

Committee: **Partnership Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **14th October 2022**

Report Subject: **Statutory Maintained Schools Partnership Agreement**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Sue Edmunds, Executive Member for People and Education**

Report Submitted by: **Michelle Jones Strategic Education Improvement Manager**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance & Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
		05.10.22			14.10.22	26.10.22		Headteacher Working Group Chair of Governors meeting

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members of the Partnership Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to contribute to the development of the Statutory Maintained Schools Partnership Agreement that sets out the way the Local Authority (LA) works with schools and their respective governing bodies to improve the collaborative working arrangements.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Maintained Schools (Partnership Agreement) (Wales) Regulations 2007 for the Local Authority to enter into a Partnership Agreement with the Governing Body of each school they maintain.

2.2 The Partnership Agreement includes those statutory functions, which must be included, and these are outlined below:

- how the LA will promote high standards and support schools in particular those giving cause for concern, in special measures or requiring significant improvement and the factors that the LA will take into account in identifying schools giving cause for concern;
- the support that the LA will provide for governing bodies where the authority has exercised its powers of intervention or suspended the right to a delegated budget, and in instances where an inspection of a school causes concern or the authority appoints additional governors;
- responsibility of the LA to provide governors with support;
- the reports which the governing body provides to the LA on the discharge of its functions;
- the responsibility of the school and the LA for health and safety matters and their respective duties to employees and other persons in respect of these matters;

- the responsibility of the school and LA for the control of school premises and their maintenance and repairs and how the governing body may exercise its powers to provide community facilities; and,
- the LA duties regarding the defrayment of expenses of maintaining schools.

2.3 The draft Partnership Agreement is attached as Appendix 1 for Members' consideration.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report has been approved by Education DMT for submission to the Partnership Scrutiny Committee. The document is presently being commented on by Headteachers and Governing Bodies prior to being presented to CLT and the Executive Committee for adoption later this year.

Option 1: To consider and accept the information in the report and appendices.

Option 1: To consider the information contained in the report and appendices and provide comments to further the development of the Statutory Partnership Agreement and in doing so, influence the way in which the LA works with schools and Governing bodies, for approval by the Executive Committee.

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

4.1 The proposed document complies with the requirements of the Maintained Schools (Partnership Agreements) (Wales) Regulations 2007

4.2 The content of the proposed Statutory Partnership document is aligned to the objectives in the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan, which aims for everyone to have the best start in life. Through this plan it seeks to ensure that the education provision is appropriate and able to meet the needs of children and young people within Blaenau Gwent's schools.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The LA's current Statutory Partnership Agreement came to an end in 2021 and there is a need to secure a new agreement with partners.

Should a revised Partnership Agreement not be agreed there is a risk that the roles and responsibilities of the partners will not be clearly defined, resulting in a lack of clarity on respective responsibilities that may inhibit the required improvements in educational standards and non-compliance with

the Maintained Schools (Partnership Agreements) (Wales) Regulation 2007.

5.3 **Legal**

A Partnership Agreement is defined in the Education Act 2002 as an agreement about how an LA and the governing body of a school will act to discharge their functions in relation to the school. If an LA is unable to reach agreement with a governing body, it can draw up a statement setting out how the LA and the governing body will discharge their functions. There is a requirement that Local Authorities must enter into Partnership Agreement with the governing body of each school they maintain. The Maintained Schools (Partnership Agreements) (Wales) Regulations 2007 sets out the relevant provisions.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no direct human resource implications associated with this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

All Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools have previously adopted the current Statutory Partnership Agreement.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**

The engagement activities planned will underpin the development of the Partnership Agreement and as such the engagement with People Scrutiny is a key piece of this work in ensuring that those stakeholders with an interest are actively involved in shaping the document.

6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**

The draft Partnership Agreement is aligned to the principles contained in the Vision for Education.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

The draft Partnership Agreement is set within the context of the Vision for Education which places the child at the centre, ensuring that early identification of pupils needs leading to timely targeted intervention being central to securing a preventative approach is recognised and fully supported.

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

The draft Partnership Agreement sets out the respective roles and responsibilities for each of the partners.

6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**

The draft Partnership Agreement sets out the roles and responsibilities of the respective partners and identifies how schools will work with others in an integrated way but focused on pupils at the centre.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

There are no decarbonisation or carbon emission issues arising from this report

6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment***

An EQIA for the Partnership Agreement has been undertaken and no adverse impact has been identified.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The revised draft Partnership Agreement is a statutory document which is the cornerstone of a suite of documents between the Local Authority and their schools. The adoption of the final document will be monitored through the termly policy adoption updates received from the Education Achievement Service. (EAS)

Background Documents / Electronic Links

- Appendix 1 – Partnership Agreement