris / Michelle Jones	Executive – 21.07.21

TBC Date	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Executive / Council
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	1. Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy To be published by 1st October	<b>Pre-Decision</b> To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the draft Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy 2022/23, prior to Executive Committee approval and publication on 1/10/2021.	Claire Gardner	Executive
	2. Self-Evaluation Report	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To ensure that Members contribute to the development of the self-evaluation report for Local Government Education Services.	Lynn Phillips	Executive
	3. Education Accessibility Strategy	<b>Pre-Decision</b> To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the draft Education Accessibility Strategy 2021-2024, prior to Executive Committee approval and implementation.	Claire Gardner	Executive
	4. Inclusion Strategy	<b>Pre-Decision</b> To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the draft Inclusion Strategy 2021 – 2022, prior to Executive Committee approval and implementation.	Luisa Munro-Morris / Rob Smith / School Representative	Executive
<b>INFORMATION ITEM</b>				
	LA Governor Vacancies	<b>Information</b> To provide Members with an update on LA governor vacancies (August position statement)	Michelle Jones	

TBC Date	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Executive / Council
<b>Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021</b>	1. Provisional KS4 School Performance	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide a summary of performance in line with accountability changes to ensure that children and young people achieve in line with expectations, particularly at KS4.	Luisa Munro-Morris/Michelle Jones	Executive 10.11.21
	2. Helping Elected Members Get to Know Our Schools	<b>Working Group</b> To seek nominations in order to re-establish the Working Group.	Michelle Jones	
	3. Recovery and Renewal	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To ensure that Members are aware of arrangements to support schools and learners to recovery from the pandemic and to monitor progress (Summer term 2021 progress on an agreed theme).	Luisa Munro-Morris / Claire Gardner/ Michelle Jones	Executive 10.11.21
	4. Improving Schools and School Inspections	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide Members with an update on any inspection report findings (when available) and progress within schools which a school causing concern or subject to Council intervention. (Overview 2020/21 academic year)	Lynn Phillips/ Luisa Munro Morris / Michelle Jones	Executive 10.11.21
<b>INFORMATION ITEM</b>				
	Section 106	<b>Information</b> To provide members with an overview of Education's Planning Obligations and associated processes, including Section 106 developer contribution assessment and implementation.	Claire Gardner	

TBC Date	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Executive / Council
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2021	1. Pupil Attendance	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> Members to review the pupil attendance performance of Blaenau Gwent's schools and monitor the associated outcomes, whilst recognising how this monitoring can inform key strategic priorities.	Luisa Munro-Morris / Lisa Adams	Executive Information
	2. Pupil Exclusions	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> Scrutiny Members are asked to review the data and associated outcomes, whilst recognising how this monitoring can inform key strategic priorities.	Luisa Munro-Morris / Lisa Adams	Executive Information
	3. Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP) Monitoring existing plan and draft 10-year plan <i>Please note the report and Plan will need to be translated to Welsh by the Directorate.</i>	<b>Pre-Decision</b> To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise performance against the Education Directorate's current WESP (2012 -20). In addition, Members will have the opportunity to scrutinise the draft BG 10-year WESP, prior to Executive Committee approval and submission to WG in January 2022.	Claire Gardner	Executive 15.12.21
	4. Management of Pupil Places and the School Estate 2020/21	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the management of pupil places and the school estate throughout the 2020/21 academic session.	Claire Gardner	Executive 15.12.21
	5. Education Directorate End of Year 2021 report	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide Members with the first annual strategic overview report from the Corporate Director on progress made and key areas for future development.	Lynn Phillips	Executive 15.12.21

TBC Date	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Executive / Council
<b>Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022</b>	1. Youth Service Performance	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise and monitor the performance and impact of the Youth Service and comparing with the latest Welsh Government benchmarking data.	Joanne Sims	Executive 02.03.22
	2. 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme Bands B progress and education project overview	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise progress in line with the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B programme, along with associated Education projects.	Claire Gardner / Luisa Munro-Morris	Executive 02.03.22
	3. School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education <b>Statutory deadline for the policy to be published by 15<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>Pre-Decision</b> To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the draft School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2023/24, prior to Executive Committee approval.	Claire Gardner	Executive 02.03.22
	4. Education ICT Strategy	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise progress in line with the development of the Education ICT Strategy, and associated projects.	Luisa Munro-Morris/ Claire Gardner/SRS	Executive 02.03.22
	5. Recovery and Renewal	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To ensure that Members are aware of arrangements to support schools and learners to recovery and renewal from the pandemic and to monitor progress (Autumn term 2021 progress on an agreed theme)	Luisa Munro-Morris / Claire Gardner / Michelle Jones	Executive 02.03.22
<b>INFORMATION ITEM</b>				
	LA Governor Vacancies	<b>Information</b> To provide members with an update on LA governor vacancies	Michelle Jones	

TBC Date	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Executive / Council
Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	1. Education Achievement Service (EAS) Business Plan 2022/23	<b>Pre-Decision</b> To consult Members on the draft EAS Business Plan for 2022/23.	Luisa Munro-Morris / Michelle Jones	Executive 27.04.22
	2. Inspire to Achieve / Work	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> Members to consider and monitor the performance in line with targets and spend. Sustainability and funding for NEETs agenda. (Performance completion and securing funding moving forward)	Joanne Sims	Executive Info Item
	3. Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) Annual Return 2019/20	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> Members to consider the Annual Assessment from Welsh Government which highlights Blaenau Gwent's performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards.	Joanne Sims <i>Invitee: ALT</i>	Executive Information



TBC Date	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Executive / Council
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	1. Self-evaluation (SE)	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> Members to contribute to the development of the SE report for LGES and to determine the actions arising from the SER are appropriate and aligned to the service needs for children and young people.	Lynn Phillips	Executive FWP 2022/23
	2. Schools organisation policy review	<b>Pre-Decision</b> To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the School Organisation Policy post annual review, prior to Executive Committee approval, and subsequent publication.	Claire Gardner	Executive FWP 2022/23
	3. Improving Schools	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide Members with an update on any inspection report findings (when available) and progress within schools that are causing concern or subject to Council intervention.	Lynn Phillips/ Luisa Munro Morris / Michelle Jones	Executive FWP 2022/23
<b>INFORMATION ITEM</b>				
	LA Governor Vacancies	<b>Information</b> To provide members with an update on LA governor vacancies	Michelle Jones	

TBC Date	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Executive / Council
Dates for items TBC	Partnership agreement			
	Renewal of SLA agreements			
	Pen y Cwm medium/long term plans			
	Policy Renewal E.g. Health and Safety Policy			

<b>Member Briefing Sessions – Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
Quarterly	Directorate Briefings	A closely focused directorate update session to provide information and detail on service areas in order to raise the interest and enthusiasm of members. This also provides a legitimate avenue to raise local issues outside of the scrutiny process.  4. ALN Reform Update	All
November	Post 16 Learner Outcomes	The session is to provide Members with an overview of the BG Learning Zone’s post 16 attainment levels for both academic and vocational areas of learning.	Joanne Sims Coleg Gwent
	Preparedness for Estyn		
	Curriculum		

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# Agenda Item 9

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021**

Report Subject: **Education Directorate – Recovery and Renewal Plan**

Portfolio Holder: **Executive Member of Education, Cllr. Joanne Collins**

Report Submitted by: **Head of School Improvement and Inclusion, Luisa Munro-Morris**  
**Service Manager - Education Transformation and Business Change, Claire Gardner**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
27.5.21	3.6.21	11.06.21			22.6.21	21.07.21		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an opportunity to scrutinise the Education Directorate’s identified priorities for recovery and renewal, as part of the response to the COVID-19 situation.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 Members will be aware that the Corporate Director of Education provides a verbal update to Scrutiny Committee regarding the response to the COVID-19 emergency. In addition, Education has reported on key outcomes, challenges and implications at each stage of the response, including the repurposing and subsequent reopening of schools.

- 2.2 This report provides an overview of progress made during the planning phase of Education recovery, along with information on identified priorities for recovery and renewal. The draft recovery and renewal plan is in development and will be a working document, which outlines how the Council will continue to support schools, both during and beyond the pandemic. It is, however, highly likely that we will continue to move between alert levels and thus response and recovery throughout the remainder of this and the next academic year. Therefore, an effective approach to business continuity at each level is required. This is dealt with via the development and review of local COVID-19 Education Guidance document, operational plans and risk assessments. It is also a key feature of the aforementioned plan. An alert level information paper has been produced, which details the operational implications and changes at each stage (please refer to **Appendix 1** for more information).

## 2.3 Impact Assessment

Until the latter part of Spring-term, the Education Directorate was firmly focused on working with and supporting schools to continue to effectively adapt and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. A significant shift in practice, delivery and learning has occurred throughout the course of the pandemic,

affecting every aspect of education and all associated provision. Therefore, in order to inform the development of a recovery and renewal plan, the Education Directorate undertook a detailed Impact Assessment to identify key impacts on education from the COVID-19 emergency. Each impact has been RAG rated to measure its seriousness. The following impacts have been identified (please refer to **Appendix 2** for more information):

- 2.4
- **Learners** - Education, social, emotional, physical and mental health implications (short and long-term).
  - **Vulnerable learners** - For those with disabilities and additional needs, provision and processes have been restricted.
  - **School staff** - Professional development, social, emotional, physical/mental health and general wellbeing in line with the need to adapt to blended learning. Staff childcare implications relating to school closure. LA's and schools have been required to establish and implement control and safety measures to support clinically vulnerable staff. This has impacted upon both staff and school operations.
  - **Childcare** - After school and pre-school provision which has been reduced and/or is not available due to COVID restrictions
  - **Education staff training** - Staff training needs aligned to operations are not all currently adapted to be delivered online e.g. first aid
  - **Education assets and site management** - Statutory functions, testing and inspection (Health and Safety, Fire Risk Assessment, maintenance and site management, ventilation), operations are regularly reviewed in line with the latest guidance and governed by risk assessments
  - **School operations** – Catering, cleaning and access to school sites, movement in and around the school, trips and visits, visitors, refuse, PPE and resources are all under continual review. These areas are subject to risk assessment and reduced operation in line with the COVID alert level implementation. Changes to the school day have been implemented throughout the school estate to support staggered start and finish times. Changes to statutory functions and regulations which affect school operation e.g. school admissions. ICT infrastructure, devices, access to resources, systems and software for both pupils and staff in line with digital exclusion and blended learning are continually reviewed to support inclusion. Home to school and post 16 transport operations, have been restricted, reconfigured and subject to detailed risk assessment.
  - **School support services** - School support service operation i.e. Educational Psychology, ALN, Social Services etc. has been prohibited on site due to lack of access, which has affected pupil and family engagement and progress. Transition at all phases has been affected by key support services having restricted/no access to schools. Human Resource management processes and engagement via OD are now online focused, but will require review to support effective school operations that were paused due to COVID. Wellbeing support services require monitoring in terms of access and uptake. Additional insurance and financial implications for schools as a result of the pandemic. EAS support for schools has transitioned to online

with a deficit to levels of engagement and to the brokerage of relevant support at all levels e.g. Learning Network Schools (LNS) arrangements.

- **School accountability services** - EAS Challenge Advisors have not been able to hold schools to account and school's data monitoring has been suspended. ESYN has suspended inspection resulting in risks to school – particularly those in a category, who are in for longer than planned.
- **School leadership** - School governance has been adapted online, therefore, the evidence base is largely restricted to Headteacher report and narrative. Support for current and new school leaders has been limited to online, and school to school working opportunities have mainly focused on wellbeing and operational issues.
- **Poverty** - Family entitlement to benefits has increased across Blaenau Gwent and the region, including free school meals. Additional funding has been allocated to support these families, however, many schemes are not sustainable and so the ongoing impact will need to be assessed.
- **School community** - Limited face to face contact and the shift to online engagement has challenged communication and relationships.
- **School development** - School development plans have had to be largely adapted in order to react to COVID-19.
- **Safeguarding** - School closure has meant that children and young people have had limited access to on-site school support e.g. adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Service support intelligence and capability has been restricted. Vulnerable adults are more exposed to risk factors with limited access to support services.
- **Voluntary/Third Sector/ Charities work and engagement** - Opportunities to engage partners have been restricted significantly due to operational implications associated with COVID-19.
- **Preventative health measures** - School-based preventative strategies to support healthcare needs of pupils have either been stopped or largely disrupted by COVID-19 i.e. vaccinations, growth and development checks, dental health, period equity etc.
- **COVID-19 control measures** - LA's and schools have implemented a series of control measures in order to manage community health i.e. vaccinations, Lateral flow tests, use of PPE, positive case management and risk assessment.

