

# Agenda



## Pwyllgor Craffu ar Berfformiad – Partneriaethau

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Dyddiad: Dydd Mercher, 9 Tachwedd 2022

Amser: 3.00 pm

Lleoliad: Siambr y Cyngor, Canolfan Ddinesig

At: Cynghorwyr: D Mayer (Cadeirydd), S Cocks, P Drewett, F Hussain, J Jones, A Morris, M Pimm, A Screen, E Stowell-Corten, K Whitehead, D Davies and L Lacey

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Eitem	Wardiau Dan Sylw
1	<u>Ymddiheuriadau</u>
2	<u>Datganiadau o ddiddordeb</u>
3	<u>Partneriaeth Cyd-fenter Llychlynnaudd</u> ( <i>Tudalennau 3 - 20</i> )
4	<u>Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg (GCA) - Gwerth am Arian 2021-22</u> ( <i>Tudalennau 21 - 72</i> )
5	<u>Casgliad Adroddiadau Pwyllgorau</u> Ar ôl cwblhau adroddiadau'r Pwyllgor, gofynnir i'r Pwyllgor ffurfioli ei gasgliadau, ei argymhellion a'i sylwadau ar eitemau blaenorol i'w gweithredu.
6	<u>Adroddiad Cynghorydd Craffu</u> ( <i>Tudalennau 73 - 80</i> )  a) Diweddariad ar y Rhaglen Gwaith i'r Dyfodol (Atodiad 1)  b) Cynllun Gweithredu (Atodiad 2)
7	<u>Live meeting</u> <a href="#">To view the live meeting please click this link.</a>

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn

# Scrutiny Report

## Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships

### Part 1

Date: 9 November 2022

### Subject **Norse Joint Venture Partnership**

**Author** Scrutiny Advisor

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

Invitee:	Area / Role / Subject
Tracy McKim	Head of People, Policy and Transformation
Lyndon Watkins	Managing Director of Newport Norse
Mark McSweeney	Director – Professional and Contract Services, Newport Norse
Rhys Cornwall	Strategic Director –Transformation and Corporate Centre, Newport City Council

## Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

### 1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

1. Consider the report on the Newport Norse Joint Venture partnership.
2. Assess the contents of the report and decide if there has been satisfactory progress against the initial aims of the partnership.
3. Establish whether there is any additional information needed.
4. Decide if the Committee wishes to make any comments or recommendations in relation to the joint venture partnership

### 2 Context

#### Background

- 2.1 This will be the Committees second consideration of the Newport City Council's joint venture partnership with Newport Norse. The aim of the partnership was to improve the way that NCC managed their assets and to provide each service area with more stable and suitable working

environments across the city. The link to the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021 are in Section 8 of this cover report.

### 3 Information Submitted to the Committee

3.1 The Newport Norse Partnership report contains the following sections;

- Introduction
- Background
  - When and why was the joint venture started
  - What has been achieved to date?
- The present day
  - Response to Member comments from Scrutiny Committee 2021
  - What does Newport Norse do for the Council
  - Lessons learned
  - Compliments and complaints 2021/2022
  - Performance Management
- The Future
  - Goals for next year
  - Planning for the end of the contract

### 4. Suggested Areas of Focus

#### Role of the Committee

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

Review and analyse the contents of the report. Establish what progress has been made from the partnerships inception and what that means for the Council and its service users.

- Take a look at the achievements of Newport Norse to date and whether this constitutes as positive progress;
- Assess and make comment on the impact Newport Norse has had on:
  - The local economy, skills and employment, the environment and schools and local communities;
  - The extent to which and opportunities to learn and change practices are being addressed and associated risks are being mitigated;
  - The management of assets and the council estate as a whole;
- Conclusions:
  - What was the overall conclusion on the information contained within the reports?
  - Is the Committee satisfied that it has had all of the relevant information to base a conclusion on the performance of the JV partnership?
  - Do any areas require a more in-depth review by the Committee?
  - Do the Committee wish to make any Comments / Recommendations to the Cabinet?

## Suggested Lines of Enquiry

- 4.1 The Committee might wish to think about the following when devising questioning strategies;
- What are the main challenges that face both Newport Norse and NCC in the Partnership?
  - Are there any fundamental changes to the relationship that would allow for greater success?
  - What were the most important lessons learned in part 3.3? Have all the actions listed in this section been implemented?
  - What is planned over the final two years of the partnership to ensure service areas and service users continue to benefit?

## Section B – Supporting Information

### 5 Supporting Information

5.1 The following have been provided to the Committee for additional / background reading to support the scrutiny of the joint venture partnership:

- A Guide to Newport Norse
- A Schools Guide to Newport Norse
- Newport Norse Communication Plan



A Guide to  
Newport Norse June



A Schools Guide to  
Newport Norse V5, J



Newport Norse  
comms plan 30-04-1

### 6 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The Newport Norse JV partnership is an integral part of all of the Wellbeing Objectives, Corporate Plan Commitments and supporting function. The NCC assets provide a foundation to provide all of our services from:

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

## **7 Impact Assessment:**

### **7.1 Summary of impact – Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act**

Newport Norse has strong working partnerships with around 50 schools in the local area, supporting a combined roll of over 23,000 pupils.

### **7.2 Summary of impact – Equality Act 2010**

The Norse Group have their own equalities plan in place, which states that The Norse Group opposes all forms of discrimination, harassment or victimisation whether because of age, disability, sex, gender-reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership ('Protected Characteristics') or otherwise.

### **7.3 Summary of impact – Socio-economic Duty**

Newport Norse directly employs 300 people, and also 9 apprentices and trainees at present, with plans to increase this number in the future. Newport Norse have also increased job security and local employment, contributing to a thriving economy.

## **8. Background Papers**

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan](#)
- [Socio-economic Duty Guidance](#)
- [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)
- [Welsh Language Measure 2015](#)
- [Minutes of Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021](#)

Report Completed: 9 November 2022

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# SCRUTINY REPORT

## NEWPORT NORSE PARTNERSHIP

Tracy McKim

Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Lyndon Watkins

Managing Director, Newport Norse

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RESTRICTED COMMERCIALY SENSITIVE

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## 1.0 Introduction

The purpose of the report is to inform Scrutiny Committee of the performance of the Council partnership company Newport Norse Limited and update on the last year.

## 2.0 Background

### 2.1 When and why was the joint venture started?

In July 2014 Newport City Council (NCC) and Norse Commercial Services Group (*a public services company wholly owned by Norfolk County Council*) entered into a 10 year Joint Venture (JV) Agreement, creating "Newport Norse" (NN) to help transform service delivery and provide an improved property and facilities service for the Council. It has the flexibility to work with the Council at a strategic level to create better value, from cradle to grave with respect to the delivery of asset management, construction projects and maintenance services.

NN is unique, being the first wholly owned Local Authority Property Services Joint Venture in Wales. It is a service delivery solution that allows public bodies to formally collaborate, and provides an alternative to a traditionally outsourced, private sector delivered, market offering. It brings into Wales a repeatable model, already in place in other Local Authorities across the United Kingdom.

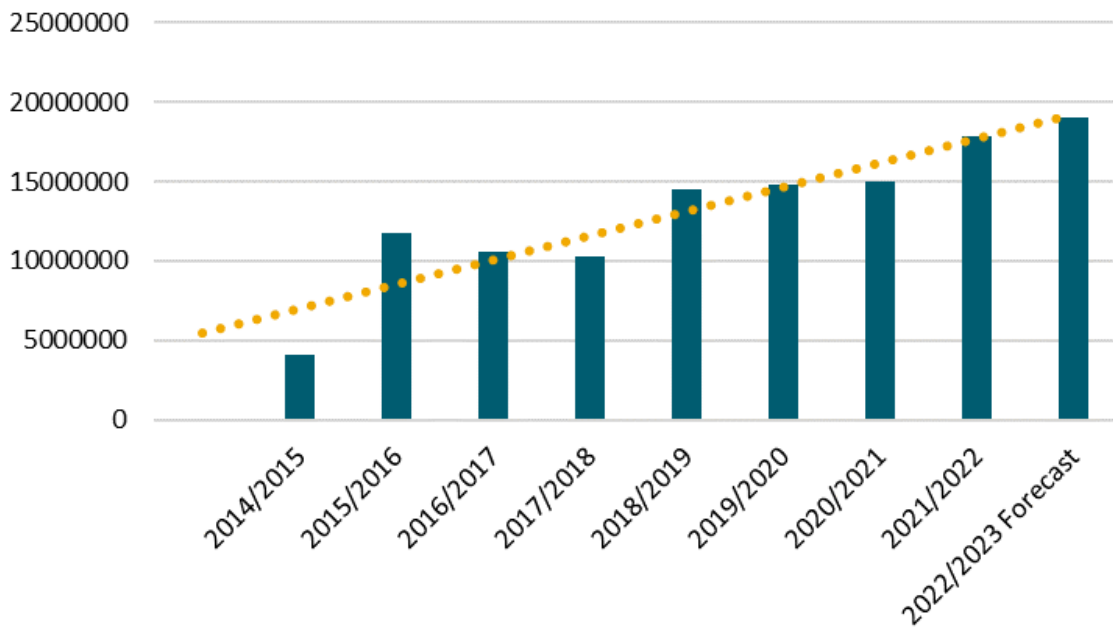
All budget surpluses are recycled back into the public purse, and locally 50% are fed back into NCC.

NCC has spearheaded this ground-breaking and cutting-edge approach in Wales. In 2013/2014, the Council decided after much analysis, to seek an approach to reduce the costs of its already lean Property and Asset Management service. This included both front line maintenance and repair services, as well on estates, cleaning and property professional services. It also recognised that it needed to retain a service offering to manage its current estate, its construction programme, and deliver upon its regeneration aspirations for a fast-growing City. In its analysis, it discounted an outsourced solution to the private sector as being too high risk. Instead, it opted to speak to the Norse Commercial Services Group to explore an alternative public sector model.

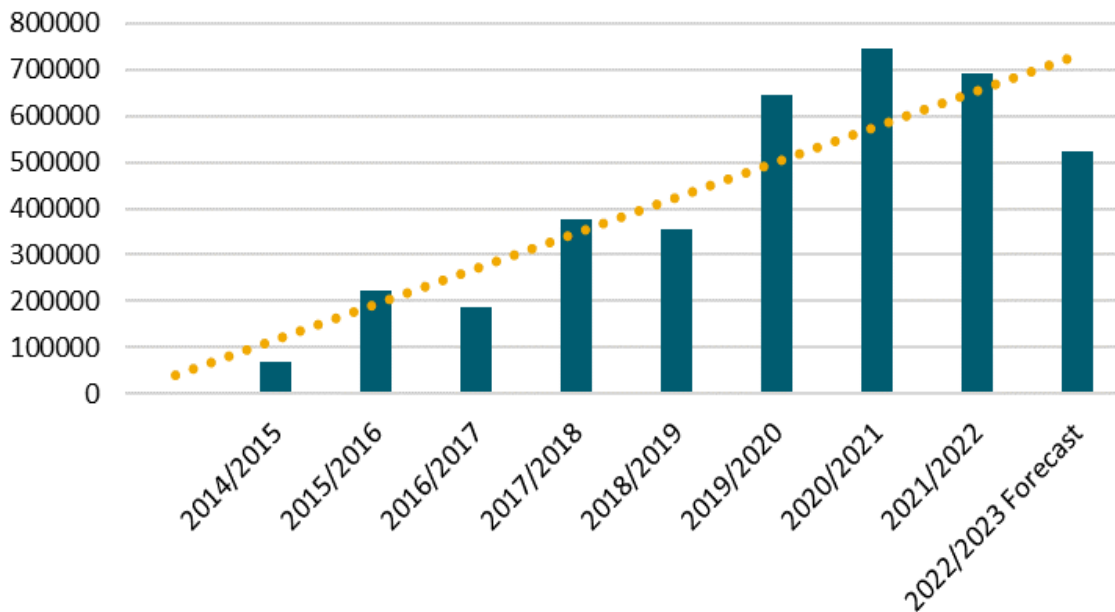
### 2.2 What has been achieved to date?

Whilst the Joint Venture may feel like NCC has outsourced its services, the fact is that it's been a very successful 'in-sourcing' mechanism. The company's turnover at its inception in 2014/2015 was **£4,067,150**, with turnover rising from 2021/2022 to **£17,889,537**.

### Annual Turnover (£) 2014 to 2022



### Annual Value Share (£) 2014 to 2022



Over the same period rebate paid back to the Council has increased from £69,000 (2015), to £690,848 (2022). Over the eight years nearly £3.3m has been rebated back to the Council. There is often the comment that this money is only the Councils money being paid back to it, which is true to an extent, however prior to the JV, this share of profits didn't occur and effectively went to private sector companies. **Total rebate (profit share) over the period to date has been £3,297,262.**

Corporate social responsibility, community benefits and social value are very important to Norse Group and NN. It is also aligned to the Councils intended approach to reporting on the Social Value Targets, Outcomes and Measures, (TOM's) adopted in Wales.

