

CYNGOR GWYNEDD

REPORT TO A MEETING OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET

Date of Meeting:	16 October 2018
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Gareth Thomas, Cabinet Member for Education
Contact Officer:	Dilwyn Williams, Chief Executive
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Title of Item:	Education Department Performance Report

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update you on what has been achieved in the field for which I, as Cabinet Member for Education, have responsibility. This will include outlining the latest with the pledges in the Council Plan; where the performance measures have reached; and the latest in terms of the Department's savings and cuts schemes.
- 1.2. I wish to remind you that all the matters have already been discussed and scrutinised in Performance Challenging meetings, which also included representatives from the Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.3. We have now started to implement the Council Plan 2018-23 that was approved at the Full Council meeting in March this year. Here, I report on progress since April 2018 until September 2018. On the whole, I am comfortable with the performance on the Council Plan projects, but acknowledge that some projects are in the process of being established and so further work is required to refine the outputs and milestones. Some fields are given special attention by the Department in order to improve performance, and these are the fields that I will be monitoring closely over the coming months:
 - Securing clear arrangements for the Education System Transformation project;
 - Scoping a new proposal for the Leadership Strengthening project;
 - Securing a resource to achieve the requirements of the Secondary Language Strategy;
 - Ensuring that the action plan drawn up in response to the findings of the Gwynedd Foundation Phase report is achieved;
 - Ensuring that an analysis is undertaken to verify why a substantial reduction has been seen in the English GCSE A-C percentages.

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2. THE DECISION SOUGHT

2.1. To accept and note the information in the report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

3.1. In order to ensure effective performance management.

4. STRATEGIC PLAN PROJECTS

4.1. Transforming the Education System

4.1.1 In 2016, we consulted on a series of principles that should form the basis to any change in the future and the purpose of this project is to establish a plan to embed those principles to secure a viable education system that will ensure that every child in the county has a fair opportunity to develop his/her potential.

4.1.2 The proposed principles consider sustainable models for the primary and secondary schools of the county, along with the leadership models for our schools. Earlier this year, the views of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee were sought regarding the principles that are intended to be submitted to the Council's Cabinet in due course.

4.2. Strengthening Leadership

4.2.1 This project will encourage and promote the professional development of the current leaders of our schools, committing to the leadership development programmes that are available. We will also identify and target future leaders, ensuring that they have access to these programmes.

4.2.2 The work of scoping options and the opportunities to strengthen leadership is currently taking place, and this coincides with the work on the Transforming the Education System project. The current proposal we have for developing leadership is not 'fit for purpose', and so, over the coming months, the project will scope a different proposal and then target headteachers / prospective headteachers for the proposal.

4.3. 21 Century Schools Programme

4.3.1 Bangor Catchment Area

This project aims to review the primary education provision in Bangor, looking to put a new plan into action that will improve the future provision.

Ysgol y Garnedd

Statutory notices to close Ysgol Coedmawr and Ysgol Glanadda and increase the capacity of Ysgol y Garnedd to 420 were published on 4 September. I will report back to the Cabinet on 6 November 2018. In addition, the planning application has been submitted, with the intention for the work to commence on site in January 2019.

Ysgol y Faenol

The statutory consultation was commenced on 18 September, 2018, with the Governing Body proposing to increase the school's capacity to 315. The design has been prepared, with the intention to submit a planning application in November 2018 and commence the work in April 2019.

4.3.2 Bala Catchment Area

The purpose of this project is to create a 3-19 Welsh-medium Learning Campus on the current site of Ysgol y Berwyn that will offer services to the local community, by September 2019.

The process of appointing a headteacher has been actioned and the headteacher will commence in post by January 2019. The construction work is also complete. The task of moving Ysgol y Berwyn into the new secondary space has also been completed. The Shadow Governing Body, along with an agreement on the use of the social space, has been established.

This project is progressing in line with the schedule and there are no financial (capital) risks at present.

4.4 Transforming the Provision of Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion

4.4.1. The work of transforming the additional learning needs and inclusion service has commenced. Over the coming period, the intention is to develop the support in the classroom, the pre-school provision, the post-16 provision and Special Schools. We will also build on the existing partnership work between our Special Schools and with the authority's mainstream schools in order to improve learning experiences.

4.4.2. By now, the budget of every school in Gwynedd has been devolved since April 2018 and all staff have transferred to the school's employment since 1 September 2018.

4.4.3. The Early Years field has been raised as an issue that requires specific attention, because the sooner the better that these conditions are identified, as then the correct provision and support is given to the child. A sub-group has now been established to respond to the matters arising specifically in this field.

4.4.4. I am happy that the work in this field is on the right track, however, as our understanding of some aspects of the project matures, I am eager for the department to review what has been done to date.

4.5. Young People using the Welsh language socially

4.5.1. The purpose of this project is to ensure a robust follow-up to and build upon the Language Charter project that is operational in Gwynedd's primary schools. The intention is to continue employing a Secondary Language Strategy Coordinator that will pose a challenge and support to our secondary schools, ensuring that every secondary school has an individual action plan that will reflect the linguistic context of the school and the community.