2.5 The impact assessment process provided the opportunity for reflection and review, learning from which has been taken forward to inform recovery and renewal priorities and planning.

2.6 The relationship between the Council and its schools is stronger than ever before. Our aim is to create a shared vision and associated plan to address key priorities for the future of Education within Blaenau Gwent.

## 2.7 **Recovery – Priorities**

It needs to be acknowledged that the impact of the last 15 months on all aspects of our school communities, and in particular the disruption to teaching

and learning, is far reaching. Recovery will need to be planned in the short, medium and long term for learner development and progression. The Education Directorate's top priority in the EAS business plan is to;

2.8 *Minimise the impact of COVID-19 on learner development and progress, including improving the digital competency of all learners and staff in the wider Blaenau Gwent school community.*

### 2.9 **Renewal – Priorities**

Through schools having to adapt to new ways of working, a number of positive outcomes have been evidenced. The Education Directorate will work with relevant stakeholders, including schools and the EAS, to use these outcomes to shape new ways of working across the Education Directorate and throughout the school estate. The core purpose of all schools in Blaenau Gwent will be to provide excellent learning and teaching for all our learners, but this will not mean a return to doing things as they were pre-pandemic, but to using the experience of the pandemic to shape education provision as we move forward.

### 2.10 **Next Steps**

The Education Directorate continues to work on the development of both the impact assessment and draft recovery and renewal action plan, both of which will be further developed and delivered in consultation with schools, support services and partners. Structures have been established through which consultation, engagement, participation and monitoring can take place. For example, a Stakeholder Recovery and Renewal Group has been established with representation from all school sectors and clusters. The draft Recovery and Renewal Plan is attached as **Appendix 3** and there will be regular update reporting via CLT and the Scrutiny/Executive governance processes, in line with corporate arrangements, particularly against the 4 recovery priorities across the Council and the work led by the Corporate Director of the Environment and Regeneration.

2.11 Education aim to finalise the impact assessment inclusive performance indicators, along the recovery and renewal action plan by the end of June 2021 – post consultation with all relevant stakeholders. In the interim, progress will continue to be made along with further development of the priorities identified within the working documents.

## 3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report has been discussed by Education DMT and CLT prior to submission to Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee.

- **Option 1** – Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee considers and accepts the report, associated documentation and proposed course of action.
- **Option 2** – Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee provide comments in relation to improvements that can be made in relation to the associated documentation and proposed course of action.



4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 Education is a strategic priority and key to facilitating effective delivery of the Corporate Plan.

4.2 One of the objectives in the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan is for every child to have the best start in life. The Council seeks to ensure that provision is appropriate and able to meet the needs of children and young people, so that their progress is in line with ambitious expectations. This is particularly pertinent in an emergency crisis situation.

4.3 There are both statutory and regulatory functions and responsibilities associated with Education. The recovery and renewal plan is an essential component in securing effective and compliant delivery.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 **Impact on Budget**

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report, however, it should be noted that the impact of the COVID-19 emergency response on both Council and school revenue budgets is being closely monitored. It should be acknowledged that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased financial costs within the Education Portfolio across the board. The vast majority of these revenue costs have been funded through the WG's Hardship funding. The LEA claimed for expenditure incurred in the sum of £0.755m and was awarded Hardship Funding of £0.74m. The net cost of £0.015m has been incorporated into the Education Portfolio provisional out-turn position for 2020-21. In addition, Welsh Government awarded specific grant funding in the final quarter of the 2020-21 financial year. Grants relating to Raise, Recover & Raise Standards and operational Covid-19 related issues amounted to approximately £0.985m. Within this figure, grant of approximately £0.9m related to school activity. It pleasing to report that the provisional Education portfolio out-turn will have a favourable position at year-end for financial year 2020-21 as well as an improving situation for school balances.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

There are two strategic risks associated with this report;

1. The impact of COVID-19 on learner progression and pupil regression. This is being mitigated through the Council, EAS and Schools working in collaboration to support learners across the board; and,
2. The risks associated with the provision of safe learning environments to minimise the potential transmission of COVID. There are comprehensive risk assessments in place to mitigate the risks, but the situation is constantly under review and appropriate remedial action is taken e.g. self-isolation protocols are implemented.

### 5.3 **Legal**

This report provides information relating to the emergency response requirements as well as the specific Education obligations set out in the School Standards and Organisation Act Wales (2013) to support strategic and operational activity to improve pupil outcomes and wellbeing.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

### 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

Education are in the process of mapping existing and required datasets (both qualitative and quantitative), analysis of which will inform planning and performance. The two lead officers are working closely with the Policy and Performance team and the Corporate Recovery Group, to develop performance indicators which will be used to monitor and report on progress.

### 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

There is a commitment from the Council and its schools to provide quality education for our children and young people to improve their life chances, despite the challenges faced during the emergency crisis.

### 6.3 **Involvement**

There has been extensive involvement of key stakeholder both corporately and across the school estate. The planning groups for secondary, primary and special schools that are established, including Headteacher representation has secured a collaborative and corporate response. This collaborative approach will continue throughout the recovery and renewal period.

### 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term**

This report largely reflects on the emergency response to date, however, there are robust governance arrangements in place to support the next stages of the emergency for the foreseeable future.

### 6.5 **Preventative focus**

The Council's emergency response has facilitated a preventative approach to minimising the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

### 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

The report outlines the significant amount of partnership working at a strategic and operational level. This has resulted in a strengthening of the working relationships between the Council, schools and other key partners.

### 6.7 **Integration**

The emergency response has been a 'One Council' approach.

### 6.8 **EqIA**

The application of EqIA's to each priority has been considered as part of the Education impact assessment process. EqIA's will be undertaken in line with development and implementation of the recovery and renewal plan.

## 7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The report will be presented to the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee and then subsequently through to the Executive Committee for monitoring purposes.

**Background Documents / Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – Alert Level Implications

Appendix 2 – Education Directorate Impact Assessment

Appendix 3 – Draft Recovery and Renewal Action Plan

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## **Welsh Government Alert Level Response and Associated Implications for School**

### **Alert Level One – Low Risk**

- Schools will be fully operational in line with their COVID Secure Risk Assessment with limited impact upon overall business continuity
- Sports Centres will be open for use under an agreement with schools
- Individual risk assessments will be in place for vulnerable staff and pupils, to support them to continue to access school-sites
- Monitoring of school-based incidence rates will take place on a daily basis
- Sufficient staff will be in place to facilitate the delivery of education, along with all statutory and wider education functions
- School support functions including transport, will be fully operational under a COVID Secure Risk Assessment
- Local Authority multi-departmental support and engagement will be carried out on a regular basis
- Local Authority Guidance documents will be in place in respect of both operations and human resources

### **Alert Level Two – Medium Risk**

- Schools will be fully operational in line with their COVID Secure Risk Assessment, with the exception of breakfast and afterschool clubs which will cease operation, along with other associated recreational activity
- Overall business continuity is likely to be impacted, with a reduction in non-essential business
- Sports Centres will be open for use under an agreement with schools
- School operations including the management and use of resources throughout the school will be reviewed
- School site access restrictions will be in place
- Individual risk assessments will be in place for vulnerable staff and pupils
- Additional monitoring measures will be in place to establish and address COVID-19 incidence rates in both pupil and staff populations
- Staff and pupil numbers are likely to fluctuate aligned to self-isolation and increased incidence of COVID-19, with decreasing staff and pupil populations
- Classes and year groups (including associated school staff, support staff and visitor contacts) are likely to be required to self-isolate
- School support staff self-isolation is also more likely i.e. caretaking, catering, cleaning, transport, school crossing patrol staff etc. affecting the delivery of key support services
- Supply staff may be required to cover the delivery of education
- The delivery of education may be impacted, with the need to introduce partial remote learning measures within affected class and/or year groups
- School-based operations will require review on a school-by-school basis based in line with the findings of contact tracing, e.g. the schools COVID Secure Risk Assessment and associated mitigation measures are likely to require review
- Increased Local Authority multi-departmental support and engagement may be required
- There is a potential for increased demand for both the Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programmes

- Local Authority guidance documents will be in place for both operations and staff, requiring review at regular intervals

### **Alert Level Three – High Risk**

- School-based operation is likely to decrease in line with COVID Secure Risk Assessment. Breakfast and afterschool clubs, along other associated recreational activity will cease to operate
- Overall business continuity will be impacted with further reductions in services, provision and site-based work
- Sports Centres will be open for use under an agreement with schools, with restricted use likely to affect the delivery of physical education to varying degrees (on a school by school basis)
- School operations including the management and use of resources throughout the school will be reviewed and reduced accordingly
- School site access restrictions will be in place ensuring that only essential visitors are able to access school buildings
- Individual risk assessments for vulnerable staff and pupils are likely to require review
- Increased monitoring measures will be in place to identify and manage increased COVID-19 incidence rates in both pupil and staff populations
- Staff and pupil numbers are likely to decrease aligned to self-isolation and increased incidence of COVID-19
- There will be an increased need to address pupil/family support requirements outside of standard operating procedures, i.e. increased Social and other related service support, digital exclusion, entitlement to free school meals etc.
- Possible increase in staff absence linked to health and welfare
- Classes and Year Groups (including staff) are likely to be required to self-isolate, along with partial and/or full temporary school closures, where it is no longer viable to operate safely
- The school closure protocol will come into effect (i.e. consideration of the ability to fulfil first aid, emergency planning, supervision, support for ALN etc. and to carry out statutory functions)
- In the event of a school closure, consideration will be given to furloughing staff in line with the established criteria
- School support staff self-isolation is highly likely i.e. catering, cleaning, transport, school crossing patrol staff etc. affecting the delivery of key support services
- Higher numbers of supply staff are likely to be required to cover the delivery of education
- Delivery of education is highly likely to be impacted, with the need to move to partial and/or full remote learning
- School-based operations will require review on a school-by-school basis in line with the findings of contact tracing e.g. the schools COVID Secure Risk Assessment and mitigation measures will require review. The introduction of additional control measures is likely to be required, such as the habitual wearing of PPE in classrooms by staff (this falls outside of the WG School Operational Guidance)
- Increased Local Authority multi-departmental support and engagement will be required more frequently
- There will be a higher level of demand and impact upon Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programmes

- Local Authority Guidance documents for both operations and staff will require frequent review