Prior to the CIPFA JV Review of 2018/2019, NN employed SQW to undertake a social / economic benefits review and some of the highlights of that report have been extrapolated to provide an up to date view;

### For the economy

- **Newport Norse directly employs 298 people** , around 73% of which live in Newport.
- **For every £1 of expenditure on suppliers, £0.70 is spent in the South East Wales region**, including £0.42 with businesses in Newport
- **The supply chain expenditure supports 54 jobs in Newport and 94 jobs in South East Wales** as a whole.
- **Newport Norse spends a total of £13.9 million on wages, salaries and local sub-contractors**. For every £1 of wages paid, 87p is spent in South East Wales and 51p in Newport.
- **We estimate that staff spending wages supports a further 45 jobs in Newport** (80 in South East Wales as a whole).
- This means that Newport Norse supports a total of **397 jobs in Newport** (and **571** across South East Wales, including Newport).
- **The business contributes Gross Value Added (GVA) of £10.4 million in Newport and £13 million in South East Wales.**

### For skills and employment

- Newport Norse supports the continuing professional development of its staff by delivering internal and external training sessions throughout the year.
- We **provide weekly training days for two Year 11 School Students** with a local School who are aspiring to become construction apprentices.
- **In 2021/22, the business devoted around 500 'training days' and over £32,000 to developing the skills of its workforce.**
- Newport Norse employs **nine apprentices and trainees** at present, with plans to increase this number in the future.
- Newport Norse pays staff working on Newport City Council contracts a sum equivalent to the Living Wage Foundation/ 'Real Living Wage'/ as a minimum.

### For the environment

- Newport Norse adhere to Norse Group's Environmental Management System, aiming to minimise their adverse impact on the environment by adopting "greener" processes.
- This is supported by the Norse Group Sustainable Procurement Policy and Supplier Code of Conduct.

### For schools and the local community

- Newport Norse has strong working partnerships with around 50 schools in the local area, supporting a combined roll of over 23,000 pupils
- The business has made a number of contributions to the local economy over the duration of the JV as part of their community activities.
- Newport Norse has organised various events throughout it's time to support a number of charities, for instance raising over **£800** for charities such as Age UK and Macmillian.
- The business has also spent over **£3,000** on sponsoring events such as the inaugural Pride of Gwent Awards.
- **The business has also donated around £10,000** from wider Norse Group's Community Fund to local voluntary associations and clubs nominated by Newport Norse employees. It has helped purchase new training kit for local sports clubs, supplied a local scout unit with a new mess tent, provided pantomime tickets for residents of a local women's refuge at Christmas, and sports equipment for local young rugby players.
- Newport Norse also operates a Volunteer Programme, which allows each member of staff to take one day off with pay each year for volunteering purposes. Staff have helped transform a rundown garden for local women's refuge, supported Dementia Awareness events, assisted the first ASD School in Newport with its preparations for opening, and landscaped a children's home.

### Other benefits brought to NCC include;

- Commitment to maintaining high quality services whilst achieving targets.
- Access to new markets generating profits subsequently shared with the Council.
- Building of strong, local communities with support for local charities, arts, civic projects and community initiatives
- Increased job security and local employment, contributing to a thriving economy. Resources and ability to invest in the business and its people, bringing long-term stability and financial strength.
- The introduction of the **c365 Compliance System**, which has been rolled out across all Schools and the wider estate. This is a cloud-based system which allows Head

Teachers and Council Premises Managers to access in 'real-time' information about asbestos, gas boiler servicing, electrical testing, etc. for the buildings they occupy.

- Much has been achieved to date, most notably the transformation of what was Newport Property Services Department. This has been done in collaboration with the Council, and much hard work by staff to build a service which **now in-sources £13.8m more than it did in 2014/2015.**
- This means that surpluses associated with this work now return to the Council instead of the private sector. By April 2021 this has amounted to **£3.3m**, and has been achieved by the partnership, whilst maintaining good quality jobs, offering the local government pension, and paying as a minimum the Living Wage Foundation/ 'Real Living Wage'.
- It has also incentivised staff to go above and beyond when needed, and we have had huge success in supporting the Council bid for external funding. Schemes such as St Andrews School, Windmill Tree Farm, Oaklands Home, Rosedale Home and many others have all been successful, where staff have worked through the night, in many cases, to ensure we beat other Councils in getting bids in on time.
- More recently Norse are partners in the Council's development of its Climate Change Strategy.

### 3.0 The Present Day

#### 3.1 Response to members comments from Scrutiny Committee 2021

Arising from the Scrutiny Committee of November 2021 members enquired about a small number of issues and asked that Norse respond.

Members asked that the partnership provide more detail than was discussed during the meeting, regarding the schools discretionary spend. Obviously, the partnership does not have extensive data on schools expenditure, but can report on what Schools discretionary spend was last year with the partnership;

Fund	Value	Nr of Orders
Local Management of Schools Budgets (LMS)	£1,567,080	1485
Fair Funding	£604,750	708
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,171,830</b>	<b>2193</b>

Members also enquired about the size and scale projects that Newport Norse were involved in, therefore the following list (not exhaustive) provides an indication of the type and size of projects worked on currently;

	Project	Value (£)	Service provided
1.	John Frost/Iscoed	£20m	PM, QS, COW
2	Bassaleg School Extension	£33m	PM, QS, COW
3	Transporter Bridge Repair Project	£10m	PM, QS
4	Transporter Bridge Visitor Centre	£4m	PM, QS, COW
5	Windmill Farm Renovation	£1.6m	PM, Arch, Eng, QS, COW

6	Newport Library refurbishment	£1.4m	PM, Arch, Eng, QS, COW and Mechanical & Electrical Contractor
7	Charles Williams Extension	£1.6m	PM, QS, COW
8	New Leisure Project	£19.7m	PM, QS, COW
9	St Andrews School	£10m	PM, QS, COW
10	St Marys School	£3.3m	PM, QS, COW
11	Welsh Government Capital Maintenance Grant	£2.7m	PM, Arch, Eng, QS, COW Mechanical & Electrical Contractor
12	Annual NCC Capital Maintenance Budget	£1.5m	PM, Arch, Eng, QS, COW Mechanical & Electrical Contractor
13	Centralised Maintenance Budget	£1.9m	Building & Engineering Services

**Key:**

PM = Construction Project Management

QS = Quantity Surveying

Eng = Structural and Building Services Engineering

COW = Clerk of Works

Arch = Architecture

### 3.2 What does NN do for the Council

Working from our base in Cleppa Park, Newport Norse currently manages approximately 330 built assets for the City Council with a total asset value of some £320m. Newport Norse provides a 'one stop shop' for all property services, which include:

- building maintenance, including direct labour
- statutory testing and inspection
- cleaning and catering
- estates and valuation
- design and construction procurement
- project management
- corporate premises manager.

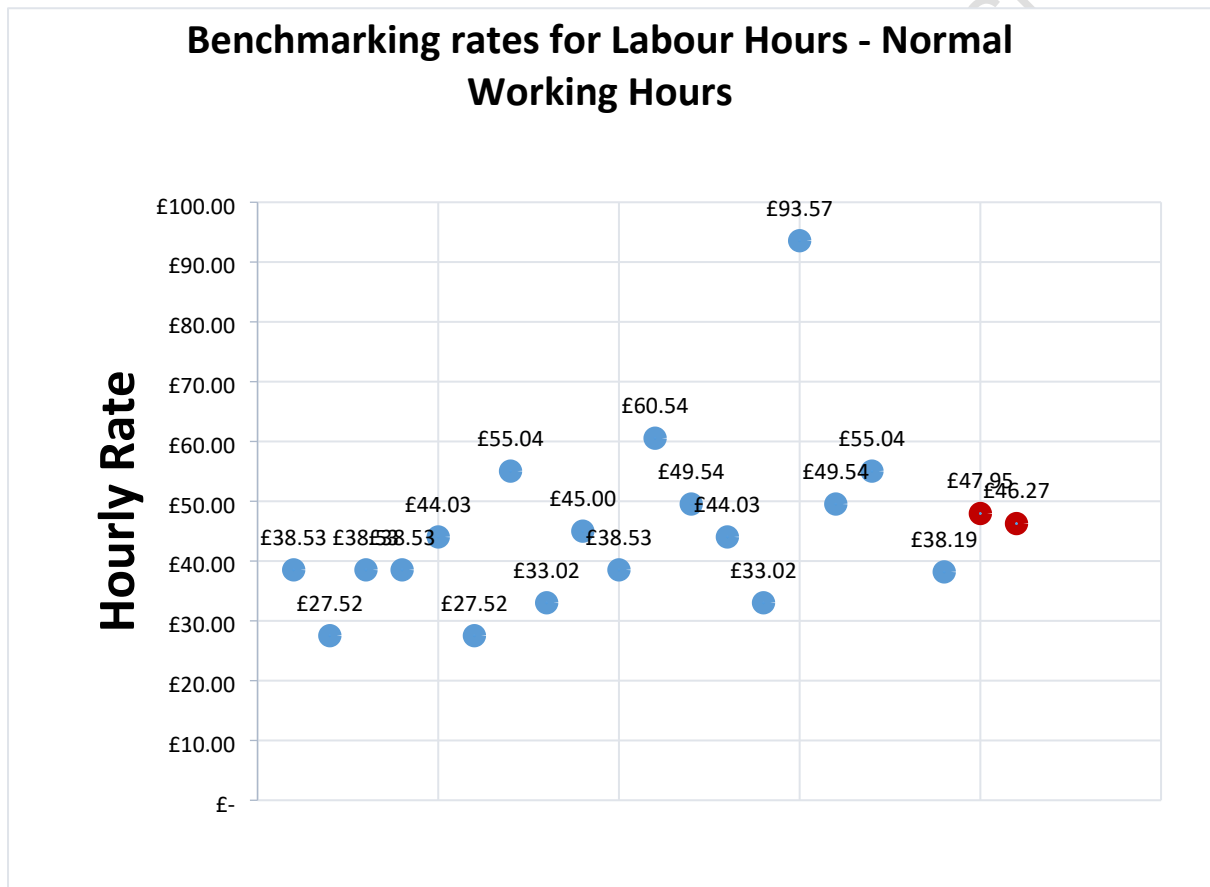
NN acts as the Council's Corporate Landlord Agent, ensuring Council policy is followed by delegated budgets holders, and that the Council fully optimises the use of its property assets.

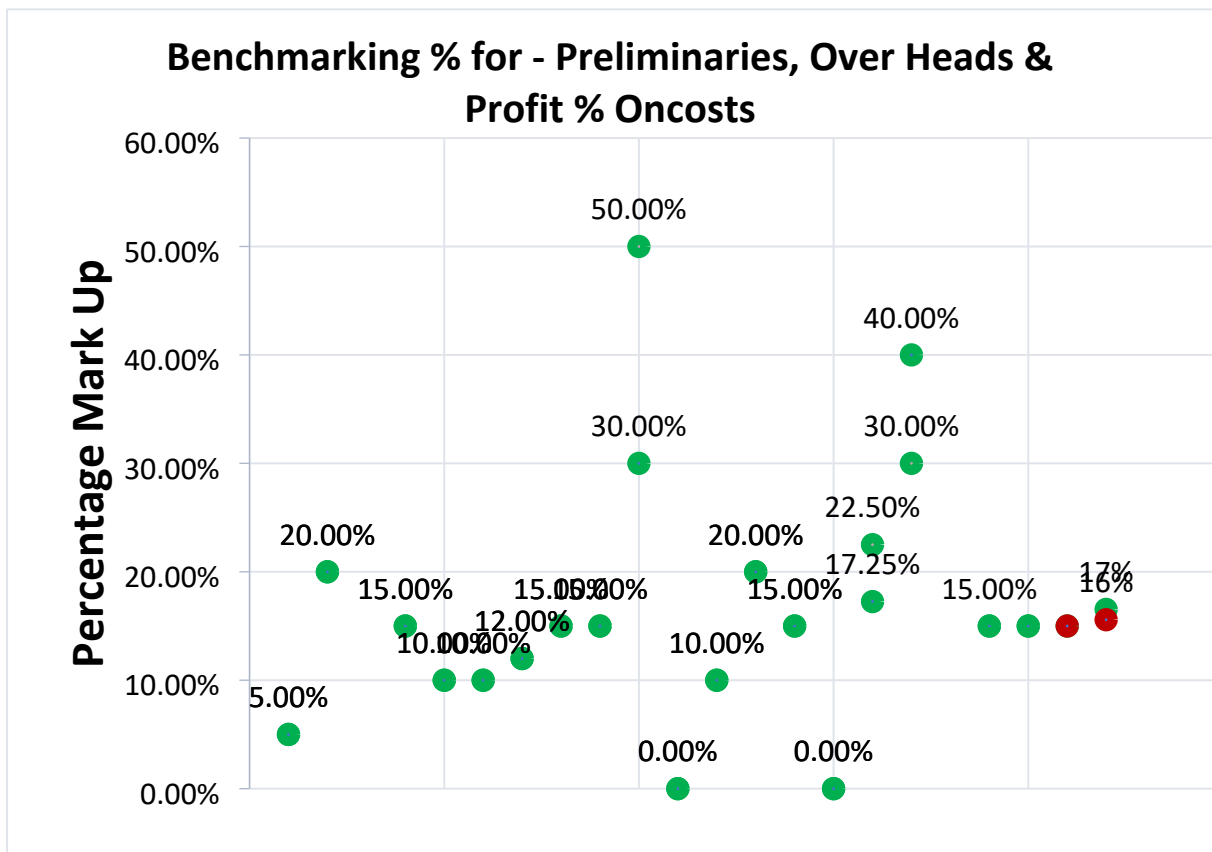
NN works with the Council to ensure the people who occupy Council properties are able to do so safely. The Council has **not** transferred ownership of any of its property to Newport Norse, and has retained full ownership of all its assets.