4.5.2. From April to July, 14 secondary schools have been supported to implement the main priorities of the Language Strategy and the individual Action Plans, and training programmes have been drawn-up. I would like to refer specifically to Ysgol

Uwchradd Tywyn as they have received the Daily Post Award for the 'Best School in the Community', and the praise that has been given to the ethos of increasing the use of Welsh at the school. As a result of this project, the school's work was evaluated in detail by Bangor University, stating:

"The ethos of increasing the use of Welsh is very strong within the school and out in the community, and the sense of joint-ownership of the challenge is obvious among school staff and local business owners."

4.5.3. One barrier to the project over the past month is that the Language Coordinator who helps the schools has moved on to another post. In order to ensure that this project does not lose momentum, I suggest that money is earmarked for this post to ensure that a Coordinator can be employed until the end of this financial year.

5. MEASURING PERFORMANCE

5.1. Summer Results 2018

I attach a copy of the data regarding the Summer Results 2018 as **Appendix 1**. I note that these figures will be validated in December, so I will be able to report on the final figures when I will report to you at that time.

5.1.1. Primary Sector:

Foundation Phase (7 years)

The results of the Foundation Phase for this year show a national drop from previous years, and the main reason for this is the use made for the first time of new outcomes in language and mathematics for assessment. Many of the teachers are under the impression that there are higher expectations to meet the Outcome and this is one factor that has therefore led to fewer pupils meeting Outcome 5.

You may recall that the department commissioned a report on the 2017 Foundation Phase results in order to identify likely reasons behind the lower than expected results in Gwynedd. The department and GwE have drawn-up an action plan in response to the report's findings.

Key Stage 2 (up to 11 years)

Although I have reported that the performance of the Foundation Phase has dropped, it is not something that I am overly concerned about as the Key Stage 2 data shows that our children are performing well by the time they reach 11 years of age. Performance in each subject for level 4 is good.

5.1.2. Secondary Sector:

Key Stage 3 (11-14 years)

Strong performance was seen again this year, with Gwynedd's performance in the Core Subjects Indicator remaining consistent (92.8%).

Key Stage 4 (14 - 16 years - GCSE)

The results of Key Stage 4 will not be validated until December, therefore the final data is not currently available.

Following changes in 2016/17, substantial changes were seen in the pattern and number of pupils who sat exams in the summer of 2018, and this has affected the results. It can be seen that the proportion of A-C grades across all subjects in Wales has dropped by 1.2% to 61.6%.

As I have already mentioned, GCSE is in the process of being reformed, and the reformed subjects were sat for the first time during the summer.

A reduction was seen in the percentage of each of the measures in comparison with 2017, and substantially so in English and Science. The performance in Welsh has remained consistent. The performance of Level 2 English dropped by 12.1%. I wish to ensure that an analysis is carried out to verify why a substantial reduction was seen in the percentages of English A-C grades and I will report to you on this again.

5.2. Education Department Measures

- 5.2.1 The Education Department is in the process of reviewing all of its measures as every department goes through the Ffordd Gwynedd process. Also, proposed changes are being made to national indicators, therefore, I will be in a position to report further on the new measures and indicators next time.

6. FINANCIAL/SAVINGS SITUATION

2017/18 - 2018/19 Schemes

- 6.1. As reported to previous meetings, a slippage occurred in the implementation of the plan for charging a fee for care before the free breakfast session in 2017/18; however, it is anticipated that the care fee income target can be achieved in full in 2018/19.
- 6.2. To date, £3,738,010 has been realised from the "Schools Efficiency Savings" scheme that was to save £4.3m in the period between 2015/16 and 2018/19. The Cabinet has already agreed to defer for two years the implementation of Secondary Schools savings of £298,990 from the 2017/18 financial year to 2019/20, when it is anticipated that this sum can be achieved. I do not anticipate a problem in delivering this, and the Secondary Schools are already aware of the amended timing in the cut to their budget.
- 6.3 Work was recently commissioned to give detailed attention to the Department's consistent overspend on transport. The Education Department has now received the findings of the work, and initial recommendations are in place and need to be implemented. Further work is to be done to analyse how to achieve the savings, and also consider the arrangements of the Integrated Transport Unit to assist the Department to realise the savings by decommissioning and re-commissioning the provision when there is an increase in the number of pupils requiring transport on some travel routes. Furthermore, new arrangements have been implemented in the field of Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion from the summer term 2018 onwards, which responds more specifically to the real need for transport provision.

7. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

7.1. Views of the Statutory Officers:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"No Comment from a propriety perspective."

ii. Head of Finance Department:

"I note that there are several financial aspects to development within Education, including the capital investment mentioned in part 4.3, devolving ALN budgets in part 4.4, and savings in part 6.

It is encouraging that the Cabinet Member is confident (in part 6.1 and 6.2) that the Department will realise the remaining savings schemes within the amended timetable.

However, the increasing overspend in transport costs of pupils (part 6.3) is a cause for concern and is addressed in my budget review report which is on the agenda of this meeting."

7.2. Views of the Local Member:

7.2.1 Not a local matter.

7.3. Results of Any Consultation:

7.3.1 None to note.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Summer 2018 Results

Background Documents:

None.