#### **Alert Level Four – Very High Risk**

- School-based operation is likely to decrease significantly in line with COVID Secure Risk Assessment and review processes. Breakfast and afterschool clubs, along other associated recreational activity, will cease operation
- Overall business continuity will be significantly impacted with services, provision and site-based work being focused on essential and statutory activity/requirements
- Sports Centres will be closed which will impact upon the availability of use by schools and ultimately the delivery of physical education to varying degrees
- School operations including the management and use of resources throughout the school will be reviewed and reduced
- School site access restrictions will be in place ensuring that only essential visitors are able to access school buildings
- Individual risk assessments for vulnerable staff and pupils will require review
- Significantly increased monitoring measures will be in place associated with pupil and staff numbers, including out of hours and duty arrangements
- Staff and pupil numbers will frequently fluctuate aligned to self-isolation and increased incidence of COVID-19, with significant impact expected upon both staff and pupil populations
- There will be an increased need to address pupil/family support requirements outside of standard operating procedure i.e. increased Social and other related service support, digital exclusion, entitlement to free school meals etc.
- There is likely to be an increase in staff absence linked to both health and welfare
- Classes and Year Groups (including staff) will be required to self-isolate, along with partial and/or full temporary school closures associated with a health and safety assessment and where it is no longer viable to operate safely
- School closure protocol comes into effect more frequently (i.e. first aid, emergency planning, supervision, support for ALN etc. along with the ability to carry out statutory functions)
- In the event of a school closure, consideration can be given to furloughing staff where applicable, in line with the established criteria
- School support staff self-isolation will be required i.e. caretaking, catering, cleaning, transport, school crossing patrol etc. affecting the delivery of key support services
- Higher numbers of supply staff will be required to cover the delivery of education (if available and if the school remains open)
- Delivery of education will be impacted, with the need to move to partially and/or fully remote learning
- School-based operations will require review on a school-by-school basis based on the findings of contact tracing e.g. the schools COVID Secure Risk Assessment and mitigation measures will require review with the introduction of additional control measures such as the habitual wearing of PPE in classrooms by staff (this falls outside of the WG School Operational Guidance).
- Increased Local Authority multi-departmental support and engagement will be required more frequently
- Full school closure may be required over a prolonged period, with the requirement to establish provision for vulnerable and key worker children

- Increased impact and demand upon Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programmes
- Local Authority Guidance documents in place for both operations and staff – reviewed more frequently

DRAFT



# Education Impact Assessment

Impact Area	*RAG	Key Impacts	Identified Needs / Actions	Responsible
Learners	Amber	Impact of missed time in school – education, social, emotional, physical and mental health implications (short and long-term).	<p>Develop a recovery and renewal plan with a focus on education and wellbeing.</p> <p>Link with national and regional priorities.</p> <p>Undertake stakeholder engagement to facilitate learning from experience, and renewal of practice.</p> <p>Partnership work with the EAS to broker support in line with the EAS Business Plan.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Vulnerable learners	Red	<p>Impact of missed time in school – education, social, emotional, physical and mental health.</p> <p>For those with disabilities and additional needs, provision and processes have been restricted.</p>	<p>Develop recovery and renewal plan with a focus on provision for vulnerable learners.</p> <p>Link with national and regional priorities.</p> <p>Undertake stakeholder engagement to facilitate learning from experience, and renewal of practice.</p> <p>Partnership work with Social Services, Health and Safety and the EAS to broker support.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion

\*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

School staff	Amber	<p>Impact of missed time in school – professional development, social, emotional, physical/mental health and general wellbeing in line with the need to adapt to blended learning.</p> <p>Staff childcare implications relating to school closure.</p> <p>LA's and schools have been required to establish and implement control and safety measures to support clinically vulnerable staff. This has impacted upon both staff and school operations.</p> <p>For those with disabilities and additional needs, provision and processes have been restricted.</p>	<p>Develop recovery and renewal plan</p> <p>Link with national and regional priorities.</p> <p>Undertake stakeholder engagement to facilitate learning from experience, and renewal of practice.</p> <p>Partnership work with OD, Health &amp; Safety and the EAS to broker support.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Childcare	Red	After school and pre-school provision which has been reduced and/or is not available due to COVID restrictions	Childcare operational plans and risk assessments to be reviewed and monitored by the Childcare Sub-group.	Service Manager - ET and BC
Staff training	Red	Staff training needs aligned to operations are not all currently adapted to be delivered online i.e. first aid and RPI	Training plan review in partnership with Health and Safety and OD colleagues.	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager -ET and BC
Education assets and site management	Amber	Statutory functions, testing and inspection (Health and Safety, Fire Risk Assessment, maintenance and site management, ventilation), operations are regularly reviewed in line with the latest guidance and governed by risk assessments	<p>Review school operational plans and WG guidance to inform priorities and changes to local guidance and operations.</p> <p>Review guidance and associated policy, risk assessment and operational plan bi-monthly, in partnership</p>	Service Manager - ET and BC

\*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

			with Health and Safety and the Technical Working Group.	
School operations	Red/Amber	<p>Catering, cleaning, access to school sites, movement in and around the school, trips and visits, visitors, refuse, PPE and resources are all under continual review. These areas are subject to risk assessment and reduced operation in line with the COVID alert level implementation. Changes to the school day have been implemented throughout the school estate to support staggered start and finish times.</p> <p>Changes to statutory functions and regulations which affect school operation e.g. school admissions.</p> <p>ICT infrastructure, devices, access to resources, systems and software for both pupils and staff in line with digital exclusion and blended learning are continually reviewed to support inclusion.</p> <p>Home to school and post 16 transport operations, have been restricted, reconfigured and subject to detailed risk assessment.</p>	<p>Operational plan to be monitored, provision, guidance and policy to be adapted accordingly.</p> <p>Regular monitoring required as above</p> <p>ICT Plan and associated strategy to be developed in partnership with SRS and the ICT Strategy Group.</p> <p>Monthly review in line with the latest regulations. Procurement and operations review</p>	Service Manager ET and BC
School support services	Red	<p>School support service operation i.e. Educational Psychology, ALN, Social Services etc. has been prohibited due to lack of access, which has affected pupil and family engagement and progress.</p> <p>Transition at all phases has been affected by key support services having restricted/no access to schools.</p> <p>Human Resource management processes and engagement via OD are now online focused, but will require review to support effective school operations that were paused due to COVID.</p>	<p>Inclusion Service review to be undertaken.</p> <p>Transition to be developed.</p> <p>Work with OD to undertake an impact associated and establish an operational plan around schools.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager ET and BC

\*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

		<p>Wellbeing support services require monitoring in terms of access and uptake.</p> <p>Additional insurance and financial implications for schools as a result of the pandemic.</p> <p>EAS support for schools has transitioned to online with a deficit to levels of engagement and to the brokerage of relevant support at all levels e.g. LNS Schools.</p>	<p>Working with Finance and Insurance colleagues to undertake an impact assessment, in order to inform future planning.</p>	
School accountability services	Red	<p>EAS Challenge Advisors have not been able to hold schools to account and school's data monitoring has been suspended.</p> <p>Esytyn has suspended inspection resulting in risks to school – particularly those in a category, who are in for longer than planned.</p>	<p>Review EAS Business Plan in line with WG regulations and guidance.</p> <p>Multi-agency partnership working with Estyn in order to support schools causing concern.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
School leadership	Amber	<p>School governance has been adapted online, therefore, the evidence base is largely restricted to Headteacher report and narrative.</p> <p>Support for current and new school leaders has been limited to online, and school to school working opportunities have mainly focused on wellbeing and operational issues.</p>	<p>Work with the EAS to review current practice for governance and school leadership.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Poverty	Red	<p>Family entitlement to benefits has increased across Blaenau Gwent and the region, including free school meals. Additional funding has been allocated to support these families, however, many schemes are not sustainable and so the ongoing impact will need to be assessed.</p>	<p>Working with Finance and Benefits colleagues to undertake an impact assessment, in order to inform future planning.</p>	Service Manager ET and BC/ Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
School community	Red	<p>Limited face to face contact and the shift to online engagement has challenged communication and relationships.</p>	<p>Provide support for individual schools to address barriers to parent engagement in partnership with the EAS.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion

\*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

School development	Amber	School development plans have had to be largely adapted in order to react to COVID-19.	Provide support for individual schools to address barriers to parent engagement in partnership with the EAS.	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Safeguarding - children	Red	School closure has meant that children and young people are at greater risk of harm e.g. adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Service support intelligence and capability has been restricted.	Supporting Schools to ensure that they are able to effectively identify and manage risks, via structure an effective multi-agency approach.	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager ET and BC
Safeguarding - adults	Red	Vulnerable adults are more exposed to risk factors with limited access to support services.	Supporting Schools to ensure that they are able to effectively identify and manage risks, via structure an effective multi-agency approach.	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager ET and BC
Voluntary/Third Sector/ Charities work and engagement	Red	Opportunities to engage partners have been restricted significantly due to operational implications associated with COVID-19.	Establish a stakeholder re-engagement and support plan for Education and schools.	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager ET and BC
Preventative health measures	Red	School-based preventative strategies to support healthcare needs of pupils have either been stopped or largely disrupted by COVID-19 i.e. vaccinations, growth and development checks, dental health, period equity etc.	Work closely with ABUHB, Public Health Wales and associated partners to review and develop a school health plan .	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/Service Manager ET and BC
COVID control measures	Amber	LA's and schools have implemented a series of control measures in order to manage community health i.e. vaccinations, Lateral flow tests, use of PPE, positive case management and risk assessment.	Review and evaluate existing control measures in line with the latest guidance, regulations and associated operational plans, in order to inform business continuity planning.	Service Manager ET and BC/Health and Safety

\*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

Review of Implementation - Areas that have worked well				
Relationships and Engagement with headteachers	Green	Throughout the course of the pandemic relationships, communication and engagement with school leaders has improved significantly. School leaders have had the opportunity to work together with the Council, shaping provision and informing key developments throughout the response period. In addition, they have been empowered to share and seek solutions to issues which have emerged, whilst working closely with the Council to achieve consistency in delivery methods etc.	Continue with the current engagement format to aid recover and ensure effective engagement and participation opportunities are in place for/with school leaders	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager ET and BC
Digital inclusion	Amber	Throughout the course of the pandemic both Welsh Government and the Council have worked to secure and invest in devices and connectivity to address digital disadvantage. As a result, there is now an improved understanding of the level of digital disadvantage throughout the school estate. In addition, there are established methods and solutions by which the impact of digital disadvantage can be addressed.	Ensure a full review of provision and requirements takes place, to aid device/provision sustainability plans in line with the Education ICT Strategy and blended learning developments.	Service Manager ET and BC/ Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Business continuity – service design and delivery	Amber	Both schools and associated Council services have established effective service design and delivery models, along with business continuity arrangements, ensuring effective response to the pandemic.	Continue to review operational and business continuity plans, to ensure that alert level response and associated delivery can be managed effectively.	Service Manager ET and BC
Learners	Amber	Many pupils have developed skills through engaging with distance learning e.g. resilience and time management.	Continue to build on these skills in a face-to-face setting, ensure schools provide catch up support for pupils who have not developed such skills/not engaged well with distance learning	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Teaching staff	Amber	Many teachers and teaching assistants have developed their use of ICT to deliver learning, many schools have used ICT in creative and engaging ways to encourage, motivate and support learning.	Continue to build on these skills in a face-to-face setting. Work with the EAS to ensure blended learning continues to	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion

\*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

			be a key priority in school development planning	
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**RECOVERY AND RENEWAL**  
**BLAENAU GWENT ACTION PLAN Summer 2021 – Summer 2022**

**Theme 1: Learners/school staff/school development**

Responsibility	Action	Resources (Specific no. of days/costs)	Timescale (Start/End)	Success Criteria	Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for actions (date)	Monthly Updates
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<p>Head of School Improvement and Inclusion</p>	<p>Undertake stakeholder engagement to facilitate learning from experience, and renewal of practice.</p> <p><u>Philosophy for Children sessions with primary stakeholders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary school pupils</li> <li>• Secondary school pupils</li> <li>• Special school representative – River Centre and/or Pen Y Cwm</li> <li>• Primary teachers and TAs</li> <li>• Secondary teachers and TAs</li> </ul>	<p>5 days to undertake P4C enquiries</p>	<p>June – July 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p>	<p>Written report on the P4C enquiries re impact of pandemic</p> <p>Paper submitted to academic journal based on P4C enquiries</p>	<p>Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive as part of FWP.</p> <p>Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive. Share good practice across EAS.</p>	
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Head of School Improvement and Inclusion and Service Manager - ET and BC	<u>Stakeholder Recovery and Renewal Group</u>  Fortnightly engagement with primary and secondary headteachers to shape support for recovery and renewal  Group to provide peer support on school development	1 hour meeting primary, fortnightly  1 hour meeting secondary, fortnightly	April 21 - onwards	Sharing of good practice, learning from recovery to aid renewal - agreed strategies and systems are put in place across BG schools to support recovery and renewal	Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive. Share good practice across EAS.	April 21 – Initial meeting with HTs to discuss the remit of this group.
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion	<u>Curriculum Reform Group</u>  Fortnightly engagement with primary and secondary headteachers to shape implementation of CfW	1 hour meeting primary, fortnightly  1 hour meeting secondary, fortnightly	June 21 – onwards	Sharing of good practice, agreed strategies and systems are put in place to enable effective implementation of CfW	Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive. Share good practice across EAS.	
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion and Principle Challenge Advisor	<u>Partnership work with the EAS to broker support in line with the EAS Business Plan.</u>  Co-construction of MER cycle to hold EAS to account for services provided to BG schools	2 days	June 21	EAS are providing the support schools in BG need to continue to improve	Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive.	