### 3.3 Lessons learned

The Review of the partnership in 2019 by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) provided a very useful and detailed examination of the joint venture arrangements. In summary, it stated that the Council made the right decision at the time in 2014 to create the partnership, and nothing has transpired in the meantime for them to have changed that view.

The area where most questions are raised are around value for money at a basic level. Some recent benchmarking of local suppliers and contractors hourly rates and overhead/profit levels show the following, with NN performing well in comparison;





*NN Rates highlighted in 'red'*

In nearly all cases where NN have been challenged as being too expensive, it has been shown that the variance has not been in unit costs, but what has actually been priced. It is very rare that NN receive a specification/drawings or clear pricing documents. This invariably leads to all competing contractors, including NN, making their own assessments as to what is required.

In other words, NN have not priced the same "thing". When NN is not presented with these documents, NN will always include for what is required by the Council to maintain its assets and will include the following (*not exhaustive*);

- Asbestos refurbishment and demolition surveys;
- Remove any asbestos containing materials in accordance with the Law
- Provide DBS checked operatives on site to ensure safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
- Compliance with the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015;
- Use high quality, durable and appropriate products.
- Provide £10m Public Liability Insurance
- Provide £10m Employers Liability Insurance
- Provide £10m Professional Indemnity Insurance
- Pay staff legal wages
- Liaise with the HSE for notifiable works
- Not cut corners



- Provide the best Option for the Council overall as Landlord.

### 3.4 Compliments and Complaints 2021/2022

Newport Norse has systems in place to obtain customer feedback. We meet regularly with various client groups such as; the Client Team, Head Teachers and Education Liaison Group, various other schools estates forum, service management teams as well as individual clients. Project related surveys and an annual tele-survey are also undertaken. We value all feedback as it helps us improve our services.

Over the 2021/2022 period NN had;

- Number of Compliments – 56
- Number of Complaints – 26

All complains are dealt with via an agreed action plan with the client to ensure that they satisfied with the end result and that lessons are learned for Norse Staff. NN has invested in updated “Customer Care” training to help improve the service and also learn the lessons from where standards have fallen short. The following are some compliments made, concerning the service in the past year;

- **Headteacher Bassaleg School**

*“I wanted to say a huge thank you for the excellent work undertaken at Bassaleg over the holiday. The windows that have been replaced are just perfect; it was such a challenging brief to manage to replace so much glazing and yet keep the tradition of the face of Forge and it’s been done brilliantly.*

*You’ll know from the conversations with Martin and Nick how important the bridge over to our new sports pitch is; what’s been produced has surpassed our expectations and we are really appreciative of how quickly it’s been achieved too for all sorts of reasons.*

- **LA (member of the public NN supported with a house move)**

*I would like to send a HUGE thank you to the team that supported our house move in Newport). The house move was unexpected adding more stress and pressure. The team brought not only their professionalism but also peace to my heart. So organised, friendly, helpful. They listened to us, added their thoughts and all went so well. The thing that amazed me is their attitude, their compliments about us being very organised. These words came just in the right time. I felt stressed about the mess in the moment and their words gave me energy to continue packing. This is the real power of kindness..Even at the end of the day when there was a need in additional tools they got them to complete the job although I know they were tired but didn’t show it. I cant find the words to thank this amazing team. All three members were simply amazing!*

- **Head of Operations - Chartwells**

*“Just wanted to say that in the circumstances, think that you and your teams have done a sterling job, with the volume of kit that has been delivered against the*

challenges of gaining access to sites during the 6 weeks, so on that note, thanks to you both and your teams.”

- **Programme Manager at NCC**

*Maxine took up the role of Project Manager on Windmill Farm after a difficult period and really made a difference. She is an excellent and skilled communicator and bridges the gap between the client, Norse and the contractor with ease. She is proactive, something I personally value highly, and keeps everyone informed. She has a professional manor and works well face to face and online. She sends information when requested and will look at alternative solutions to problems and challenges. I look forward to working with Maxine again on other projects.*

- **TA Team Leader NCC**

*I just wanted to pass on a huge thank you to the cleaning team and Joanne for their efforts today. It wasn't an easy task but they managed to get all the girls moved across. They went the extra mile by cleaning the new property early this morning as we only realised yesterday that the landlord's team had left it in a bit of a mess. Honestly, nothing was too much trouble for them today. Shaun called by and some of the plumbers came towards the end to help finish off. They all worked on. Hugely appreciated!!*

### 3.5 Performance Management

The performance of the partnership is monitored at a number of levels using various monitoring tools, such as Quarterly report to the Board and Internal/External Audits. This also has a number of layers from strategic monitoring to day to day monitoring;

1. Contract Management, via;
  - Joint Venture Management Team (Monthly)
2. Council wide via;
  - CSAMG – Capital and Assets officer group (Quarterly)
  - Joint Venture Company Client Group (Quarterly)
  - People Services Capital Board (Quarterly)
  - Head Teachers Liasion Group (Quarterly)
  - School Governors Group (Quarterly)
  - People Services Capital Board Steering Group (Monthly)
  - Major Projects Group (Place) (Monthly)
  - Capital Maintenance Finance Monitoring (Monthly)
  - Capital Finance Budget Monitoring (Monthly)
  - Executive Member Briefings (Monthly)
3. Service Specific

At a service level there are a significant number of weekly and ad hoc meetings to discuss and manage performance on a day to day basis.

- 3.6 The local authority asset management and property services function is also the subject of internal and external audits and lessons are learned from these, resulting in changes to management arrangements where required.

## **4.0 The Future**

### **4.1 Goals for the next year**

Each year NN produce what it calls its 'Plan on Page'. This is presented to the Company Board and the Steering Group, which includes Senior Council Officers and Elected Members.

In summary the Key Objectives for 2022/2023 are;

- Achieve planned surplus and sustainable growth
- Expand our customer base and meet our client's needs while making a positive impact on the communities we serve
- Continue to deliver high quality services effectively
- Become the employer of choice within the property industry in South Wales

A fully detailed copy of this year's plan is available.

### **4.2 Planning for the end of the Contract**

The current contract is due to end on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024, which is less than two years before the end of the current arrangements. There are several options available to the Council, and whatever proposal the Council deems appropriate, emphasis will need to be focused on the new legislative environment i.e. The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015. Norse are currently supporting the Council in that regard to ensure that the Council has the best solution for its needs going forward.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn

# Scrutiny Report

## Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

### Part 1

Date: 9 November 2022

## Subject Education Achievement Service (EAS) - Value for Money 2021-22

Author Scrutiny Adviser

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

Invitee:	Area / Role / Subject
Geraint Willington	Education Achievement Service (EAS) Director: Resources, Business and Governance
Ed Pryce	Education Achievement Service (EAS) Assistant Director : Policy and Strategy
Marc Belli	Education Achievement Service (EAS) Principal School Improvement Partner
Sarah Morgan	Head of Education

## Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

### 1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked

1. Consider the information provided within the submission of evidence in **Appendix A** together with the externally commissioned Education Achievement Service (EAS) Regional Value for Money (VfM) report 2021-22 in **Appendix 1** and the Education Achievement Service (EAS) Regional Value for Money (VfM) report 2021-22 PowerPoint presentation in **Appendix 2**.
2. Determine if it wishes to make any comments to the Cabinet Member and / or the EAS.

### 2 Context

#### Background

- 2.1 The EAS is the school improvement service for the five Local Authorities in the region (Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen). The role of the EAS is to support, monitor and challenge schools with the purpose of raising education standards in South East Wales.

- 2.2 Newport City Council makes an annual contribution to the commissioning of the EAS. The EAS has provided Value for Money reports to each of the local authorities across the Region for the last four years. In Newport, the 2020-21 EAS Value for Money Report was considered by this Committee at its meeting on 3 November 2021 and were previously reported at its meeting on 10 July 2019. **(Links to the Report and Minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships Meeting held on 3 November 2021 are provided in the Background Papers in Section 7 of this report.)**
- 2.3 The VfM report for 2021-2022 (Appendix A) focuses on the delivery of the regional service and the regional impact set against a number of criteria. Members will note that the report does not break down individual LA detail. The report has been written by an external consultant, Rod Alcott following a competitive tender process. A key requirement of the South-East Wales Education Achievement Service ('the EAS') is to demonstrate annually that it offers value for money to the five local authorities within its geographical remit and their constituent schools. This report details the findings from a Value for Money (VfM) review that was undertake 'an independent report on value for money functions of the EAS paying particular attention to how the organisation has refined its delivery model from a fully staffed central model to a model where schools are funded to provide support and challenge to peer schools within the region'.

### **Previous Consideration of this item**

- 2.4 The following is an extract from the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 3 November 2021, when the Committee received the EAS Value for Money Financial Year 2020-21 report:

*"The EAS Director presented a brief overview to the Committee and highlighted they key areas for consideration. The report to the Committee assessing the performance of the EAS concluded that the EAS is providing good value for money in terms of those aspects that are within its control, notably: economy; efficiency; equity and; sustainability. However against the backdrop of a global pandemic; the approach has been rethought in vulnerable and disadvantaged wellbeing. The Director went through the report in detail for the Committee and highlighted that the focus is spending less and spending well, the external contender introduced equity of spending fairly and for the long term. They found effectiveness affects wellbeing and therefore assessed how the EAS mitigated the impact on those from poor backgrounds.*

*The officers covered the sustainability area of the report and went through the data on how to get a greater range of accountability about what was going on in schools rather than exam performance. As they did not have the exam grades due to the pandemic the team had to improvise their approach and also discussed the feedback from the schools on this. The officer noted it is about ensuring that the recommendations from the report have been implemented as part of the value for money and they continue to compare the outcomes outlined from the surveys.*

*The Committee asked the following:*

- *A Committee Member noted the a third of the staff numbers being reduced. With that, will they still see a resilient service and what the differences will be? For instance would that be putting more on the head-teachers on providing a service more so than before?*

*The Assistant Director covered the headteacher element by stating that the majority of heads are improvement schools that they backfill and ensure that their funding they receive are able to other leaders to buy and supply and. Their partner school advisors report gained huge amount of support in another school; can learn a lot by providing the support back into the school.*

*The Director for Resources confirmed with the resilient point, they had to make major savings but the issue with grants has hit them hard as they had to reduce what was needed to be taken again and have had to re-structure. They assured Members they are mindful with the improvement service area, that it cannot go any lower. They are mindful of the support going to the staff; for instance they received the gold award while going through a re-structure.*

- *The Member asked if the reduction in funding from Welsh Government was foreseen or unforeseen and in terms of risk balance; would there be a risk if there is further reduction; and if there is clarity between the Welsh Government and Council of this difficulty.*

*The EAS Director confirmed that the Joint Executive Group (JEG) is under a lot of pressure and that they are 50 percent funded via grants and due to the pandemic; funding was late coming through. They were unaware they had this until late January, but was already in communication with the Welsh Government. They were under the impression they had to make savings whilst being in touch with unions; as they did not know what the funding was going to be. Members were informed they had a meeting today to see what it is like as they are mindful they want to avoid a re-structure for stability.*

- *A Member queried how EAS compares to other regional bodies.*

*In response, the Assistant Director stated they work collaboratively with other regions and are well established within the Cardiff/Bridgend area. The Director for EAS added that the pandemic has brought the bodies closer together because of the virtual environment which has helped with collaboration in leadership.*

- *The Committee Member then queried in relation to the Welsh Government funding; would they have been able to foresee that the Government is funding less in order to encourage the bodies to merge.*

*The Assistant Director confirmed that they would not as they only know what each region is getting in terms of money and use that collaboratively.*

- *A Committee Member queried whether head teachers will be prepared for more cuts and if they are in the know of these so they can work within the set budgets.*

*The Head of Education confirmed that with school individual budgets; the Committee are discussing a different topic but explained the EAS provide money to schools for school support. A fraction of the grants they have are their budgets; as public servants the Council has limited resources so potentially there could be reductions at any point but they do their very best with supporting the schools with financial training. The Council have to watch and wait in terms of Welsh Government settlements with grants but are prepared to manage money appropriately.*

- *The Member then asked the officers to confirm what would be the lowest amount they can manage on, grants wise.*

*The EAS Director of Resources replied stating that the grants go to the local authorities and through the Head of Education, they commission the work. For instance they have £52 million coming in, and 44 grants within that total all trying to do something different. They try to simplify that for schools to give them more autonomy and use one grant to do one function.*

- A Committee Member referred to the recovery situation from covid-19 and queried the team on how they feel they have challenged themselves and how the Local Authority challenged them.

*The Assistant Director stated that schools have adapted and where schools have not responded for strategies; this has been addressed collaboratively with schools to get the right provisions in place for pupils to be supported appropriately. They have been listening to school leadership. From the EAS perspective; for quality assurances there has been good attendance between Local Authority officers and Principal Officers with a lot of dialogue on individual schools on a monthly basis.*

*The Head of Education concluded that they have regular dialogue in terms of experience through quality assurances. Over the pandemic, the JEG group monitored the performance of the EAS; nothing stopped during the pandemic but noted they found school partners have been receptive to change with professional learning to keep teachers teaching through blended learning. The officer was pleased with the performance of EAS for what they have done for the school improvement partners is valued.*

- The Member asked if the officers foresee any future challenges or can comment on the past challenges, and if any Local Authorities ventured off from what Newport are trying to achieve.

*The Assistant Director confirmed they work very close with Managing Director Debbie Hartevelde and look at priorities with similar in terms of equity. The Head of Education highlighted an example of the Local Authority request would be the ESTYN recommendations from the services within their Local Authority annex of the action plan; within that are specific actions bespoke to Newport.*

- How does the partnership try to maintain innovation and new ways of working?

*The Assistant Director confirmed in terms of innovation this is ongoing but is slow as the engagement with teachers because the schools struggle with staffing in terms of Covid. There has been a range of work with workshops working with school leaders, selective groups and governors for reflection. With curriculum reform, they are constantly challenging thoughts and have had external advisers who are highly experienced, joining them on virtual engagement activities to challenge the leaders.*

- The Committee mentioned that with failures; usually leadership comes down to being one of them. Is there work being done to ensure leadership?

*The Head of Education asserted that categorisation is not part of it anymore, so there would be no 'Red' areas. There is a professional learning menu that goes on all different levels including middle leadership with those considering going into deputy headship with professional courses available. In addition to new leadership courses; they have been responsive to the pandemic by focusing on agile leadership.*

*The Assistant Director complimented this by explaining that now categorisation has gone; there has been dialogue with local authorities with schools on their concerns. Funding is linked to that model and up to 25 days of support; this offers far more flexibility to support the mentioned programmes.*

- Members referred to the tables with coloured feedback and queried what type of work and actions are being discussed. It was observed there were a lot within the 'agreed' section. How would officers get those to be move to the 'strongly agreed' section?



*The Assistant Director confirmed that it is a small part of a large bit of qualitative feedback. That was not shared in the report from Rod Alcott; it is a 'you said, we did' style of table. The columns form the approach for the business plan for their data which will include quantitative and qualitative feedback.*

- *The Chair recognised that the pandemic has been tough but through the report and presentation, it seems to have developed stronger relationships; the chair asked the officers if this is something they agree with.*

*The Head of Education agreed and that is important to feedback they talk directly to the school and the authority is direct with EAS. They have all had to think quickly on their feet to be innovative through the pandemic. They have developed helpful relationships to ensure they are listening and responding. The Assistant Director also agreed that the accessibility has been important for colleagues in schools and LEA interfacing.*

*The Chair and Committee thanked the Officers for their time and asked them to express their thanks to their colleagues as they recognise that they have moved forward over the past 18 months.*

### **Conclusions:**

*The Committee **noted** the Education Achievement Service Value for Money Financial Year 2020-21 report and **agreed** to forward the Minute to the Education Achievement Service and the Cabinet Member as a summary of the issues raised and in particular, the following comments:*

- *The Committee were satisfied with the report concluding overall value for money and commended the evidence of constructive relationships between the EAS and the Local Authority; the programme of robust support (tools) available, and; the mutual professional respect to challenge and develop the support provided, especially during the pandemic. The Committee also wished to thank the partners and all their staff for all of their hard throughout the pandemic, and continued high quality of service.*
- *The Committee expressed concern at the unknown Welsh Government funding position for the Education Achievement Service for next year. Concerns were also expressed at the reduction of third of the workforce over a period of five years. Even though EAS are doing well currently with the number of staff and resources available, Members raised the concern of future staffing problems.*
- *The Committee felt that the partnership had conducted themselves well, which was evident in the report. It was also felt that they risk assessed each other well, were not afraid of innovation and could sense the strong, positive relationship between the consortium. It was hoped that this will continue."*

## **3 Information Submitted to the Committee**

3.1 The following information has been submitted to the Committee for consideration:

- **Appendix A - Submission of Evidence – Education Achievement Services, Value for Money, Financial Year 2021-22**
- **Appendix 1 - Regional Value for Money Evaluation 2021-22 by External Consultant**
- **Appendix 2 - Submission of Evidence – Education Achievement Services, Value for Money PowerPoint presentation**

## 4. Suggested Areas of Focus

### 4.1 Role of the Committee

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

- Whether the information presented provides the Committee with evidence of the impact of the EAS providing measurable value for money, within the scope of the definitions provided in the report?
- How should scrutiny be involved in monitoring of the value for money of the EAS collaboration?
- Assess and make comment on:
  - Whether the consortium is providing value for money?
  - The progress being made since the previous year's Value for Money report?
  - How well the consortium is working together to deliver Value for Money?
- Conclusions:
  - What was the overall conclusion on the information contained within the reports?
  - Is the Committee satisfied that it has had all of the relevant information to base a conclusion?
  - Do any areas require a more in-depth review by the Committee?
  - Do the Committee wish to make any Comments / Recommendations to the Cabinet?

### Suggested Lines of Enquiry

4.2 In evaluating whether the EAS is providing Value for Money in the 2021-22 Report attached as **Appendix A**, the Committee may wish to consider:

- How does EAS performance compare with that of neighbouring regional education improvement services, where there is comparable information?
- Whether the report contains sufficient information to demonstrate that the EAS Consortium is providing Value for Money, within the context of the definitions of value for money provided in the report.
- Has the EAS Consortium fully considered the previous impacts of Covid-19 in the delivery of their objectives?
- Is the EAS Consortium demonstrating sufficient steps to innovate or change the way they deliver services to meet the long term needs of its users?
- Are there any emerging risks / issues and lessons learned as result of Covid-19 on the EAS Consortium both short term and long term?

## Section B – Supporting Information

### 5 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Summarise how this report aligns with Council priorities – in particular the Corporate Plan and wellbeing objectives:

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

## 6 Impact Assessment:

### 6.1 Summary of impact – Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

The Committee's consideration of the Education Achievement Service's Value for Money Report 2021-22 should consider how the Consortium is maximising its contribution to the five ways of working. The following are examples of the types of questions to consider:

5 Ways of Working	Types of Questions to consider:
<b>Long-term</b> The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.	What long term trends will impact upon the service delivery?
	How will changes in long term needs impact upon the service delivery in the future?
<b>Prevention</b> Prevent problems occurring or getting worse.	What issues are facing the Consortium's service users at the moment?
	How is the Consortium addressing these issues to prevent a future problem?
<b>Integration</b> Considering how public bodies' wellbeing objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.	Are there any other organisations providing similar / complementary services?
	How does the Consortium's performance upon service delivery impact upon the services of other public bodies and their objectives?
<b>Collaboration</b> Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the organisation itself).	Who has the Consortium been working with to deliver the service?
	How is the Consortium using knowledge / information / good practice of others to inform / influence delivery?
<b>Involvement</b> The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.	How has the Consortium sought the views of those who are impacted by its service delivery?
	How has the Consortium taken into account diverse communities in decision making?

### 6.2 Summary of impact – Equality Act 2010

The EAS have their own Equalities plan in place.

### 6.3 Summary of impact – Welsh language

The EAS have their own Welsh Language plan in place.

## 7. **Background Papers**

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan](#)
- [Socio-economic Duty Guidance](#)
- [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)
- [Welsh Language Measure 2015](#)
- [Agenda and Minutes of Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships 10 July 2019](#)
- [Agenda and Minutes of Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships 20 June 2018](#)
- [EAS Website](#)

Report Completed: November 2022

# Report

## Scrutiny Meeting

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### Part 1

Date: 9 November 2022

Item No:

**Subject** Education Achievement Service (EAS) - Value for Money 2021-2022

**Purpose** Newport City Council are a partner local authority of the EAS Regional School Improvement Service. This paper describes the outcomes of an external report on the Value for Money (VfM) of the Regional Service in 2021-2022.

**Author** Geraint Willington (Director - Resources, Business and Governance, EAS)

**Ward** All

**Summary** The VfM report for 2021-2022 (Appendix A) focuses on the delivery of the regional service and the regional impact set against a number of criteria. Members will note that the report does not break down individual LA detail. The report has been written by an external consultant, Rod Alcott following a competitive tender process. A key requirement of the South-East Wales Education Achievement Service ('the EAS') is to demonstrate annually that it offers value for money to the five local authorities within its geographical remit and their constituent schools. This report details the findings from a Value for Money (VfM) review that was undertake 'an independent report on value for money functions of the EAS paying particular attention to how the organisation has refined its delivery model from a fully staffed central model to a model where schools are funded to provide support and challenge to peer schools within the region'.

**Proposal** Members are requested to:

- Receive the report for information

**Action by** The Education Achievement Service in partnership with the LA

**Timetable** This is an annual report reflecting on the previous Business Plan year (2021-2022)

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Sarah Morgan (Chief Education Officer)

**Signed**

## **Background and Report**

- 1.1. The Educational Achievement Service (EAS) is the school improvement service of the five local authorities in South East Wales: Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen. The EAS is owned by the five Councils and operates within a robust governance structure which is populated by representative Elected Members from each Council.
- 1.2. The EAS has been in operation since September 2012 and has undergone many changes during this period. Through the commissioning of a Business Plan the EAS delivers key school improvement support to all schools and educational settings across the South East Wales region.
- 1.3. The EAS endeavours to work in partnership local authorities, schools and settings and wider stakeholders, ensuring that service delivery remains of a consistently high standard and meets the needs of the system. The service welcomes external expertise and challenge to support continued improvement and will remain agile and responsive to regional need.
- 1.4. The VfM report for 2021-2022 (Appendix A) was commissioned to review the delivery of the regional EAS Business Plan 2021-22. It focuses on the delivery of the regional service and the regional impact set against a number of criteria. Members will note that the report does not break down individual LA detail.
- 1.5. On the request of the EAS Company Board an external tender was advertised to attract alternate consultants to complete this work. Despite this tender process only one consultant applied to undertake the work. This was Rod Alcott, and the tender was awarded to him to complete the review. The report has been shared and agreed through EAS Governance structures (Company Board and Joint Executive Group (JEG)) in Summer 2022
- 1.6. The report has been sectioned into the following aspects:
  - Executive Summary
  - Review Framework
  - Financial Overview of the EAS
  - School to School Delivery Model
  - Illustrative Case Studies
  - Conclusion
- 1.7. The full content of the regional school improvement VfM 2021-2022 report can be found in Appendix A.
- 1.8. The report notes that: Value for Money, or cost effectiveness, is a measure of how well resources are being used to achieve intended outcomes. Good value for money is the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes. VfM is usually measured by considering:

- **Economy:** minimising the cost of resources used while having regard to quality (inputs) – spending less;
- **Efficiency:** the relationship between outputs and the resources used to produce them – spending well; and
- **Effectiveness:** the extent to which objectives are achieved (outcomes) – spending wisely.

1.9. While the above represent the traditional method of measuring VfM it is also possible to include two further dimensions:

- **Equity:** the extent to which service provision is needs based to remove barriers and facilitate equal opportunity – spending fairly.
- **Sustainability:** an increasingly standard consideration within the context of the Well Being of Future Generations Act (WBFNG) – spending for the long term.

1.10. It was recognised from the outset that time and financial constraints did not allow for a detailed consideration of the above criteria across the full range of activities undertaken, and services provided, by the EAS in the period under review. The review is not therefore of school improvement in its broadest sense, but a review of a particular approach to school improvement.

1.11. To ensure the validity of any subsequent judgements it was essential to identify an area of activity that was broad enough to provide a representative view of the EAS, but specific enough to lend itself to detailed analysis and subsequent evaluation. The requirement was therefore to provide *'an independent report on value for money functions of the EAS paying particular attention to how the organisation has refined its delivery model from a fully staffed central model to a model where schools are funded to provide support and challenge to peer schools within the region'*.