Head of School Improvement and Inclusion	<p>Fortnightly meetings with PCA to monitor MER cycle and share information about schools</p> <p><u>Engagement with STEM</u></p> <p>Increase opportunities for STEM links across BG schools</p> <p>Work with Regeneration on the STEM activity</p> <p>Promote 5G classroom across BG schools</p>	<p>1 hour meetings fortnightly</p> <p>Meetings and site visits to local companies/STEM links</p> <p>STEM Co-ordinator in place</p>	<p>April 21 – ongoing</p> <p>May 21 ongoing</p>	<p>teaching and learning and leadership</p> <p>All schools in BG can access STEM support to enrich teaching and learning</p>	<p>Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive.</p> <p>Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive</p> <p>Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive</p>	<p>April 21 – initial meeting with PCA. Sharing of documents to inform discussion around role of EAS.</p> <p>May 21 – Meeting with STEM contacts</p>
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion	<p><u>Whole school wellbeing and mental health support</u></p> <p>Evaluate current provision within inclusion team to support school's wellbeing and mental health. Exploration of different support strategies to provide a BG model e.g. Trauma Informed Schools</p>	<p>Gathering of data on current support, exploration of different models e.g. TIS</p>	<p>May 21 – August 21</p>	<p>All schools in BG have access to relevant wellbeing and mental health support</p>	<p>Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive</p>	<p>Meeting with TIS 19/05/21</p>

<p>Head of School Improvement and Inclusion</p>	<p><u>Further develop partnership working</u> with e.g. healthy schools, Post-16 partnership, youth service, education transformation, social services</p>	<p>Join relevant groups to ensure school improvement and inclusion representation</p>	<p>May 21 – onwards</p>	<p>A joint up approach to school improvement and inclusion across services in BG</p>	<p>Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive</p>	
<p>Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/Principle Challenge Advisor</p>	<p><u>Develop better use of blended learning tailored more closely to individual needs</u></p>	<p>Work with EAS to ensure schools have relevant support to enable all learners to engage effectively with blended learning</p>	<p>June 21 - ongoing</p>	<p>All schools in BG have access to the relevant support to enable all their learners to effectively engage with blended learning</p>	<p>Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive</p>	

**Theme 2: Vulnerable learners**

Responsibility	Action	Resources (Specific no. of days/costs)	Timescale (Start/End)	Success Criteria	Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for actions (date)	Monthly Updates
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion and Service Manager - ET and BC	<u>Digitally disadvantaged learners continue to access devices/MIFI</u>	Replacement costs of devices (WG funded?)	Until summer 21, to be reviewed.	All digitally disadvantaged learners in BG have access to devices/MIFI	Weekly reports from schools/SRS/ Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive	
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion	<u>Realignment of ALN SLA and EP Service</u>  Revised support offer to schools based on school-improving system. Schools to be provided with one offer to access whole school training to support vulnerable learners	Time for meetings	March 21 – Summer 21	All schools in BG have access to relevant training to support the needs of vulnerable learners.	Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive	March 21 – meeting with ALN service manager April 21 – meeting with head of EP service May 21 – ALN package of support for schools – draft started
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/Principle Challenge Advisor	<u>Analysis of additional funding to support vulnerable learners</u>	Time for analysis	September 21	Analysis used to inform support for vulnerable learners in recovery and renewal plan	Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive	

**Theme 3: Leadership/parent engagement**

Responsibility	Action	Resources (Specific no. of days/costs)	Timescale (Start/End)	Success Criteria	Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for actions (date)	Monthly Updates
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/Principle Challenge Advisor	Work with the EAS to review current practice for governance and school leadership in current context, to inform future ways of supporting leadership	Time for meetings	September 21 – December 21	School governors/leader are supported to implement school improvement and held to account	SCC meetings/action plans/ Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive EAS monthly CA reports	
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion	Meet with all school leaders	Time for meetings	April 21 – September 21	HoS/la has clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development of all school settings in BG	Visit notes – not for accountability purposes	
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion	Work with the Recovery and Renewal group to explore key barriers/enablers to carers/parents engaging with distance learning. Create a BG offer for training parents/carers	Time for meetings	September 21 – December 21	Development of BG offer to support parents, initial pilot stage by December 21, roll out to all schools January 22	Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive/sh are good practice across EAS	

Theme 4: Staff training						
Responsibility	Action	Resources (Specific no. of days/costs)	Timescale (Start/End)	Success Criteria	Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for actions (date)	Monthly Updates
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager -ET and BC/Health and Safety Manager	<p><u>Survey of schools to identify where training is not up to date e.g. Safeguarding, first aid and Health and Safety</u></p> <p>Use information to support schools to access relevant training</p>	Time to create a survey, data collection and feedback to schools.	June 21 – ongoing	All schools in BG have received relevant training	Termly review of data	
Theme 5: Early Years						
Responsibility	Action	Resources (Specific no. of days/costs)	Timescale (Start/End)	Success Criteria	Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for actions (date)	Monthly Updates
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion	<u>Develop links with early years provision and early years intervention</u>	Time for meetings	September 21 - ongoing	Schools work well with early years' provision to close the early year's attainment gap, and identify and deal effectively with early warning signs.	Report to DMT and Scrutiny/Executive	



# Agenda Item 10

Performance and Democratic Team -  
Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:  
Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021**

Report Subject: **Aneurin Leisure Trust Performance and Monitoring Report (April 2020 – March 2021)**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Joanne Collins, Executive Member for Education**

Report Submitted by: **Lynn Phillips, Corporate Director of Education  
Joanne Sims, Service Manager – Young People and Partnerships**

Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
√	√	11.06.21			22.06.21	21.07.21		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on the performance of the Aneurin Leisure Trust and to clarify the future performance monitoring arrangements.

## 2. Scope and Background

2.1 In April 2018, the Council commenced a review of the provision of Leisure and Culture services. This review was in line with the finance and management agreement between the Council and the Aneurin Leisure Trust (ALT). The review included two phases and the second phase of the review concluded early 2020.

2.2 In parallel to the review, the Council developed the Leisure and Culture Strategy 2019-29 to provide strategic direction for the future of leisure services and identified key priorities for the next 10 years.

2.3 Due to the emergence of COVID-19 and subsequent national lockdown, the outcome of the review was not presented to Full Council until September 2020. However, at that meeting, Option 2 was agreed which stated:

‘Provide a time limited contract extension period of five years with a break/review point at year 3. Using the proposed new governance structure to formally review the performance of ALT’s delivery of the business plan against the new specification and revised financial and management arrangement. Use clear checkpoints to identify risks and take action to mitigate those in a timely manner. If ALT fully deliver to their business plan the Council will consider a further extension to the contract subject to a further review’.

2.4

In addition, along with the appointment of the then Interim Director of Education, it was agreed in April 2020 to move the lead responsibility for Leisure and Culture from the Regeneration and Community Services Directorate to the Education Directorate, undertaking the role of client for

these services, and appointing an interim lead officer for this function. Following the permanent appointment to the post of Director of Education, a new Education senior management structure was created which included a new post of Service Manager – Young People and Partnerships. This post includes the function of lead officer with Aneurin Leisure Trust.

2.5

Since April, the following areas have been prioritised:

- Establishing regular meetings and protocols between the Education link officer and senior managers in the ALT;
- Supporting the ALT Trust through lockdown, phased reopening and understanding any financial impact;
- Identifying areas for development following the review, including the service specification, governance structure, SLAs, reporting framework; and,
- Facilitated the transfer of the Metropole Theatre from ALT to Awen Cultural Trust and Head 4 Arts back into the Council.

### **Response to COVID-19**

2.6 Throughout lockdown, many of the Trust's employees were initially redeployed to support the Council's response to the pandemic and later providing summer activities for vulnerable children. However, the Trust also placed the majority of the workforce onto the Job Retention Scheme (furlough) in order to safeguard the business. A robust phased reopening plan was developed and gradually many of the Trust's services have moved to partial or full re-opening, working closely with Health and Safety colleagues to put the appropriate risk assessments in place. ALT also worked closely with the Local Health Board to provide Bedwellty House as a vaccination centre free of charge.

2.7 The review recognised that key to the successful delivery of a sustainable Leisure and Culture offer is improved governance and contract management arrangements. Therefore, since April, developments have focussed on finalising the draft service specification which outlines exactly what services are being requested. This has been finalised and forms part of a wider suite of legal documents which will be completed by the end of June.

2.8 Fortnightly meetings have taken place between the link officer and ALT throughout the year. This improved partnership with the Council has resulted in ALT successfully accessing the Welsh Government Hardship Fund, which alongside careful management of furlough arrangements, has ensured that the Trust is financially and operationally stable, despite a year of extreme interruption to usual business.

2.9 ALT has also used this year to proactively pursue all possible funding/grant schemes created due to Covid and information about these are set out in Appendix 1.

## **Monitoring and Scrutinising Performance**

2.10 In order to monitor and scrutinise the progress and impact of the Trust, a full progress report will be presented to Education Scrutiny Committee twice a year, reporting against the agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within the specification. The KPI balance scorecard is set out in section 6.1 and is the proposed way ALT will present their performance. Other reports may be presented throughout the year by exception. These reports will also be presented to the Executive Committee and the Joint Strategic Partnership Group for comment.

2.11 The working relationship between the Council and Aneurin Leisure Trust greatly improved during phase 2 of the review. This positive working relationship has continued to improve throughout lockdown and into the re-opening phase. This has been enhanced through the weekly structured meetings between the link officer and senior managers in the Trust during the first six months of lockdown.

### **3. Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report has been discussed and agreed by Education DMT and CLT prior to submission to Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee. Members are asked to consider the following options:

**Option 1:** Members are requested to scrutinise the annual performance and accept the report's proposals for future reporting arrangements.

**Option 2:** Members are requested to scrutinise the information detailed within the report and make appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee for final approval.

### **4. Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

#### **4.1 Corporate Plan Priorities**

This report supports the Council's Performance Management Framework and the work of the Aneurin Leisure Trust contributes to the Council priority, Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities, the delivery of statutory responsibilities for providing library services and the core elements of the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing plan.

### **5. Implications Against Each Option**

#### **5.1 Impact on Budget**

The proposal in this report will ensure that the Council is getting the most out of the investment through the commissioned service. The proposed new reporting process will ensure that the investment is delivering the outcomes as articulated in the Leisure and Culture Strategy. The full impact of COVID-19 on the Trust's Business Plan is not yet fully realised, as the furlough scheme has provided much needed financial support. However, the Trust

has a clear delivery plan and financial forecast which takes account of this uncertainty, and is being closely monitored.

ALT income and expenditure is set out below. This is regularly discussed and shared with the Council, with a BGCBC Finance Officer also attends all ALT Finance meetings. Due to the ALT's success in accessing Covid related grants, the hardship fund and careful management of staff on furlough, the Trust is in a positive financial position, which is providing some support for the future. This is important as the Trust has forecast that a return to full operation will take time.

Income and Expenditure	Original Estimate YTD	Mar 2021 Actual YTD
	£	£
Income YTD	2,511,228	3,243,085
Expenditure YTD	6,013,825	5,754,678
<b>Operating Deficit YTD</b>	<b>(3,502,597)</b>	<b>(2,511,593)</b>
Management Fee YTD	3,232,692	3,232,688
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) YTD</b>	<b>(269,905)</b>	<b>721,095</b>

## 5.2 Risk

The risk of not monitoring progress against the agreed performance indicators could lead to the outcomes in the Leisure and Culture Strategy not being met, and the Trust not meeting the requirements set out in the service specification.