1.12. The review was an evaluation of how successful the EAS approach to school to school learning has been in terms of the quantity, quality and deployment of resources designed to secure improvement. This necessitated:

- comparing the costs associated with a decentralised school to school approach with the previous more centralised approach;
- gathering information from the EAS including, where available, from relevant reports and surveys;
- gathering, where possible, feedback from participating schools; and
- bringing the above together.

1.13. While there are more nuanced interpretations available; for the purposes of this review VfM would be demonstrated if the approach ensures that:

- effectiveness remains unimpaired or improves while costs have been reduced; or
- effectiveness improves while costs remain constant; or
- increased spending is offset by improved effectiveness
- equity is preserved; and

- sustainability can be demonstrated.
- 1.14. Having determined the focus for the review, the approach to evidence gathering and the necessary evaluative criteria, it was also important to consider the specific context of the external environment within which the EAS has been operating during the period under review. For the period 2021-2022 the dominant external consideration is that of operating under the challenges posed in continuing to adapt service delivery to respond to a global pandemic.
  - 1.15. A key feature of the review was an evaluation of the effectiveness of the organisation's response both in terms of its deployment of resources and the impact of its amended service provision.
  - 1.16. Evaluating impact also provided a unique challenge given that measures of educational outcomes such as examination results (not to be used for accountability purposes), school categorisation (suspended by Welsh Government and subsequently now ceased) and Estyn inspection reports (not available during the pandemic).
  - 1.17. Welsh Government have suspended the calculation and publication of Key Stage 4 and legacy sixth form performance measures for 2020 to 2021 and 2021 to 2022 academic years. They have stated that qualification awards data will not be used to report on attainment outcomes at a school, local authority or regional consortium level and must not be used to hold schools to account for their learners' outcomes.
  - 1.18. The table in Section 3 of the full report gives a detailed breakdown of overall EAS financial position. From 2016/17 the reduction in core funding has been continuous over the six-year period. There has been an agreed 10.07% reduction in LA funding, which, along with the elimination of trading income, has resulted in a reduction in total core funding of some £942k or 23.7% in absolute terms; although in real terms, when inflation and pay awards are taken into consideration, the reduction has been in excess of 30%.
  - 1.19. Over the same time period the amount of grant money received from the Welsh Government reduced year on year up to 2019-20 but has increased over the last two years with a very significant increase of £8.83m or some 17% between 2020-21 and 2021-22.
  - 1.20. From a regional school improvement prospective when reductions in LA funding, elimination of trading income and increases in grant money received are added together the increase in total funding is £3.81m which represents a 6.3% increase in absolute terms over a six year period.
  - 1.21. When increases in the rate of delegation to schools (95.5%) are taken into account then residual income spent on running the organisation, including staffing costs, fell by some £2.04m or 26.6% from 2016-17 to 2021-22. Reduced spending has resulted in reduction in staffing numbers, with the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff reducing from 111 in 2016-17 to 63.3 in 2021-22, taking the total reduction in FTE staff reduction to 47.7 over the period 2016-17 to 2020-21, representing a reduction of almost 43% in staffing levels.



- 1.22. This staffing reduction is a direct consequence of the decision by the EAS to refine its delivery model from a fully staffed central model to a self-improving School to School (S2S) model where schools are funded to provide support and challenge to peer schools within the region. It is this delivery modification that provided the focus for the VfM review for 2021-22.
- 1.23. The review gathered evidence that allowed the following questions to be answered:
- What does the delivery model comprise?
  - How has it been refined?
  - What are the cost implications?
  - How effective is it?
  - Is it demonstrably equitable and sustainable?
  - What lessons have been learned that will inform future refinement and improvement?
- 1.24. The School to School (S2S) delivery model is broken down into 4 areas of support
- School Improvement Partner (SIP)
  - Learning Network Schools (LNS)
  - Professional Learning Networks (PLN)
  - Curriculum for Wales Professional Learning Schools (CfW PL)
- 1.25. The evidence that was gathered is presented in the table below to reflect the three component areas of expenditure:
- School Improvement – Challenge Advisers or School Improvement Partners as they have been re-titled and S2S (delegation to headteachers to support allocated headteachers)
  - Curriculum and Wellbeing – Mainly subject specific advisers and LNS (departments in schools providing support to departments in other schools)
  - Leadership and Teaching – Mainly former headteachers undertaking professional learning for schools (building future leaders at all levels) and delegation to schools within clusters to embed and continue practice.
- 1.26. The table on Page 10 of the report highlighted the funding to support these 3 areas, comparing 2020-21 (where funding was already used heavily to support S2S delivery) with 2021-22 where this model has been expanded. Spending has increased by 5%, but the amount distributed to school to support the model has increased by 43%, whilst the core decreased by 17%

## **Conclusion**

- 1.25. Consideration of the body of evidence provided to this review enabled a judgement to be made regarding VfM and the judgement is that:

*The refined School to School (S2S) delivery model represents good value for money. This judgement has been arrived at from the following evaluative judgements:*

- *The model is efficient:* - Evidence gathered from case studies demonstrates that the small 5% increase in spending to fund investment in the model can result in significantly accelerated progress in schools requiring support; with a consequent reduction in the amount of time that additional support needs to be provided.
- *The model is equitable:* The distribution of funding ensures that those schools most in need of support receive the most support.
- *The model is sustainable:* The concentration on capacity building, based on leadership development in supported schools, ensures that progress is sustainable and increases the pool of potential support providers in the future.

1.26. The full report in Appendix A details the evidence that underpins these judgements.

### **Recommendations**

- The EAS must ensure that approaches to school improvement represent continuation and refinement to this model rather than any shorter-term fixes.
- The EAS must ensure that it has systems and mechanisms in place to gather valid data and wider intelligence on school performance to verify the effectiveness of the model and inform future improvements.

## **2. Resource Implications**

2.1 There are no specific resource implications, but resource decisions already taken are considered within the report.

## **3. Consultation**

3.1. The Consultees are noted below:

- Directors of Education (within South East Wales)
- EAS Company Board
- Regional Joint Executive Group (JEG)
- Individual local authority scrutiny committees (each local authority determines the most appropriate committee and whether to add the report to the work programme)

## **4. Background Papers**

4.1 The South-East Wales Regional Value for Money Report (2021-2022) attached as Appendix A.

**Value for Money (VFM) review and report for 2021/22 for  
South East Wales Education Achievement Service (EAS)**

**Report Author: Rod Alcott (External Consultant)**

**Date of report: June 2022**

## **Contents:**

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# 1. Executive Summary

## Introduction:

A key requirement of the South-East Wales Education Achievement Service ('the EAS') is to demonstrate annually that it offers value for money to the five local authorities within its geographical remit and their constituent schools. This report details the findings from a Value for Money (VfM) review that was undertaken to evaluate the extent to which that requirement was met for the year April 2021 to April 2022.

Value for Money, or cost effectiveness, is a measure of how well resources are being used to achieve intended outcomes. Good value for money is the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes. VfM is usually measured by considering:

- **Economy:** minimising the cost of resources used while having regard to quality (inputs) – spending less;
- **Efficiency:** the relationship between outputs and the resources used to produce them – spending well; and
- **Effectiveness:** the extent to which objectives are achieved (outcomes) – spending wisely.

While the above represent the traditional method of measuring VfM it is also possible to include two further dimensions:

- **Equity:** the extent to which service provision is needs based to remove barriers and facilitate equal opportunity – spending fairly.
- **Sustainability:** an increasingly standard consideration within the context of the Well Being of Future Generations Act (WBFG) – spending for the long term.

## Focus for the review:

It was recognised from the outset that time and financial constraints did not allow for a detailed consideration of the above criteria across the full range of activities undertaken, and services provided, by the EAS in the period under review. This meant that the review was not a review of school improvement in its broadest sense, but a review of a particular approach to school improvement.

To ensure the validity of any subsequent judgements it was essential to identify an area of activity that was broad enough to provide a representative view of the EAS, but specific enough to lend itself to detailed analysis and subsequent evaluation.

The process of identification was simplified through reference to the Invitation to Tender document which set out the requirement to provide.... *'an independent report on value for money functions of the EAS paying particular attention to how the organisation has refined its delivery model from a fully staffed central model to a model where schools are funded to provide support and challenge to peer schools within the region'*.

## **2. Review Framework:**

Having determined the focus for the review it was then essential to develop a framework for the review that:

- set out what evidence would be required and how it was to be gathered;
- determined evaluative criteria for arriving at a VfM judgement;
- established a chronology of phases for undertaking the review; and
- recognised any contextual factors that needed to be considered.

These phases are described in more detail in the main body of the report.

## **Review Findings:**

The overall conclusion is that the refined S2S delivery model represents good value for money. This judgement has been arrived at from the following evaluative judgements:

- *The model is efficient:* - Evidence gathered from case studies demonstrates that the small 5% increase in spending to fund investment in the model can result in significantly accelerated progress in schools requiring support; with a consequent reduction in the amount of time that additional support needs to be provided.
- *The model is equitable:* The distribution of funding ensures that those schools most in need of support receive the most support.
- *The model is sustainable:* The concentration on capacity building, based on leadership development in supported schools, ensures that progress is sustainable and increases the pool of potential support providers in the future.

## **Recommendations**

- The EAS must ensure that approaches to school improvement represent continuation and refinement to this model rather than any shorter-term fixes.
- The EAS must ensure that it has systems and mechanisms in place to gather valid data and wider intelligence on school performance to verify the effectiveness of the model and inform future improvements.

The main body of the report sets out:

- Details of the review framework

- A financial overview of the EAS
- A detailed description of the S2S delivery model
- Illustrative case studies
- Conclusions drawn from the evidence

### **The Review Framework:**

#### *Evidence gathering:*

In essence, the review needed to be an evaluation of how successful the EAS approach to school to school learning has been in terms of the quantity, quality and deployment of resources designed to secure improvement. This necessitated:

- comparing the costs associated with a decentralised school to school approach with the previous more centralised approach;
- gathering information from the EAS including, where available, from relevant reports and surveys;
- gathering, where possible, feedback from participating schools; and
- bringing the above together.

#### *Evaluative criteria:*

While there are more nuanced interpretations available; for the purposes of this review VfM would be demonstrated if the approach ensures that:

- effectiveness remains unimpaired or improves while costs have been reduced; or
- effectiveness improves while costs remain constant; or
- increased spending is offset by improved effectiveness
- equity is preserved; and
- sustainability can be demonstrated.

#### *Contextual factors:*

Having determined the focus for the review, the approach to evidence gathering and the necessary evaluative criteria, it was also important to consider the specific context of the external environment within which the EAS has been operating during the period under review. For the period 2021-2022 the dominant external consideration is that of operating under the challenges posed in continuing to adapt service delivery to respond to a global pandemic.

This meant that a key feature of the review was an evaluation of the effectiveness of the organisation's response both in terms of its deployment of resources and the impact of its amended service provision. Evaluating impact also provided a unique challenge given that measures of educational outcomes such as examination results, school categorisation and Estyn inspection reports were either no longer available or, where available, did not provide a valid measure of progress.

The pandemic didn't just impact on the availability of evaluative measures it also, inevitably, impacted on the availability and capacity of the S2S delivery model over the time period covered by this review and subsequent report.

*Chronology:*

It was essential to adopt an incremental approach where each phase built on the previous phase to produce a rounded judgement of overall VfM. In essence the phases were:

- data gathering and analysis to determine economy – spending less;
- information gathering to determine the impact of the changed approach – effectiveness;
- combining the above to determine efficiency; and
- refining judgements through consideration of equity and sustainability.

### 3. Financial Overview of the EAS:

As stated earlier, time and financial constraints did not allow for a detailed consideration of VfM across the full range of activities undertaken, and services provided, by the EAS in the period under review. However, it is possible to look at the organisation holistically in terms of the overall resources -essentially people and money - at its disposal. The table below summarises the picture for the EAS over the last six years

**Summary of overall financial position:**

	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
LA Funding	£3,376,653	£3,275,353	£3,209,847	£3,145,651	£3,098,465	£3,036,496
Trading Income	£601,974	£447,460	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total Core Funding	£3,978,627	£3,722,813	£3,209,847	£3,145,651	£3,098,465	£3,036,496
Grants	£56,082,261	£52,033,572	£51,991,066	£49,022,408	£51,996,479	£60,830,062
TOTAL	£60,060,888	£55,756,385	£55,200,913	£52,168,059	£55,094,944	£63,866,558
Delegated to Schools	£50,384,126	£46,481,315	£48,886,304	£46,142,076	£48,754,009	£58,240,283
Delegation Rate	90%	89%	94%	94%	94%	96%
Residual Income	£7,668,633	£7,278,655	£6,314,609	£6,025,983	£6,340,935	£5,626,275

The reduction in core funding has been continuous over the six-year period. There has been an agreed 10.07% reduction in LA funding, which, along with the elimination of trading income, has resulted in a reduction in total core funding of some £942k or



23.7% in absolute terms; although in real terms, when inflation and pay awards are taken into consideration, the reduction has been in excess of 30%. Over the same time period the amount of grant money received from the Welsh Government reduced year on year up to 2019-20 but has increased over the last two years with a very significant increase of £8.83m or some 17% between 2020-21 and 2021-22<sup>1</sup>. From a regional school improvement prospective when reductions in LA funding, elimination of trading income and increases in grant money received are added together the increase in total funding is £3.81m which represents a 6.3% increase in absolute terms over a six year period. However, when inflation and pay awards are taken into account, there has probably been very little or no increase in real terms.

When increases in the rate of delegation to schools are taken into account then residual income spent on running the organisation, including staffing costs, fell by some £2.04m or 26.6% from 2016-17 to 2021-22. Reduced spending has inevitably resulted in a considerable reduction in staffing numbers, with the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff reducing from 111 in 2016-17 to 63.3 in 2021-22, taking the total reduction in FTE staff reduction to 47.7 over the period 2016-17 to 2020-21, representing a reduction of almost 43% in staffing levels.

This staffing reduction is a direct consequence of the decision by the EAS to refine its delivery model from a fully staffed central model to a self-improving School to School (S2S) model where schools are funded to provide support and challenge to peer schools within the region. It is this delivery modification that provided the focus for the VfM review for 2021-22.

#### **4. School to School Delivery Model:**

Essentially the review distilled down to gathering evidence that allowed the following questions to be answered:

- What does the delivery model comprise?
- How has it been refined?
- What are the cost implications?
- How effective is it?
- Is it demonstrably equitable and sustainable?
- What lessons have been learned that will inform future refinement and improvement?

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<sup>1</sup> Additional grant funding represented part of the Welsh Government's response to the impact of the pandemic and curriculum reform.

The remainder of this report will detail the evidence that was gathered to answer the above questions and allow a summative evaluative judgement of VfM to be made.

### *The delivery model:*

Broadly speaking the S2S delivery model is broken down into four areas of support and challenge designed to enable teachers and leaders to learn from each other, try out new approaches and engage with educational research, as the backdrop for improvement. The four areas of support and challenge are:

#### *School Improvement Partner (SIP)*

This role is usually, but not exclusively, undertaken by more experienced headteachers whose knowledge and experience is used to support and challenge headteachers in allocated schools and to plan and monitor support. They record their activity with the allocated school, agreed actions aligned to the school's own plan for improvement (School Development Plan) and evaluation of the progress made against the plan, through the Notes of Activity system, and through their contacts with a nominated Principal School Improvement Partner (PSIP). While most SIPs are experienced headteachers, some are 'newer' headteachers who have demonstrated their ability to make a significant contribution to improvement, both as headteachers and in senior leadership roles previously.

#### *Learning Network Schools (LNS).*

The LNS programme has become established over the last 5 years engaging over a hundred schools across the region both as facilitators and participants. The decision to adopt the Learning Network Schools programme is based on research evidence which highlights the need for well-resourced school to school collaboration in a transparent and supportive culture. premised on the belief that support for school improvement is at its most effective when schools are learning from each other. Schools within the programme perform the following differentiated roles:

- support on a subject specific basis;
- specialised health and well-being support; and
- headteacher and school leader support for teaching, learning and governance.

All participating LNS in the secondary sector perform a single role but within the primary sector some schools provide both subject specific/ health and wellbeing and support for teaching, learning and governance.

All schools within the region are given the opportunity to apply to become an LNS. Applications are vetted and applicants are subsequently subjected to a quality assurance process to determine their suitability for the role. Potential SIPs are identified by the EAS based on data that provides evidence of sustained improvement or high achievement within their schools over a period of time. Recognising improvement as a criterion as well as high achievement is important because it

provides the opportunity to recognise those headteachers who have been successful in turning around under-performing schools and who might, therefore, be ideally placed to support and challenge another school embarking on a similar journey. This approach is a good example of possibly the single most important perceived advantage of the S2S approach to school improvement – the credibility of those providing support because ‘*they have walked in your shoes*’.

It is also important to note that the identification of LNS and SIPs has not been confined to the South East Wales region. In the secondary school sector, and for Welsh medium provision, there was a recognition that the necessary expertise did not exist in sufficient numbers and that there was a need to widen the search to identify potential contributors from outside the region.

#### *Professional Learning Networks (PLN)*

The EAS Early Years team employs the knowledge, skills and experience of three lead network settings to support leadership in non-maintained nursery settings across the region. The lead settings offer bespoke coaching and mentoring to new leaders or those who have been identified through setting improvement partner visits as requiring support with leadership and management.

In addition, the lead network settings offer professional learning to leaders who require it. These take the form of three sessions on leadership, managing a team, self-evaluation and improvement planning. The final session is offered in situ at the lead setting site – to see the impact of leadership in action and to share documentation at first hand.

#### *Curriculum for Wales Professional Learning Schools:*

This programme has been established over the last 7 years engaging with schools within and across the region to design and facilitate the support to all aspects of the Educational Reform in Wales. Across the EAS there are 46 Curriculum for Wales Schools representative of primary, secondary, special, faith and Welsh medium schools. These schools receive a sliding scale of funding across three tiers, with an approximate outline of time expectation of their role. During this time they support the co-construction, facilitation and evaluation of the regional and national professional learning offer linked to teaching and leadership. Lead schools contribute to the whole regional and national offer, and partners and associate contribute to the core and optional work programme.

#### *Refinement of the delivery model:*

Refinement has been largely a process of evolution over time rather than a ‘big bang’ change of direction. Evolution has been both quantitative and qualitative. The model has been both expanded and refined over a number of years. Expansion is illustrated through the increase in the number of participating schools, the concomitant reduction in the number of Challenge Advisors – now referred to as School Improvement Partners - and an increased rate of delegation of funds to schools.

Refinement has been a learning process of gathering and evaluating evidence to identify what works well and what could be refined to further improve the effectiveness of the model. One area of refinement has been the inclusion of a growing number of secondary schools in the LNS S2S model, with a few secondary schools taking on a number of other secondary schools as recipients, rather than just one school. This has built capacity within their own schools through resourcing and has helped grow future leaders. This is a positive by-product of the LNS system that as well as supporting other schools, participant schools also grow and develop their own internal leadership structures.

A further refinement has been differentiating the models of support to reflect the needs of individual schools rather than a one-size fits all approach. This differentiation is closely aligned to the recipient school's Estyn category and to the needs analysis undertaken with the school and Local Authority through partnership meetings, professional discussion and Team Around the School Meetings.

Cost implications:

The earlier evaluative criteria stated that for the purposes of this review VfM would be demonstrated if the S2S approach ensures that either effectiveness remains unimpaired or improves while costs have been reduced, effectiveness improves while costs remain constant or increased spending is offset by improved effectiveness. To begin this analysis it was necessary to gather evidence that would allow a comparison between the costs associated with a decentralised S2S approach with the previous more centralised approach.

The evidence that was gathered is presented in the table below to reflect the three component areas of expenditure:

- School Improvement – Challenge Advisers or School Improvement Partners as they have been re-titled and S2S (delegation to headteachers to support allocated headteachers)
- Curriculum and Wellbeing – Mainly subject specific advisers and LNS (departments in schools providing support to departments in other schools)
- Leadership and Teaching – Mainly former headteachers undertaking professional learning for schools (building future leaders at all levels) and delegation to schools within clusters to embed and continue practice.

**Comparing the costs associated with a decentralised school to school approach with the previous more centralised approach:**

<b>Area of Expenditure</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>Change</b>
School Improvement (core)	£1,326,035	£917,771	-£408,264
School to School (S2S) (schools)	£1,352,903	£1,826,747	£473,844
Curriculum (core)	£1,414,510	£1,156,663	-£257,847
Equity, Health and Wellbeing (core)	£137,485	£296,522	£159,037
Curriculum for Wales - Learning Network Schools (LNS) (schools)	£218,725	£401,320	£182,595
Leadership and Teaching (core)	£405,833	£370,176	-£35,657
Curriculum for Wales Professional Learning Schools – Leadership and Teaching (schools)	£344,960	£510,000	£165,040
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,200,451</b>	<b>£5,479,199</b>	<b>£278,748</b>

The evidence shows that spending has increased by some 5% between 2020-21 and 2021-22 to support the organisation’s investment in refining its delivery model from a fully staffed central model to a model where schools are funded to provide support and challenge to peer schools within the region.

The above table provides an important quantitative overview of spending on the ever-expanding S2S delivery programme. However, this needs to be supplemented with an understanding of the funding mechanism that underpins the quantitative changes.

In the past, the level of support provided to schools, via their appointed Challenge Adviser, was dictated by school categorisation. Those schools judged to be most in need of support received the highest number of days of support. The suspension, and subsequent scrapping, of categorisation has led to the development of a multi-layered funding model that continues to be support-need based.

The current, but constantly evolving, funding model comprises a universal baseline of funding for eight days support for every school in the region. Five days funding is provided directly to the support school or person while the remaining three days funding can either be retained by the recipient school or used to buy-in additional SIP support. Currently, the majority of schools are opting to retain the funding to use as peer-to-peer work with schools of their choice.

In addition to the universal baseline support, extra funding is also distributed on a support-need basis. Schools that are providing support to those schools most in need of support, are funded to provide that support. The amount of funding provided is determined by the amount of support deemed to be necessary and reasonable. Thus, as an example, a secondary school providing high levels of 'wrap-around' support to a school judged to need the highest level of support will receive £30,000 to provide that support; while a secondary school providing a more targeted medium levels of support will receive £17,000 to provide that support. A primary school providing high levels of 'wrap-around' support to a school judged to need the highest level of support will receive £13,500 to provide that support.

In addition to the funding provided to schools providing bespoke support, funding is also allocated to all recipient schools. It ranges from £1000 to £6000 per school, based on need. This funding was introduced to eliminate any potential cost barriers to engagement.

The distribution of this funding for 2021-2022 is shown in the table below.

Delivery - 8 days universal support		<b>£ 575,350</b>
Delivery - bespoke SIP/LNS	£ 680,500	
Delivery - bespoke SIP	£ 71,200	
		<b>£ 751,700</b>
Recipient engagement		<b>£ 119,000</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>£ 1,446,050</b>

The table shows that £870,700, or some 60%, of the funding went to targeted support for those schools most in need of support; compared to the 40% going to universal support.

## **5. Illustrative Case Studies:**

The next phase of the review required gathering evidence to enable an evaluation of the impact of this increased investment. Essentially, what was needed was the gathering of valid evidence to enable the impact on schools and their pupils to be identified. This in turn would enable a judgement to be made regarding the effectiveness of the redirected spending and deployment of resources.

As with all evidence-based reviews, triangulation of evidence is a necessary condition for ensuring validity. In this review triangulation comprises gaining evidence from participating schools to verify the evidence provided to the review by the EAS. The most comprehensive form of triangulation involves a multi-layered approach of gathering evidence from both schools that are providing support and schools that are receiving support. For reporting purposes, a small number of representative case studies will be used to examine the effectiveness of the approach based on actual experience of involved schools.

To ensure that the selected case studies are as representative as possible within time and resource constraints it was decided to include case studies that featured:

- a relatively new headteacher as a SIP within the primary/infant sector;
- an experienced headteacher from outside the region as a SIP working across multiple schools in the secondary sector; and
- an experienced headteacher as a SIP working with a newly appointed headteacher in a Welsh medium primary school.

### ***Case Study 1:***

Participating schools -Llanyrafon Primary School and Ysgol Fabanod Cwm Glas Infants School

As mentioned previously, in the main body of the report, the majority of School Improvement Partners (SIPs) are experienced headteachers. However, some are less experienced individuals who have demonstrated their ability to make a significant contribution to improvement, both as headteachers and in senior leadership roles previously.

It is also mentioned previously in the report that the EAS provides universal support for all schools of five days input from a School Improvement Partner (SIP); with further support being provided to those schools judged to need of greater support.

This case study reflects an example of a SIP who is less experienced and a recipient school judged to need no additional support.

Llanyrafon Primary School has 420 pupils on roll and is situated in Cwmbran within Torfaen County Borough Council. The headteacher took up post in September 2021

having previously been the Head of Raglan Church in Wales Primary School in Monmouthshire from 2017 to 2021.

During her tenure at Raglan Church in Wales Primary School:

- a significant deficit was transformed into a healthy surplus;
- categorisation had improved from amber to yellow (with every likelihood of progression to green had categorisation not been suspended); and
- a reputation was gained for excellence in maths and numeracy which would have resulted in the school being designated as a Learning Network School (LNS) if the pandemic had not intervened.

In the summer term 2021 the headteacher was approached by the Principal School Improvement Partner (PSIP) for Monmouthshire regarding the possibility of becoming a SIP. The headteacher agreed and completed her SIP induction training in June 2021.