## 5.3 Legal

Monitoring performance in line with the agreed performance indicators is a requirement within the Service Specification, which is part of the Finance and Management Agreement. The Finance and Management Agreement represents all the legal and financial arrangements for the relationship between the Council and ALT.

## 5.4 Human Resources










There are no direct Human Resources implications associated with this report other than the allocation of time from the link officer.

## 6. Supporting Evidence

### 6.1 Performance Information and Data

6.12 The bi-annual reports will include progress against the following key performance indicators. Targets and measures have been agreed against each of these areas to provide clarity on what is expected for the Trust and

also to ensure Members can make judgements on what is going well and what needs to improve. ALT has developed a visual dashboard which highlights progress against the KPIs and the current status is set out below:

 <u>Area</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Key Drivers</u>
Governance, Leadership & Advocacy	Green >90% Amber <90% >80% Red <80%		All meetings attended
Financial Sustainability	Green 1% of Target Amber <1% of Target Red >5% of Target		During a challenging year of lockdown closures the Trust has utilised; The Hardship Fund and the JRS through Furlough
Use of the Services	Green Target met Amber 10% of target Red >10% of Target		Data has not been achieved due to sites being closed for 8 months of the financial year
Operational Performance	Green 80%-100% Amber 70%-79% Red 0%-79%		Not achieved due to lockdown closures throughout the year
Customer & Staff Satisfaction	Green >55% Amber <55% >45% Red <45%		When open the customer satisfaction has been positive but lockdown has not provided a full year of data. Staff satisfaction is good due to furloughed staff receiving 100% of salary
Library Services Standards	Green >80% Amber 70% - 79% Red <79%		A year on year improvement on the WPLS report. Other positives include working in partnership with BGCBC to create the Community Hubs
Environmental Sustainability	Green 3% Amber 10% Red >10%		Phase 2 implemented to install replacement pool covers which will greatly reduce water heating costs
Asset Management	Green >90% Amber <90% >80% Red <80%		All key maintenance tasks actioned

6.13 This table clearly highlights ALT is performing well in all areas it has control over. However, importantly, the three areas which are red or amber are directly related to the services not being able to be open to the public, and so we would not expect these to be green at this point.

Measures underpinning these KPIs are also listed in Appendix 1.

- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public (This section is mandatory)**  
The expected outcome for the public will be to achieve the aspirations in the Leisure and Culture Strategy
- 6.3 ***Involvement***  
The updating of the service specification and performance indicators has been developed in collaboration between the Council and the Trust.
- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term***  
Blaenau Gwent's decision to commission the provision of Leisure and Culture Services from ALT is intended to secure the long term provision of Leisure and Culture provision in the County Borough. The monitoring and reporting process, in line with the finance and management agreement, seeks to strengthen the long term provision by ensuring that provision is in line with what is required.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**  
The impact of leisure and cultural provision on wellbeing has been recognised for a long time and is preventative in its approach.
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**  
The new governance model within the service specification ensures that collaboration is at the heart of all decisions. The Joint Strategic Partnership Group will strengthen this approach and encourage greater partnership working.
- 6.7 **Integration**  
The move of the client function to Education will only further enhance opportunities for integration between the Trust and across areas within the Council.
- 6.8 **EqIA**  
There is no requirement for an EQIA assessment as all partners will have their own equality planning arrangements in place.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 The current reporting arrangements, along with the new governance structure will ensure that the performance of the Trust is transparent and accountable. Reports will be presented to CLT, Scrutiny Committee, Executive, Council and the new Joint Strategic Partnership Group on a six monthly basis.

### **Background Documents / Electronic Links**

Appendix 1  
Appendix 2



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## Appendix 1

### Grants applied for during the Covid Pandemic by ALT

\*not including any funds received through the Hardship fund or the JRS

C Waters	Digital 2030	Welsh Govt	Digital Transformation Fund	Aug-20		<b>£25,000</b>	<b>Caerphilly Led</b>
C Waters	Learning and Work Institute	Learning and Work Institute	Adult Learners Wkk	Sep-20	1 mth	<b>£750</b>	<b>Approved</b>
C Waters	Welsh Govt	Digital Exclusion Fund	Laptops, Mi Fi	Aug-20	6mths	<b>£13,480</b>	<b>Approved</b>
P Sykes	Welsh Govt	Sports Resilience Fund	Recovery fund	Aug-20	12 mths	<b>£55,000</b>	<b>Approved</b>
C Waters	Welsh Govt	Arts Council Wales	Support for Arts	Sep-20	5 mths	<b>£70,000</b>	<b>Approved</b>
C Waters	BGCBC	Town Centre Grants	Gazebos EVLAC	Sep-20	5 mths	<b>£2,000</b>	<b>Approved</b>
C Hares	BGCBC	Town Centre Grants	BHaP	Sep-20	3mths	<b>£12,000</b>	<b>Approved</b>
C Hares	BGCBC	Town Centre Grants	PBB	Oct-20		<b>£12,000</b>	<b>Declined</b>
T Jones	Welsh Govt	Cultural Services Fund	Staff salaries	Sep-20	4 mths	<b>£4,720</b>	<b>WG funded a central post for marketing across service</b>
C Waters	WCVA	Cultural Resilience	staff salaries			<b>£75,000</b>	<b>Declined (re; management fee)</b>
C Waters/G Parnham	National Lottery Heritage	Local Place for Nature	Sensory garden	Nov-20	3 mths	<b>£11,000</b>	<b>Approved</b>
C Hares	National Lottery Heritage	15 minute Heritage	BHaP - Digital tour		6 mths	<b>£10,000</b>	<b>In process</b>
C Waters	Welsh Government	Adult Learning Support Fund	Remote/Blended Learning training for tutors	Nov-20	5 mths	<b>£6,000</b>	<b>Approved Coleg Gwent lead</b>
C Waters G Parnham	WCVA	Landfill (conservation)	Fencing PBB			<b>£50,000</b>	<b>In process</b>
C Waters	Welsh Government	Digital Exclusion Fund	Tablets/laptops	Nov-20	5 mths	<b>£5,777</b>	<b>Approved</b>
C Waters	Good Things Foundation	Census On line	Deliver digital census	Sep-20	9weeks	<b>£4,434</b>	<b>Approved</b>
T Jones	Welsh Government	Estyn Allan	Libraries improve social media	Jan-21	3mths	<b>3,000</b>	<b>Approved</b>
P Sykes	Sport Wales	Sports Recovery Fund	Providing activities for the most vulnerable families	Apr-21	12 mths	<b>£55,000</b>	<b>Approved</b>
					Total Applied	<b>£393,161</b>	
					Grants Rec'd	<b>£237,161</b>	
					Not lead	<b>£31,000</b>	
					Declined	<b>£79,720</b>	
					In process	<b>£60,000</b>	
						<b>£347,881</b>	

## Measures underpinning the KPIs

The below will be used for monitoring all performance information and data from April 2021 but has not been tracked through 2020 due to being closed for 8 months of the financial year.

Leisurecard holders																
	April	May	June	Q1	July	Aug	Sept	Q2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4
Total New holders (in reporting period)																
Total Card Holders																
Gym Statistics																
	April	May	June	Q1	July	Aug	Sept	Q2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4
Total Bookings in Month																
Age Group with Highest Bookings																
Average Income Per Day £																
Swimming Statistics																
	April	May	June	Q1	July	Aug	Sept	Q2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4
Total Bookings in Month																
Racquet Sport Statistics																
	April	May	June	Q1	July	Aug	Sept	Q2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4
Total Bookings For Month - Badminton																
Total Bookings For Month - Squash																
Fitness Class Statistics																
	April	May	June	Q1	July	Aug	Sept	Q2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4
Fitness Class Age Group Highest Usage																
Total Bookings in Month																
Average Income Per Day £																
App Statistics																
	April	May	June	Q1	July	Aug	Sept	Q2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4
Total App Users																
Percentage % Increase Since Mar 20																
Booking Comparison																
	April	May	June	Q1	July	Aug	Sept	Q2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4
App Bookings %																
Online Bookings %																
Reception Bookings %																
Footfall Per Site																
	April	May	June	Q1	July	Aug	Sept	Q2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4
ASC																
EVSC																
TSC																
BHAP (park)																
BHAP (house)																
PBB (park)																
PBB (visitor centre)																
EV Lib																
Tred Lib																
Bryn Lib																
Blai Lib																
Aber Lib																
Cwm Lib																
Unique Users																
	April	May	June	Q1	July	Aug	Sept	Q2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4
Sports Centres																
Libraries																

**Appendix 2 Investments made in 2020-21**

# Investments

Investment	Venue	Cost
New flooring throughout visitor centre	Parc Bryn Bach	£18,000
New furniture in the café	Parc Bryn Bach	£8,000
Refurbished showers	Parc Bryn Bach	£50,000
Upgraded Mini Golf	Parc Bryn Bach	£48,000
Lake view patio	Parc Bryn Bach	£10,000
Pedal Go-Karts (to be hired)	Parc Bryn Bach	£5,600
Bi-Fold windows	Parc Bryn Bach	£9,000
Kiosk (outside catering)	Parc Bryn Bach	£6,000
Online booking systems	Parc Bryn Bach	£4,500
Tiled flooring	Bedwellty House	£4,750
Large Awning Shelter	Bedwellty House	£5,000
Additional outside seating	Bedwellty House	£3,500
Dining Bubbles	Bedwellty House	£2,000
Patio Heaters	Bedwellty House	£2,500
Gym upgrades (all 3 centres)	Sports Centres	£600,000
	Total	£776,850



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# Agenda Item 11

Performance and Democratic Team -  
Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:  
Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee **Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee:**  
Date of meeting: **22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021**  
Report Subject: **Improving Schools Programme 2021**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr J Collins, Executive Member for Education**  
Report Submitted by: **Lynn Phillips, Corporate Director of Education**  
**Luisa Munro-Morris, Head of School Improvement and Inclusion**  
**Michelle Jones, Strategic Education Improvement Manager**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
27.05.21	03.06.21	11.06.21			22.06.21	21.07.21		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an overview of those schools that have been inspected in the period, including those schools that have presented as a cause for concern, their progress and the work delivered or currently underway to continue to support them to improve.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The report covers the inspection outcomes reported on during the period and all schools and settings within the County Borough identified by the Education Directorate, supported by the EAS and/or Estyn as needing to improve.
- 2.2 The Blaenau Gwent Improving Schools Programme operates within the regional arrangements for supporting schools across South East Wales and is aligned with regional policies and processes for school monitoring, evaluation, support and intervention. The regional arrangements build on the national frameworks and guidance and in particular the National Framework for Categorising Schools and the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The significant improvement in performance of Blaenau Gwent's schools during recent years and the latest position is explained further in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The Blaenau Gwent Improving Schools Programme focuses particularly on those schools which need to secure improvement in schools categorised as Amber and Red.

## 3. Options for Recommendation

### 3.1 Option 1

Members are asked to scrutinise the information detailed within the report and contribute to the continuous assessment of effectiveness by making appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee.

## **Option 2**

Accept the report as provided.

### **4. Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

#### **4.1 Corporate Plan**

One of the objectives in the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan is for every child to have the best start in life. The Council seeks to ensure that provision is appropriate and able to meet the needs of children and young people, so that their progress is in line with ambitious expectations.

#### **4.2 Statutory Responsibility**

The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 consolidates, clarifies and reforms the law in relation to intervention in schools causing concern. The Welsh Government's statutory guidance for schools causing concern (February 2014) details the local authority powers of intervention in schools causing concern, the grounds on which those powers can be invoked and the procedures governing the intervention process.

### **5. Implications Against Each Option**

#### **5.1 Impact on Budget**

There are no direct financial implications for this report. However, the Council allocates approximately £42.8 million to schools via the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) to provide high quality education and to improve pupil outcomes.