As a newly appointed SIP the headteacher was, in the first instance, allocated a single school to work with for the academic year 2021-2022

Ysgol Fabanod Cwm Glas Infants School ('Cwm Glas') is situated in Llanbradach within Caerphilly County Borough Council and has 62 pupils on roll. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2009. The school is not in any Estyn category and was judged to be a green school in the last round of school categorisation in January 2020, prior to the suspension of categorisation in response to the global pandemic.

For the autumn term 2021 and spring term 2022 contact was, at the request of Cwm Glas, via Microsoft Teams rather than in-person but subsequent meetings have been in-person. The support provided has encompassed sharing practice and suggestions on generic issues such as School Development Plans, performance management, grant monitoring, professional learning, and wellbeing. Much of this support has been based on a '*you might want to look at this*' as opposed to a '*this is how to do it*' approach. This has encouraged the development of a support culture centred around '*pick and share*', which Cwm Glas has found very beneficial.

The SIP has also been involved in the personal appraisal process for the headteacher at Cwm Glas and pupils' book scrutiny is planned for June 2022. Where the schools have a shared focus, for example, the school environment then reciprocal visits are planned to provide new learning opportunities for both parties.

As with all S2S partnership working forming good professional relationships has been vital; and the key to this is the perceived credibility of the SIP allied to the receptiveness, to new ideas and suggestions, of the headteacher in Cwm Glas. The



SIP is respected as a successful headteacher with a background in early years lecturing in a university which confers added credibility.

However, most important of all is the sense of a shared understanding of reality in the current educational environment. Both participating headteachers are receiving the same emails at 10am on a Monday morning and facing the same challenges, for example, Additional Learning Needs (ALN) reform. This all lends to an appreciation that the SIP *'really gets it'*.

While this case study concentrates on the relationship between two schools it is important to note that inter-school working within the region is not confined to these specific arrangements. Thus, Cwm Glas is a member of a proactive cluster of schools that includes secondary schools, primary schools and infants schools who network among themselves to share ideas and emerging practice in relation to major challenges they face, for example, implementing the Curriculum for Wales.

### **Case Study 2:**

Participating Schools: Cardiff High School – Chepstow School

Cardiff High School (Cardiff High) is a mainstream local authority run school with 1800 pupils on roll. The school has an experienced headteacher who has been in post since 2011. In 2019 the school was inspected by Estyn and identified as being excellent across all five inspection areas. The report stated that:

*'Cardiff High School is an exceptional school. Pupils' achievements have been amongst the highest in Wales over recent years, and yet the school has striven relentlessly to improve in every aspect of its work. In particular, the school has focused on refining its approaches to supporting all teachers to hone their craft'.  
.....Pupils respond extremely positively to the inspirational teaching and high levels of challenge. ....As a result, pupils' outcomes are well above expectations. High quality teaching, care, support and guidance combine effectively to enable pupils to become confident, capable and ambitious learners. Leadership is outstanding. It is distributed widely and effectively and all know their part in developing the school. Leaders emphasise and promote the importance of wellbeing for staff and pupils. As a result pupils enjoy school and staff morale is high'.*

The school's performance was judged to be such that no recommendations for improvement were issued – instead the report stated that:

*'The school should continue on its improvement journey. There are no specific recommendations following this inspection'.*

Chepstow School (Chepstow) is a mainstream local authority run school with 733 pupils on roll. The current headteacher has been in post since April 2019 and had been a headteacher in another school in the region for five years prior to his appointment to Chepstow. Following inspection in December 2017 the school was

placed into Estyn Monitoring; and was judged to be an Amber school in need of the second highest level of support in the last round of categorisation in January 2020. Prior to the appointment of a substantive headteacher in April 2019 the school had an acting headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.

The 2019 Estyn report on Cardiff High attracted attention and led to an approach to the school by the EAS to ascertain if the school – despite sitting outside the geographical remit of the EAS – would be prepared to participate in the S2S delivery model that sits at the heart of its school improvement programme. In the first instance the invitation was confined to the provision of digital technology and skills support.

However, over time the support provided by the school has grown exponentially, to the point where six schools are now being supported. The support model is not a one size fits all offer, but a bespoke, tailored programme of support agreed with recipient schools to meet their needs. The support package varies both quantitatively and qualitatively; from a 40-day commitment to provide ‘wrap-around’ support through a 20-day commitment to provide more targeted support down to a School Improvement Partnership offer.

In late 2019 and early 2020, just before the impact of the pandemic on schools across Wales, an agreement was brokered by the EAS for Cardiff High to provide support to Chepstow based on a 20-day commitment.

Fundamental to effective partnership working between the schools was the initial stage of gaining trust and building relationships. This provided the necessary foundation for agreeing needs and designing an appropriate and agile support package. The role of Cardiff High within the partnership has encompassed providing a sounding board, offering mentoring and acting as a critical friend in relation to leadership, planning, performance management, quality assurance, teaching and learning and subject specific classroom delivery. The overriding aim is to build capacity and ensure that it is entrenched to provide a platform for sustained improvement rather than a sticking plaster short term fix.

Central to the aim of building capacity has been the professional learning development programme for Middle and Senior Leadership Teams in Chepstow. This has involved one-to-one working with peers in Cardiff High with a concentration and focus on *‘things that matter’* and reciprocal staff visits. The most rapid improvement has been in the accelerated development of Middle Management based on engagement with the OLEVI Teacher Development and Leadership Courses with Cardiff High School as the principal deliverers.

Having a clear focus was a substantial feature of the support from Cardiff High and this helped to identify and streamline what was needed to prevent attention being diverted and progress on school improvement being slowed down. One example of this is school attendance during the pandemic. Chepstow had one of the highest attendance rates in Wales; attributable in part to a focused approach that allowed the school to further develop this aspect of school improvement.

The schools have worked together on a range of upskilling initiatives, based on the adaptation of generic development models, for example, Dr ICE, to ensure they are interlinked with the values that are integral to Chepstow. Role-modelling has been an important feature of the adaptation and delivery, with senior leaders from Cardiff High working alongside peers in Chepstow in a partnership where engagement is deepening.

As mentioned previously, establishing good personal relationships is essential to the provision and acceptance of constructive challenge. This is evident in the termly reviews carried out by Chepstow School where senior leaders from Cardiff High perform the role of critical friend in validating judgements arrived at internally.

One source of evidence of the improvement in pupil outcomes within Chepstow comes in the form of results in GCSE Mathematics where A-A\* grades have risen as follows:

- 2019 30%;
- 2020 Centre Assessed Grade 42%;
- 2021 Centre Determined Grade 46%.
- 2022 Extremal examined 45% (40% validated<sup>2</sup>)

Evidence of the cultural change that has been brought about in Chepstow comes from the most recent iteration of their School Development Plan. This now includes improvement targets that mirror comments contained in the 2019 Estyn report on Cardiff High as an illustration of increased aspiration and a belief in the achievement of excellence.

However, it is important to note that benefits are not confined to recipient schools. There are benefits for the supporting school in terms of leadership development gained from providing support, learning from practice in other schools and accelerated leadership opportunities through promotion to an expanded Senior Leadership Team (SLT) as part of backfilling to cover SLT members most heavily involved in providing external support and challenge.

In conclusion it should be noted that while the headteacher of Chepstow believes the school would have arrived its present destination without external support, he acknowledges that without the additional capacity that Cardiff High brought to the school, it would have taken much longer.

### **Case Study 3:**

Participating Schools: Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gaerfilli - Ysgol Panteg Torfaen

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Caerffilli (YGGC) is a mainstream local authority run Welsh medium primary school with 439 pupils on roll. The school has an experienced headteacher who has been in post since 2002. In February 2022 the school was inspected by Estyn and identified, in the subsequent report, as a school which *'provides valuable experiences for its pupils. Strong leadership and enthusiastic*

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<sup>2</sup> Early entry results published in January 2022

*teachers and assistants, support pupils' well-being very effectively. This helps pupils to become conscientious, confident, citizens of Wales. Staff offer exciting learning experiences that engage pupils' interest and help them to develop the skills they need to access the whole curriculum and learn effectively. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and most make good progress during their time at school'.*

Ysgol Panteg (Panteg) is a mainstream local authority run Welsh medium primary school with 413 pupils on roll. In the last round of school categorisation (January 2020) the school was categorised as Red, indicating that it had been judged to be one of only twenty primary schools in Wales in need of the highest level of support. The overwhelming probability is that it would have gone into Estyn monitoring if school inspections had not been suspended due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

This case study centres around the support that YGGC has been providing to Panteg. This support has been in place since May 2020, but the impact was limited in the academic year 2020-21 because of:

- the long-term sickness absence of the headteacher in Panteg;
- subsequent appointment of a part-time headteacher; and
- the inability to have face-to-face meetings between the respective staffs because of the pandemic.

The latter issue was a significant factor in inhibiting the development of the necessary relationship – based on support rather than challenge and criticism – that was required between the schools.

The appointment of a full-time substantive headteacher in Panteg in June 2021 provided the opportunity for the necessary relationships between the schools to develop. The subsequent support that has been provided has encompassed all levels including Teaching Assistant, Higher Level Teaching Assistant, Middle Leader and Senior Leader. Support has also included strategic support for performance management and quality-assurance; and at a more detailed and specific level, for example, the teaching of phonics via Tric a Chlic in Welsh and Read Write Inc in English.

Support has also been provided more generally in relation to care support and guidance. The Estyn inspection report on YGGC recognised that this area was one of the school's particular strengths as the following extracts illustrate:

*Pupils' well-being and attitudes to learning are one of the school's obvious strengths.... The school provides a caring, supportive, and welcoming environment where all pupils take pride in being a valued member of the school family..... Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is a strong feature. All pupils with additional learning needs have an individual education plan, which includes specific targets that staff review with parents regularly. Effective links with a range of external agencies, such as the speech and language service, provide specialist and beneficial support for pupils.*

The existence of expertise in this area within YGGC has allowed the transfer of good practice through the Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCO) in YGGC

undertaking a quality assurance role for Panteg to provide re-assurance to them in terms of their emerging practice.

Provision of effective support requires a willingness to participate on the part of both providers and recipients. This has been the case as both parties recognise the professional development opportunities that sharing practice can provide. It is important to note that the benefits from providing support are not confined to the recipient school and its staff. The Estyn inspection report for YGGC noted *that ‘Staff at all levels contribute to professional learning sessions regularly and share their expertise successfully’*. The opportunities to work with Panteg on a S2S basis increased the professional learning opportunities of YGGC staff who also benefitted from working professionally with colleagues from Panteg.

A critical factor in effective S2S working is the forging of good working relationships underpinned by mutual respect. In this case study that is reflected in Panteg's sense of participating in a partnership where support and challenge is *‘being done with not done to’*. This stems from an appreciation that guidance, support and advice is being offered and that they are not being forced into doing things that they potentially might disagree with. They are able to take what fits for them and not just become a mirror of YGGC.

A key indicator of the effectiveness of the support that has been provided is the fact that both school leadership in Panteg, and their SIP, believe that there is sufficient evidence to show that capacity building has resulted in the level of support being no longer required to the same extent. A meeting with the Principal School Improvement Partner is scheduled for 30 June 2022 where the level of support required will be discussed and it is likely that the current level of S2S support will cease for 2022-2023.

However, this will not signal an end to inter school collaboration with the intention to continue to share practice, raise staff aspiration within Panteg, develop a joint project and enjoy the beneficial dialogue.

One further source of evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of this example of S2S working comes from comparison of the results of completed staff surveys within Panteg. The ‘Schools as Learning Organisations’ survey maps Panteg’s professional learning offer and culture of self-improvement by looking at 7 areas (Sections A-G).

	2019 Average Rating	2022 Average Rating	Commentary
Overall	Neutral 3.2/5.0	Agree 4.4/5.0	Increase 34.38%
A: Developing a shared vision centred on the learning of all learners	Neutral 3.5/5.0	Agree 4.6/5.0	Increase 31.43%
B: Creating and supporting continuous learning opportunities for all staff	Neutral 3.3/5.0	Agree 4.4/5.0	Increase 33.333%

	2019 Average Rating	2022 Average Rating	Commentary
C: promoting team learning and collaboration among all staff	Neutral 3.3/5.0	Agree 4.3/5.0	Increase 30.30%
D: Establishing a culture of enquiry, innovation and exploration	Neutral 3.3/5.0	Agree 4.2/5.0	Increase 27.27%
E: Embedding systems for collecting and exchanging knowledge for learning	Neutral 3.3/5.0	Agree 4.3/5.0	Increase 30.30%
F: learning with and from the external environment and wider learning system	Neutral 3.3/5.0	Agree 4.2/5.0	Increase 27.27%
G: Modelling and growing learning leadership	Neutral 3.2/5.0	Agree 4.4/5.0	Increase 37.5%

## 6. Conclusion:

The detailed information provided by the EAS, supplemented by feedback gathered from the representative case studies, provides sufficient triangulated evidence to enable a summative VfM evaluation based on consideration of the following criteria:

- Economy - cost compared to alternative support models
- Effectiveness – impact on participating schools
- Efficiency – combination of above
- Equity – provision of support based on need
- Sustainability – securing long term improvement

**Economy:** There was a slight increase of some 5% in spending to fund further investment in the shift from a centrally funded model of school support to a devolved model of S2S support.