Blaenau Gwent continues to make a financial contribution to the regional EAS arrangements of approximately £350,000 from the core Education Directorate Budget. The EAS is the Council's commissioned school improvement service commissioned to work directly with schools to provide professional challenge and support to improve. The Education Directorate holds the EAS to account for the impact and effectiveness of their work in schools in Blaenau Gwent. The EAS value for money report has previously been shared with Members that indicates an improving position i.e. educational standards are increasing with less financial resources.

#### **5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions**

5.2.1 The Estyn Inspection Framework focuses primarily on standards, the quality of education provision and the quality of leadership in educational establishments and schools. Improving pupil performance is fundamental to the development of a highly-skilled workforce which is essential to Blaenau Gwent's longer term economic development. Failure to identify schools and provide support appropriately places at risk the quality of education and standards in individual schools. The Estyn Inspection approach provides an external viewpoint through which potential school risks are identified and

resolved. Failure to ensure that there is robust monitoring of settings and of Council services carries with it a number of significant risks:

- Undetected and unaddressed decline in school performance and the quality of
- provision.
- Learners do not achieve to acceptable levels
- Lack of overall improvement in schools' performance
- Children do not receive the best start in life
- Negative impact on the reputation of the Council.

5.2.2 Similarly, ineffective monitoring of Council Services also poses a range of risks including:

- Reducing standards and quality of provision in settings
- Poor value for money
- Ineffective support for settings which hinders improvement
- Negative impact on the reputation of the Council.

5.2.3 However, there are clear Education Directorate led risk mitigation considerations in place that are facilitating strong school improvement. Mitigating actions include the routine monitoring of quantitative and qualitative information, regular quality assurance meetings between the Council and the EAS, regular quality assurance meetings within the Education Directorate and across teams, school inspection findings and school categorisation results.

5.2.4 The progress schools make in their School Development Plans is also monitored on a half-termly basis. School attendance and exclusion figures are monitored on a fortnightly basis. School's safeguarding processes are also closely monitored. Although notably during the pandemic many of these routine business processes have been suspended, in line with national requirements. However, holistic support packages are devised for schools via regular intra Council services meetings between OD, finance, health and safety, education and school governor support services. Moreover, through ongoing robust self-evaluation processes school level performance data is regularly analysed and evaluated to identify emerging trends or possible underperformance.

5.2.5 The quality of provision i.e. the quality teaching and learning in classrooms is monitored and supported via the EAS. The quality of school leadership is also supported extensively by the EAS via a range of programmes and school-to-school networks. Through the monitoring of performance by means of Estyn reports, the Scrutiny/Executive Committees are provided with assurances that educational settings and supporting services are able to deliver provision of a high quality.

### 5.3 **Legal**

Estyn is an inspection body, established under the Education Act 1992. Whilst, the improving schools programme operates within the legal framework of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013

### 5.4 **Human Resources**

There is no direct staffing or workforce implications arising from this report.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

### 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

#### 6.1.1 **School Categorisation**

Under normal circumstances, all schools are categorised on an annual basis in accordance with the National Model for Categorisation. The process has taken place at a regional level and historic national moderation has confirmed that the regional process is robust. However, there has been no school categorisation process undertaken since 2020. Importantly, Appendix 1 shows the significant progress made and the reduction in the level of support that Blaenau Gwent Schools require during recent times.

#### 6.1.2 **Schools in the Red and Amber Categories, that have made positive progress (2019 to 2021)**

Appendix 1 details the progress of the following schools:

- Brynbach Primary School; and,
- Glyncoed Primary School.

It is pleasing to note that both schools have made further positive progress and are now not in receipt of additional support; with Brynbach Primary School being categorised as yellow in 2019/20 and Glyncoed Primary School being removed in the autumn term 2020 from the Schools Causing Concern process.

#### 6.1.3 **Schools Causing Concern (SCC)**

##### **Schools who are in receipt of additional support 2019 to 2020**

Appendix 1 details the additional support that is now provided to Sofrydd Primary School (Yellow to Amber).

##### **Schools in Receipt of a Statutory Warning Notice (Red)**

Appendix 1 details the arrangement and progress for the two schools, ALC and Brynmawr Foundation School that are in receipt of a Statutory Warning Notice and the River Centre, which is in receipt of a Pre-Warning Notice letter.

##### **Educational Inspections**

Since the last inspection report to this Committee in the Autumn of 2020, there have been no further Estyn inspections undertaken.



## 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

### 6.2.1 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**

The regional policy for monitoring, evaluation and intervention in schools through the categorisation process is derived from the National Categorisation Framework, but has been evolved through the engagement of a variety of stakeholders including schools and members of governing bodies. A range of Council services and external partners are involved in delivering programmes to support schools requiring improvement. Monitoring progress towards targets enables effective targeting of support.

### 6.2.2 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**

Analysis of aggregate school performance data is a key element in ensuring that schools are known well by the Council so that appropriate support and intervention can be directed towards areas of greatest need.

Monitoring of school performance facilitates support for schools to ensure that schools maintain high quality outcomes in the longer term.

### 6.2.3 **Preventative focus**

Through effective monitoring and evaluation of school performance, early identification of emerging areas for improvement can be achieved with consequent early intervention to secure improvement.

The effectiveness of the Council's monitoring, evaluation and intervention programmes ensure that preventative action is taken early in order to minimise the escalation of concerns.

### 6.2.4 **Collaboration / partnership working**

The Council collaborates with neighbouring local authorities through the South East Wales Consortium for the provision of School Improvement services through the Education Achievement Service (EAS). The Council also secures a range of pupil support services such as Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired, Speech and Language, and Ethnic Minority support services through regional collaboration.

Within the Council, the school improvement and inclusion leadership teams ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to supporting schools in the Education Directorate and across the Council as a whole.

### 6.2.5 **Integration (across service areas)**

The Council commissions its school improvement function on regional basis.

## 6.3 **EqIA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)**

There is no requirement for EqIA assessment since this is not a change of policy or practice. However, implementation of the Council's monitoring, evaluation and intervention practice in schools has a positive impact on children and young people and on staff within a particular school. By improving the quality of education, standards are improved for all children and young people. Through the Council's school improvement strategy, particular

focus is given to vulnerable learners and those who are at risk of underachievement.

**7. Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 Monitoring of Estyn reports and improvement pathways is an important mechanism for ensuring that Members of the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee and the Executive are sufficiently informed to enable them to hold the Authority to account effectively for the quality of education provision, and importantly, pupil outcomes.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

*Appendix 1 – Improving Schools Programme*

*Appendix 2 – Estyn Inspection Framework*

*Appendix 3 - Operational appendix for meetings of Schools Causing Concern*

## Improving Schools Programme

### 1.0 School Categorisation

The national framework for the categorisation of schools is based on a staged process. For the 2020-21 academic year this process has been suspended. In the interim the regional identification support level is now classified as high, medium, low and self-improving. However, in terms of the judgements shown in this report on the overall category of support are based on a four-colour model, green, yellow, amber, and red, with 'green' denoting the category where least support is needed.

Blaenau Gwent has a strong position overall on school categorisation and a relatively small number of Schools Causing Concern, with progress being identified in all of these SCC schools. In the case of schools categorised as Red, the school's Challenge Adviser works with the school to create a Single Plan i.e. the school development plan, which defines the support available through the Local Authority and the Education Achievement Service (EAS). In the schools requiring such improvement regular half-termly Schools Causing Concern meetings (SCC) are held, which in the case of Blaenau Gwent Schools are chaired by the Executive Member for Education and are attended by the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, Corporate Director of Education, Strategic Education Improvement Manager, Principal Challenge Adviser and EAS representatives. Following each meeting, the Schools Causing Concern Panel evaluates the progress which the school has made and determines the next steps which should be taken in relation to supporting the school. This can include the invocation of formal powers of intervention should that be considered appropriate.

### 2.0 Statutory Responsibility

The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 consolidates, clarifies and reforms the law in relation to intervention in schools causing concern. The statutory guidance defines a 'school causing concern' as one which is:

- Subject to a Warning Notice issued under the 2013 Act.
- Not subject to Warning Notice but meets one or more of the six grounds for intervention and there is a related risk to the health and safety on any person that calls for urgent intervention
- Deemed by Estyn to require significant improvement.
- Deemed by Estyn to require special measures.

Under the terms of the Act, a school will be 'eligible for Intervention' where one of the following six grounds for intervention exist:

- Ground 1: The standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low.

- Ground 2: There has been a breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed.
- Ground 3: The behaviour of pupils at the school or any action taken by those pupils or their parents is severely prejudicing, or is likely to severely prejudice, the education of any pupils at the school.
- Ground 4: The safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown of discipline or otherwise).
- Ground 5: The governing body or headteacher has failed, or is likely to fail, to comply with a duty under the Education Acts.
- Ground 6: The governing body or head teacher has acted, or is proposing to act unreasonably in the exercise of any of its or his or her functions under the Education Acts.

### **Local Authority powers of intervention**

Under Section 5 of the Act, the LA is able to intervene in schools causing concern in the following ways:

1. Direct the governing body to secure advice or collaborate with another school
2. Appoint additional governors and nominating a new Chair
3. Appoint an Interim Executive Board
4. Suspend the delegated authority for the governing body to manage the school's budget
5. Direct the governing body to take certain action or to desist from taking certain action.

A school remains eligible for intervention by the LA until one of the following events takes place;

- the authority gives notice that it is satisfied that the grounds for interventions that have been dealt with or that using its powers of intervention would not be appropriate for any other reason.
- the Welsh Ministers determine that the power to intervene is no longer in effect and give notice in writing to the local authority and the governing body of their determination.

### **3.0 Performance Information and Data**

All schools are usually categorised on an annual basis in accordance with the National Model for Categorisation. The process takes place at a regional level and historically when in operation the national moderation has confirmed that the regional process is robust. This process has been suspended though since 2020, in line with national requirements.

### 3.1 School Categorisation January 2019

Overall, National School Categorisation in January 2019 indicated further continued improvement when compared with the previous year in terms of the number of green and yellow schools:

- The number of Red schools remains the same **(2)**. Two schools remain categorised as Red (Abertillery Learning Community and Brynmawr Foundation School).
- **2** schools were categorised as Amber (one school Rhos-y-Fedwen Primary remained as Amber with Brynbach Primary School being categorised from yellow to amber due to the need to provide additional support. Overall this represented a reduction of 2 schools compared to the previous year.)
- **10** schools were categorised as yellow (Coed-y-Garn Primary, Glyncoed Primary, St Joseph's Primary, St Mary's RC Primary, Sofrydd Primary Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, Ystruth Primary with a further 3 schools moving from Amber to Yellow, including River Centre, EFLC and St Illtyd's Primary)
- **11** schools were categorised as Green (All Saints RC Primary, Beaufort Hill Primary, Deighton Primary, Georgetown Primary, Glanhowy Primary, Pen-y-Cwm Special, St Mary's CiW Primary and Tredegar Comprehensive School with a further 3 schools moving from Yellow to Green Blaen-y-Cwm Primary, Cwm Primary and Willowtown Primary). This is again an improvement on the previous year and over a three-year period represents a significant improvement in the percentage of schools categorised as either Yellow or Green and demonstrates the improved capacity and leadership within our schools.

### 3.2 School Categorisation January 2020

Overall, National School Categorisation in January 2020 indicated further sustained improvement over the period.

- The number of Red schools remains the same **(2)**. Two schools remain categorised as Red (Abertillery Learning Community and Brynmawr Foundation School), as both schools are in an Estyn category.
- **2** schools were categorised as Amber (Glyncoed Primary School and Sofrydd Primary School.)
- **10** schools were categorised as Yellow (Coed-y-Garn Primary, Ebbw Fawr Learning Community, St Illtyd's Primary, St Joseph's Primary, St Mary's RC Primary, Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, River Centre with a further 2 schools moving from Amber to Yellow (Brynbach Primary

and Rhos-y-Fedwen Primary) and one Deighton Primary School moving from Green to yellow)

- **11** schools were categorised as Green (All Saints RC Primary, Blaen-y-Cwm Primary, Beaufort Hill Primary, Cwm Primary, Georgetown Primary, Glanhowy Primary, Pen-y-Cwm Special, St Mary's CiW Primary, Willowtown Primary, Ystruth Primary and Tredegar Comprehensive School. This is again an improvement and represents a significant improvement in the percentage of schools categorised as either Yellow or Green and further demonstrates the improved capacity and leadership within our schools.

### **3.3 School Categorisation 2020/2021**

As previously explained the school categorisation process has been suspended and as such no comparative data is available, however, there has been progress made in made in a number of schools.

### **3.4 Brynbach Primary School (Yellow to Amber to Yellow)**

In January 2019, the school was categorised as Amber in 2019 in recognition of the additional support required by the then recently appointed Headteacher. Throughout that academic year, the then EIB processes reported that progress against the school development plan priorities are Good with the school being removed from category at the end of the year and the categorisation process for 2019/20 confirming that the school was now categorised as Yellow.

### **3.5 Glyncoed Primary School (Yellow to Amber)**

Glyncoed Primary School was classified as Amber in January 2020 as a result of concerns in relation to leadership capacity at the school as a result of a number of leadership changes over a period of time. Progress was evaluated and assessed as strong and during the autumn term 2020 the school was removed from the SCC process noting the evident progress that had taken place at pace.

### **4.0 Schools Causing Concern Update**

The regional approach to School Causing Concern was amended in preparation for the 2019/20 academic year and the protocol is embedded at the end of this document. As such, these meetings form part of a wider drive by SEWC Councils and EAS to improve educational outcomes for all children and young people. The Council and EAS roles will be principally:

- To review and evaluate pace and progress in relation to identified School Development Plan priorities.
- To challenge the Headteacher and Governing Body on the rates of progress in their school.

- To recommend and monitor actions aimed at accelerating improvement.
- To consider the extent to which the school has been successful in achieving required improvement. This will determine future actions by the LA and EAS. This may encompass:

#### 4.1 **Schools Causing Concern (SCC) Progress:**

During the period from March 2020, schools have been operating under very different and challenging circumstances. In March, the focus of the Council/EAS support for schools shifted to the delivery of the National Continuity of Learning Plan and subsequently the regional distance and blended learning PL offer. During this time, national programmes for leadership and regional network meetings have continued and schools have engaged with these activities to varying degrees. In addition, SDP review meetings, Team Around the School meetings, Schools Causing Concern meetings and bespoke meetings with individual schools have given schools opportunities to identify and access appropriate support. During this period schools have been presented with a wide range of professional learning opportunities and support to deliver distance and blended learning.

Since March 2020, restrictions have meant that school visits have been very limited, and evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of leadership and the quality of teaching and learning have been undertaken largely through virtual meetings and review of documentation. Opportunities to examine first-hand evidence have, therefore, been very limited as is the case in all schools across Wales. At the commencement of the 2021/22 academic year there were only 3 schools identified as a cause for concern and one school was added to during the spring term. Below is summary of their progress made to date:

##### 4.1.1 **Sofrydd Primary School (Yellow to Amber)**

Sofrydd Primary School was categorised as Amber in January 2020 as the school development plan was identified as unsatisfactory and became part of the regional schools causing concern arrangements. During early 2020, a Leadership and Management review was commissioned which reported to the governing body of the school just prior to the initial wave of the pandemic.

The purpose of the review was to evaluate and review the current leadership standards in the school, the quality of provision and standards achieved by pupils to provide an evidence base, to support the school to identify its key priorities for improvement and enable the local authority and the EAS to provide the appropriate level of support.

The review identified 12 key recommendations for securing improvement and now informs the work programme that is being progressed. Key to this improvement agenda has been the need to improve governance arrangements, which have continued to be strengthened through the

successful recruitment of a new Chair of Governors and Vice Chair of Governors who has continued to work alongside the Acting Executive Headteacher, this relationship has continued to deliver satisfactory progress against the recommendations, however, there is a need for the school improvement service to verify judgements. At the start of the Summer term 2021 a new Acting Headteacher commenced in post. This position will be kept under review in the summer term of 2021.

#### **4.1.2 Schools in Receipt of a Statutory Warning Notice**

##### **4.1.2.1 Abertillery Learning Community (Red)**

The school is currently subject to a LA warning notice to improve and a programme of intervention. However, it is important to note that for 2020 as a result of the pandemic there are no comparative performance measurements that can be relied upon.

A school leadership review was undertaken in the Autumn term of 2017, which resulted in LA intervention and when the school was inspected in February 2018 it was then placed in the statutory category of requiring significant improvement. A follow-up visit was held in July 2019 and Inspectors noted the progress that had been made in respect of many of the recommendations for action from the inspection, although noted that many of the improvements are at an early stage of development and as such confirmed that the school will remain within an Estyn category. Following a successful period of leadership continuity by two established Headteachers, the Governing Body successfully recruited a suitably experienced Headteacher to the permanent position of Headteacher and also appointed a new Chair of Governors. Both have been in place now for in excess of 2 years. Additional LA governors remain in place to provide additional capacity to the governing body for progressing key personnel matters.

The Learning Community has had several changes in senior leadership since the core inspection:

- A new substantive Headteacher was appointed in January 2020.
- A new Director of Learning took up post in the Summer 2020.
- A Deputy Phase Lead at primary was appointed in Spring 2021.
- A new substantive Secondary Phase Lead started at Easter 2021.
- A new Secondary Assistant Headteacher started at Easter 2021

The Learning Community has engaged well with support on offer from the Council and the EAS. The model for supporting the school is via Challenge Adviser, with additional Learning Network School support (via Tonyrefail Community School). The Learning Community has engaged with this arrangement, though delays to planned support were caused in the Autumn and Spring due to COVID affecting capacity in both secondary and primary settings. EAS support visits commenced at the end of the Spring term 2021. The focus of support from the Challenge Adviser, and also from the Learning



Network School, is specifically to enable leaders to make strong progress against the school's recommendations

SCC meetings scheduled half-termly during 2020-2021 were disrupted by the pandemic, however, catch-up sessions between the Council and the Learning Community continued throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. There were two formal SCC meetings that were held in the autumn; in October and December. In November 2020, the EAS had completed a review of progress against the Estyn recommendations using a limited evidence base gathered as part of an on-site visit. The outcome of this was shared in the December SCC meeting. The formal SCC meetings continued into the Spring term on a half-termly basis. Moreover, the Abertillery Learning Community Corporate Group was reinstated in the Spring term. The group is chaired by the Managing Director of the Council and the emphasis of the meetings is to gain corporate assurance against the Learning Community's capacity to improve standards and consider sustainability issues, particularly the revenue budget and dealing with the projected financial deficit. The ALC revenue budget provisional out-turn is a significantly improved position with a deficit circa £324,000 against the projected deficit of over £1m+.

There is also consideration of the following high-level strategic overview strands of work to capture the statement of actions moving forward. Updates are reported against areas set out below and progress is cross-referenced to the LA statement of action plan:

- OD strategy
- Financial strategy (5 Year Plan)
- Provision strategy (ICT, Inclusion, Youth service)
- Engagement strategy

The Headteacher presented reports in each of the SCC meetings. In the October 2020, December 2020, February 2021 and March 2021 SCC meetings, the Headteacher reported on actions taken against each of the recommendations in the current term, with limitations on making school judgements due to the circumstances of the pandemic. It was acknowledged, however, by the SCC Panel that satisfactory progress is being made, based on the evidence seen and presented and that the Learning Community is in a more stable position, especially from a governance perspective. A broad range of actions were taken in all priority areas and each were reported on in detail in the meetings, including outlining the provision developed in distance and blended learning across the community, with a focus on both learning and wellbeing of pupils, staff and the wider school community. It is expected that Estyn will return to the school in the near future to undertake a monitoring visit.

#### 4.1.2.2 **Brynmawr Foundation (Amber to Yellow and to Red)**

In December 2013 Brynmawr Foundation School was inspected by Estyn and placed in Estyn monitoring; with an adequate judgement for its current performance and prospects for improvement. Recommendations included

improving the school's performance and improving quality in teaching and learning. The school was categorised as Amber in 2014 and 2015. The school was issued with a statutory Warning Notice in 2015 to improve standards, particularly in Maths. Support was put in place and Key Stage 4 outcomes improved significantly in 2016. The Warning Notice was subsequently lifted.

Due to the improvement secured, in 2016 the school was classified as Yellow, having made strong progress against Estyn's recommendations and with improved performance at the end of KS4.

However, following an unexpected decline in KS4 performance in 2017, particularly in Maths and the outcome of an EAS review of the effectiveness of leadership and management at the school, the school was categorised as Red in the 2017-18 in the national school's categorisation process and invoked the LA powers of intervention. The school continues to be subject to a LA statutory warning notice to improve and after a period of support, intervention is now in place.

In the autumn term 2019, the school was inspected by Estyn and was placed in a category of Significant Measures and Members will already be aware from a previous report to this committee that the inspectors awarded a judgement against all four inspection areas of 'unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement' and against the inspection area of care support and guidance a judgement of 'adequate and needs improvement' was recorded.

Governance has significantly improved, the additional Governors that had been appointed have been removed evidencing the cultural growth that is now demonstrable within the Governing Body. However, it is important to note that for 2020 as a result of the pandemic there are no comparative performance measurements that can be relied upon. The school's engagement in regional Professional Learning Opportunities and professional networks has been strong.

The school has had several changes in senior leadership since the core inspection:

- A new Assistant Headteacher was appointed at Easter 2020.
- Two new Associate Assistant Headteachers joined the leadership team this current academic year.
- The Assistant Headteacher who leads on inclusion and wellbeing will step down at the end of this academic year and a recruitment process is planned for May 2021 to appoint a replacement.
- A new subject leader for mathematics was appointed in April 2021 and will take up post on June 6th, 2021.

The school has engaged well with support on offer from the Council and the EAS, for example, LNS school to school support and Challenge Adviser support. The focus of support from LNS is specifically to enable leaders to make strong progress against the school's recommendations.

SCC meetings scheduled half-termly during 2020-2021 were disrupted by the pandemic, however, catch-up sessions between the Council and the BFS continued throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. There were two formal SCC meetings that were held in the autumn; in October and December. In November 2020, the EAS had completed a review of progress against the Estyn recommendations using a limited evidence base gathered as part of an on-site visit. The outcome of this was shared in the December SCC meeting.

Additionally, the school also shared their own review of progress against the recommendations from the same period:

- In the December 2020 SCC meeting, the Headteacher reported satisfactory progress against all inspection recommendations.
- In the February 2021 meeting, due to school closure the Headteacher reported on the school's home learning strengths and shared results from its recent survey with parents/carers, pupils and staff.
- In March 2021 the headteacher reported that broadly 65% of pupils overall had engaged with online learning during the time of school closure.
- In the March SCC meeting the Headteacher outlined 'improvements' and 'continue focus' areas for each of the inspection recommendations, with no formal judgements presented due to the challenge of gathering first-hand evidence. The Headteacher also reported that governance was now effective in the school with the Chair of Governors solely focussing on BFS and that Governors had implemented new 'recommendation monitoring sub-groups'.
- The Headteacher outlined that the financial position for BFS has improved significantly with a projected surplus at year-end 2020-21 and this is evidenced in the provisional accounts.
- The Headteacher and Brynmawr Foundation School have wholeheartedly embraced the WG Multi-Agency Support for Schools in Special Measures initiative and the initial improvement conference was convened in April 2021.

#### 4.1.2.3 **River Centre (Amber to Yellow)**

In the Spring term of 2021, the Council acted promptly and issued a pre-warning letter to the Chair of Governors of the River Centre. The pre-warning notice clearly set out the Council's areas of concern, which were predicated around the school's pupil capacity and admission arrangements for learners. In essence, the pre-warning notice concludes that the school has not operated or functioned in accordance with the terms on which it was established, particularly relating to placement of learners back into mainstream settings. The governing body has responded to the pre-warning notice and the Council are seeking confirmation of full compliancy against expectations. There are also other concerns that have emerged, such as the quality of the School Development Plan that will be covered through the SCC protocols.

Following the issuing of the pre-warning notice a number of governors resigned from the governing body, which included both the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors. These vacancies have now been filled and a new Chair of Governors appointed as well as three strong LA Governors being appointed. Consequently, as the school has been identified as a cause for concern, in line with the regional protocol moving forwards the school will participate in SCC meetings with the LA and the EAS. The initial meeting at which an overview of the SCC process took place in March 2021 and the next meeting is scheduled for late May 2021.

**5.0 Educational Inspections**

5.1 Appendix 2 details the framework that Estyn uses when inspecting educational establishments and the levels of follow up activity.

5.2 Since the last inspection report to this Committee there have been no further Estyn inspections.

<b>Overview of Current Inspection Framework</b>	
<b>Inspection Area</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Standards</b>
	1.1 Standards and progress overall 1.2 Standards and progress of specific groups 1.3 Standards and progress in skills
<b>2.</b>	<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>
	2.1 Wellbeing 2.2 Attitudes to learning
<b>3</b>	<b>Teaching and Learning Experience</b>
	3.1 Quality of teaching 3.2 The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum 3.3 Provision for skills
<b>4</b>	<b>Care, support and guidance</b>
	4.1 Tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support 4.2 Personal development 4.3 Safeguarding
<b>5</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>
	5.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers 5.2 Self-evaluation processes and improvement planning 5.3 Professional learning 5.4 Use of resources

## **Inspection Arrangements for Early Years Settings**

Members will be aware that the inspection framework under which early years settings were inspected differs from the school framework which is presently reported with the provision being assessed against the three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management

As a result of the inspection, the setting's current performance and prospects for improvement are assessed against a four-point judgement scale which is shown below:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement

### **Post Inspection Follow up Arrangements**

- **Estyn review** (formerly Estyn monitoring) - Normally, schools will require this level of activity when the judgement for inspection area 5, leadership and management, is adequate and needs improvement. It would be possible that a few inspection areas have been judged as good. However, the school would have some important areas for improvement that require monitoring.
- **Significant improvement** - The inspection report will state that in accordance with the Education Act 2005 HMCI is of the opinion that this school is in need of significant improvement. Schools in need of **significant improvement** are likely to have fewer important areas for improvement than schools in need of special measures. If inspectors have seriously considered, but rejected, the judgement that the school is in need of special measures, it is highly likely that it will come into the category of schools requiring significant improvement.
- **Special measures** - The inspection report will state that In accordance with the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that special measures are required in relation to this school. Schools identified as in need of **special measures** during a core inspection are likely to have many important areas for improvement in their work. Some schools may have a few important areas for improvement to a very marked degree or many areas for improvement to a lesser degree. In most instances, it will be the cumulative weight and effect of a combination of these areas for improvement which, when taken together, will prompt the judgement that a school is not providing an acceptable standard of education. While one feature alone is unlikely to result in a judgement that a school requires special measures, where inspectors find low standards and poor teaching and learning, significant risks to pupils or the likelihood of a breakdown of discipline, the school will normally require special measures.

For some educational establishments / schools there will be no follow-up activity.



# EAS

Education Achievement Service  
for South East Wales  
Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg  
i Dde Ddwyrain Cymru

## Schools Causing Concern

Operational appendix for meetings of  
Schools Causing Concern

September 2019

## Schools Causing Concern Meetings:

A Schools Causing Concern meeting can be requested by the local authority when a school is considered to be a 'school which causes concern' or is at risk of 'becoming a school which causes concern'. A School Causing Concern meeting will be arranged when a school:

- Is placed in a red or amber category;
- Has received a local authority warning notice;
- Is placed in an Estyn statutory category of requiring Significant Improvement or Special Measures;
- Evidences that enhanced support and challenge is required linked to grounds 1-6 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 for Schools Causing Concern.

Meetings may be arranged when a school;

- Is placed in a yellow or green category but its capacity to improve is not secure and / or the pace of improvement is too slow.
- Is in an Estyn review category.
- Is identified as a risk in relation to a review or audit, which has been conducted by the LA or EAS. This may include for example; Finance, Health & Safety and Safeguarding Audits or Leadership and ALN Reviews.
- Demonstrates evidences that enhanced support and challenge is required linked to grounds 1-6 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

Within the Welsh Government guidance on Schools Causing Concern, the six grounds for intervention are:

<b>Ground 1</b>	The standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low.
<b>Ground 2</b>	There has been a breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed.
<b>Ground 3</b>	The behaviour of pupils at the school or any action taken by those pupils or their parents is severely prejudicing, or is likely to severely prejudice, the education of any pupils at the school.
<b>Ground 4</b>	The safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown of discipline or otherwise).
<b>Ground 5</b>	The governing body or head teacher has failed, or is likely to fail, to comply with a duty under the Education Acts.
<b>Ground 6</b>	The governing body or head teacher has acted or is proposing to act unreasonably in the exercise of any of its, his, or her functions under the Education Acts.



## Terms of Reference

### Membership of a Schools Causing Concern Meeting

A Schools Causing Concern meeting is a collaborative meeting between a school, the local authority and the EAS. Key individuals are essential to the meeting. Essential members are listed below:

Director of Education / Chief Education Officer (or representative of)  
Head of School Standards (LA)  
Head Teacher  
Chair of Governing Body or Vice Chair (in exceptional circumstances)  
EAS Representative

*The following members will attend at the request of the Executive Member / Cabinet Member for Education, Chief Education Officer or Managing Director of the EAS:*

Executive / Cabinet Member for Education  
Managing Director / Director / Assistant Director EAS

*On occasions, additional school, LA or EAS staff will be required to attend. Additional members may include:*

Additional Senior Leaders or Heads of Department from schools  
Additional EAS Representatives  
Additional Senior Leaders, HR, Finance or Health and Safety Offices from the local authority.

### Aims of a Schools Causing Concern Meeting

School Causing Concern meetings form part of a wider drive by SEWC LAs and EAS to improve educational outcomes for all children and young people. The local authority and EAS roles will be principally:

- To review and evaluate pace and progress in relation to identified School Development Plan priorities.
- To challenge the Headteacher and Governing Body on the rates of progress in their school.
- To recommend and monitor actions aimed at accelerating improvement.
- To consider the extent to which the school has been successful in achieving required improvement. This will determine future actions by the LA and EAS. This may encompass:

### Schools Causing Concern Progress Judgements:

1. The school has made strong progress / very good progress and will not be required to attend Schools Causing Concern meetings. The support level of the school will be reduced.
2. The school has made satisfactory/ strong progress but will need to continue to attend Schools Causing Concern meetings for a further period of time to enable the improvements to become consistent and embedded.
3. The school has made satisfactory / strong progress but still requires additional support and the SDP / PIAP requires revision and updating.
4. The school demonstrates limited progress which lacks pace. It is advised that the local authority determine appropriate next steps of action agreed with the agreed Schools Causing Concern policy.

## Process

- The local authority will determine the venue for meetings. Generally, meetings will be held in local authority offices unless there is a specific reason for holding the meeting at the school.
- The Director of Education or Cabinet Member / Executive Member for Education will chair the meeting.
- The local authority will facilitate the meetings. The local authority or EAS will take minutes of the meeting.
- The agenda will be agreed at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting. The local authority should ensure that further notice is given whenever possible, enabling the school to fully prepare for the meeting. Ideally, the next agenda should be discussed at the end of a Schools Causing Concern meeting. This discussion will include details of specific areas the local authority and EAS wish to focus upon and those persons required to attend.
- Schools will be requested to present evidence to demonstrate progress linked to their School Development Plan / PIAP. Therefore, all reports presented at Schools Causing Concern meetings must practically align to the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. Local authorities reserve the right to request first hand evidence linked to specific reports. This may include pupil data, pupil books, minutes of departmental meetings, SLT meetings and reports to Governing Bodies. (This list is not intended to be exhaustive).
- Schools will prepare and submit progress reports or updates of their School Development Plan to the local authority 5 working days prior to the meetings. All documents to be distributed to all attendees at least 3 working days in advance of the meeting.
- School may use the meetings to discuss brokered support, their on-going challenges / barriers to improvement and any additional support requirements.
- The school will be expected to discuss its progress, obstacles to improvement, and any further planned actions.
- The LA and EAS will provide a view on a range of aspects relating to the school's key successes and barriers. These aspects may include the school's level of engagement, its pace and progress, its capacity to improve and required future support from the LA and EAS.
- Where a school is requested to attend a Schools Causing Concern meeting, the local authority may choose to discuss and focus on a range of issues, which can contribute to successful school performance and pupil outcomes. This should include a focus on pupil exclusions, attendance, wellbeing, vulnerable group data, performance management arrangement, parent engagement etc. (This list is not intended to be exhaustive).
- Confidential items will not be recorded within minutes. The nature of confidential discussion will be agreed between the school, local authority and the EAS. The local authority reserves the right to see either the Headteacher or Chair of Governors individually by request.
- The LA will provide a view of the schools' improvement and its need for further support using Schools Causing Progress Judgements 1-4 (indicated on page 3).
- Local authority and EAS staff will participate in a pre-briefing and debriefing session before and after a Schools Causing Concern meeting.

## Schedule /Timings of Meetings

For schools requiring the highest levels of support, monthly meetings will be established. All Schools Causing Concern will be requested to attend a meeting every half term.

It is expected that a School Causing Concern meeting will last no longer than 1.5 hours.

The local authority will aim to agree and issue meeting dates at least 6 weeks in advance. The local authority will invite EAS representatives, the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors. The Head Teacher will invite any additional staff or Senior Leaders whose attendance has been requested.

The local authority and EAS will establish which organisation will record and circulate minutes of meetings. All minutes should be circulated to the school, LA and EAS within 10 working days.

## **Agenda**

The standing agenda for all Schools Causing Concern meetings is:

1. Welcome and apologies.
2. Specific actions or matters arising from the previous meeting.
3. Head teacher led discussion based around the school's progress against the School Development Plan priorities (agreed prior to the meeting), including any reports verifying evidence of progress. Other Senior Leaders or Heads of Department may lead specific / appropriate reports by request.
4. School led discussion linked to the progress of all learners, including vulnerable groups.
5. EAS overview of support provided and commentary of progress made by the school.
6. Conclusions / next steps.
7. A.O.B / Future agenda items.
8. Confidential matters to be discussed in the presence of the local authority, EAS, the Head and/ or the Chair of Governors.
9. Meeting close.

A 15-minute LA and EAS pre-brief / debrief will take place before and after each meeting. The school will not be invited to participate.

## **Improvement Conferences:**

It is recognised that a Schools Causing Concern meeting is time limited which can restrict the length of the agenda. On occasions an extended meeting will be required to consider:

- The pace of progress linked to School Development Plan priorities and the identified support required.
- Why a school is not improving and has become 'stuck'.
- The level and range of support a school has received and its impact.
- The use of local authority statutory powers.

An improvement Conference will act as an extended and focussed meeting. This could be considered as an escalation of concern. The meeting will be scheduled over at least half a day and will be chaired and by either:

- The Executive/ Cabinet Member for Education
- The Chief Education Officer
- A Chief Education Officer from within the region but not from within the LA
- The Managing Director / Director of the EAS

At this stage the local authority will determine the agenda in conjunction with the school with at least 3 weeks' notice. Minutes will be kept as a record of the meeting and shared with all in attendance.

Persons Present:  
 Apologies:  
 Date of meeting:

**Actions completed since last Schools Causing Concern Meeting (School / LA / EAS)**

- 

**Main issues arising from Meeting**

- 

Schools Causing Progress Judgements 1-4:

**Actions for the school (to include timescales);**

Actions		Timescales
1.		
2.		

**Actions for the LA (to include timescales);**

Actions		Timescales
1.		
2.		

**Actions for the EAS (to include timescales);**

Actions		Timescales
1.		
2.		

**Next Meeting: (Date)**

**Next Agenda Items: (Draft)**