**Effectiveness:** The lack of valid quantitative data to enable a meaningful analysis of effectiveness meant that the focus had to shift to qualitative evidence. This evidence was gathered from in-depth discussion with headteachers in participating schools to inform a number of representative case studies. This evidence was unequivocally positive from both the providers and recipients of support.

**Efficiency:** The evidence from the case studies suggests that gains in effectiveness far outweigh any marginal increase in spending. These gains include accelerated progress in supported schools resulting in the level of support they require being reduced more quickly and hence creating a cost saving in the longer term.

**Equity:** This does not mean that all pupils will achieve equal outcomes but rather that support is provided to overcome barriers they may face which are outside of their control, but within the remit of a school improvement consortium. The effectiveness of the S2S delivery mechanism in accelerating progress means that potential barriers are removed quicker while the funding mechanism for the S2S delivery model ensures that schools that need the most support, to provide equality of opportunity for their pupils, receive the most support.

**Sustainability:** In contrast to some models of support that provide short term 'sticking plaster' solutions, this model has capacity building, through leadership development, at its heart. This helps to ensure that improvements are entrenched and sustainable into the future and also helps to build a pool of high-quality leaders who can be the support providers of the future.

Taken together the above component judgements demonstrate that the model provides good value for money because it meets the evaluative criteria set out earlier in the report of:

- Increased spending being offset by improved effectiveness
- equity being preserved; and
- sustainability being demonstrated.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn





Education Achievement Service  
Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg

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# EAS Value for Money (VFM) 2021-2022

Presentation to accompany Newport Partnerships scrutiny  
report (9 November 2022)



- The Educational Achievement Service (EAS) is the school improvement service of the five local authorities in South East Wales.
- **The EAS is owned by the five Councils** and operates within a defined **governance structure populated by representative Elected Members** from each Council.
- The EAS has been in operation since **September 2012** and has undergone many changes during this period.
- Through the commissioning of a **Business Plan the EAS delivers key school improvement support** to all schools and educational settings across the South East Wales region.

# Context – EAS Governance Structure



# Context – Value For Money (VfM) report



- The VfM report focuses on the delivery of the **regional service**.
- Considers regional impact on a number of measurable outcomes within the commissioned **regional business plan (2021-22)**, not the current **Business Plan (2022-2025)**
- The report has been written by an **external consultant**, Rod Alcott following a tender process.
- The report has been shared and agreed through EAS Governance structures (**Company Board, ARAC and Joint Executive Group (JEG)**) in Summer 2022

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# What is Value for Money?



VfM or cost effectiveness, is a measure of how well resources are being used to achieve intended outcomes. Good value for money is the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes.

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- **Economy:** minimising the cost of resources used while having regard to quality (inputs) – spending less;
- **Efficiency:** the relationship between outputs and the resources used to produce them – spending well;
- **Effectiveness:** the extent to which objectives are achieved (outcomes) – spending wisely

- **Equity:** the extent to which services are available to and reach all people that they are intended to – spending fairly;
- **Sustainability:** an increasingly standard consideration within the context of the Well Being of Future Generations Act (WBFG) – spending for the long term.

- It was recognised from the outset that time and financial constraints did not allow for a detailed consideration of the above criteria across the full range of activities undertaken, and services provided, by the EAS in the period under review..

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The review is not therefore of school improvement in its broadest sense, but a review of a particular approach to school improvement (*School to School Model*)

To ensure the validity of any subsequent judgements it was essential to identify an area of activity that was broad enough to provide a representative view of the EAS, but specific enough to lend itself to detailed analysis and subsequent evaluation.

- The dominant external consideration is that of operating under the challenges posed in continuing to adapt service delivery to respond to a global pandemic.

# Review Method



The review was an evaluation of how successful the EAS approach to school to school learning has been in terms of the quantity, quality and deployment of resources designed to secure improvement. This necessitated:

- comparing the costs associated with a decentralised school to school approach with the previous more centralised approach;
- gathering information from the EAS including, where available, from relevant reports and surveys;
- gathering, where possible, feedback from participating schools; and
- bringing the above together.

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# Review Evaluation



For the purposes of this review VfM would be demonstrated if the approach ensures that:

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- effectiveness remains unimpaired or improves while costs have been reduced; or
  - effectiveness improves while costs remain constant; or
  - increased spending is offset by improved effectiveness
  - equity is preserved; and
  - sustainability can be demonstrated.



Evaluating impact provided a unique challenge given that measures of educational outcomes such as:

- examination results \* (not to be used for accountability purposes)
- school categorisation (suspended by Welsh Government and subsequently now ceased)
- Estyn inspection reports (not available during the pandemic).

\*Welsh Government suspended the calculation and publication of Key Stage 4 and legacy sixth form performance measures for 2020 to 2021 and 2021 to 2022 academic years. Qualification awards data will not be used to report on attainment outcomes at a school, local authority or regional consortium level and must not be used to hold schools to account for their learners' outcomes.

# Economy and Efficiency



Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
LA Funding	£3,376,653	£3,275,353	£3,209,847	£3,145,651	£3,098,465	£3,036,496
Trading Income	£601,974	£447,460	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total Core Funding	£3,978,627	£3,722,813	£3,209,847	£3,145,651	£3,098,465	£3,036,496
Grants	£56,082,261	£52,033,572	£51,991,066	£49,022,408	£51,996,479	£60,830,062
<b>Total</b>	<b>£60,060,888</b>	<b>£55,756,385</b>	<b>£55,200,913</b>	<b>£52,168,059</b>	<b>£55,094,944</b>	<b>£63,866,558</b>
Delegated To Schools	£50,384,126	£46,481,315	£48,886,304	£46,142,076	£48,754,009	£58,240,283
Delegation Rate	90%	89%	94%	94%	94%	96%
<b>Residual Income</b>	<b>£7,668,633</b>	<b>£7,278,655</b>	<b>£6,314,609</b>	<b>£6,025,983</b>	<b>£6,340,935</b>	<b>£5,626,275</b>

Funding of

- From 2016/17 the **reduction in core funding** has been continuous. An agreed 10.07% reduction in LA funding, which, along with the elimination of trading income, resulted in a reduction in total core funding of some £942k or **23.7% in absolute terms**; although in real terms, when inflation and pay awards are taken into consideration, the reduction has been in excess of 30%.
- **Grant money** received from the Welsh Government reduced year on year up to 2019-20 but has increased over the last two years with a significant increase of £8.83m or some 17% between 2020-21 and 2021-22.

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When reductions in LA funding, elimination of trading income and increases in grant money received are added together the increase in total funding is £3.81m which represents a **6.3% increase in absolute terms over a six year period.**

- **However**, when **increases in the rate of delegation to schools (95.5%)** are taken into account then residual income spent on running the organisation, including staffing costs, **fell by some £2.04m or 26.6%** from 2016-17 to 2021-22.
- Reduced spending has resulted in reduction in staffing numbers, with the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff reducing from 111 in 2016-17 to 63.3 in 2021-22, taking the total reduction in FTE staff reduction to 47.7 over the period 2016-17 to 2020-21, **representing a reduction of almost 43% in staffing levels.**

# The School to School (S2S) Delivery Model



Four Areas of Support:

- School Improvement Partner (SIP)
- Learning Network Schools (LNS)
- Professional Learning Networks (PLN)
- Curriculum for Wales Professional Learning Schools (CfW PL)

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The evidence that was gathered is presented in the table below to reflect the three component areas of expenditure:

- School Improvement – Challenge Advisers or School Improvement Partners as they have been re-titled and S2S (delegation to headteachers to support allocated headteachers)
- Curriculum and Wellbeing – Mainly subject specific advisers and LNS (departments in schools providing support to departments in other schools)
- Leadership and Teaching – Mainly former headteachers undertaking professional learning for schools (building future leaders at all levels) and delegation to schools within clusters to embed and continue practice.

# S2S Delivery Model – Finance (Service Delivery)



Area of Expenditure	2020-2021	2021-2022	Change
School Improvement (core)	£1,326,035	£917,771	-£408,264
School to School (S2S) (schools)	£1,352,903	£1,826,747	£473,844
Curriculum (core)	£1,414,510	£1,156,663	-£257,847
Equity, Health and Wellbeing (core)	£137,485	£296,522	£159,037
Curriculum for Wales - LNS (schools)	£218,725	£401,320	£182,595
Leadership and Teaching (core)	£405,833	£370,176	-£35,657
Curriculum for Wales Professional Learning Schools – Leadership and Teaching (schools)	£344,960	£510,000	£165,040
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,200,451</b>	<b>£5,479,199</b>	<b>£278,748</b>

Comparing 2020-21 (where funding was already used heavily to support S2S delivery) with 2021-22 (where this model has been expanded)

- overall spending has increased by 5%
- distribution to schools to support the model has increased by 43%
- Core funding decreased by 17%

# External Judgements of the EAS



**The refined School to School (S2S) delivery model represents good value for money.** This judgement has been arrived at from the following evaluative judgements:

- **The model is efficient:** - Evidence gathered from case studies demonstrates that the small 5% increase in spending to fund investment in the model can result in significantly accelerated progress in schools requiring support; with a consequent reduction in the amount of time that additional support needs to be provided.
- **The model is equitable:** The distribution of funding ensures that those schools most in need of support receive the most support.
- **The model is sustainable:** The concentration on capacity building, based on leadership development in supported schools, ensures that progress is sustainable and increases the pool of potential support providers in the future.

- The EAS must ensure that approaches to school improvement represent continuation and refinement to this model rather than any shorter-term fixes.
- The EAS must ensure that it has systems and mechanisms in place to gather valid data and wider intelligence on school performance to verify the effectiveness of the model and inform future improvements.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn



# Scrutiny Report

## Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships

### Part 1

Date: 9 November 2022

### Subject Scrutiny Adviser Report

Author Scrutiny Adviser

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

Invitee:	Role
Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser)	Present the Committee with the Scrutiny Adviser Report for discussion and update the Committee on any changes.

## Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

### Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

#### 1. Committee's Work Programme:

Consider the Committee's Forward Work Programme Update (**Appendix 1**):

- *Are there any amendments to the topics scheduled to be considered at the next Committee meeting?*
- *Are there any additional invitees that the Committee requires to fully consider the topics?*
- *Is there any additional information that the Committee would like to request?*

#### 2. Action Plan

Consider the Actions from previous meetings (**Appendix 2**):

- *Note the responses for the actions;*
- *Determine if any further information / action is required;*
- *Agree to receive an update on outstanding issues at the next meeting.*

## 2 Context

### Background

- 2.1 The purpose of a forward work programme is to help ensure Councillors achieve organisation and focus in the undertaking of enquiries through the Overview and Scrutiny function. Effective

work programming is essential to ensure that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.

- 2.2 Further information about the work programming process, including the procedures for referring new business to the programme, can be found in our Scrutiny Handbook on the Council's Scrutiny webpages ([www.newport.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.newport.gov.uk/scrutiny)).
- 2.3 The Centre for Public Scrutiny's Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the forward work programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be co-ordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.

### **Action Sheet from Previous Meetings**

- 2.6 Attached at **Appendix 2** is the Action Sheet from the Committee meetings. The updated completed actions are included in the table.
- 2.7 Any actions that do not have a response will be included on the Action Sheet at the next meeting to ensure that the Committee can keep track of outstanding actions.

### **3 Information Submitted to the Committee**

- 3.1 The following information is attached:

**Appendix 1:** The Committee's Forward Work Programme Update;  
**Appendix 2:** Action Sheet from Previous Meetings.

### **4. Suggested Areas of Focus**

#### **Role of the Committee**

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

- **Forward Work Programme Update - Appendix 1**  
Consider:
  - Are there any amendments to the topics scheduled to be considered at the next Committee meeting?
  - Are there any additional invitees that the Committee requires to fully consider the topics?
  - Is there any additional information that the Committee would like to request?
  
- **Action Sheet from Previous Meetings - Appendix 2**
  - Consider the responses to the actions from the meeting;
  - Are you satisfied that you have received the necessary information?
  - Are there any further issues arising from the responses that you would like to raise?
  - For the actions that do not have responses – these actions will be rolled over to the next meeting and reported back to the Committee.

## Section B – Supporting Information

### 5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The Corporate Assessment, and the subsequent [follow up assessment](#) provide background information on the importance of good work programming. Specific reference is made to the need to align the Cabinet and Scrutiny work programmes to ensure the value of the Scrutiny Function is maximised.
- 5.2 The latest Cabinet work programme was approved by the Cabinet on a monthly basis for the next 12 months and includes the list of reports scheduled for consideration. Effective forward planning by both Cabinet and Scrutiny needs to be coordinated and integrated in relation to certain reports to ensure proper consultation takes place before a decision is taken.

### 6. Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- 6.1 Having proper work programming procedures in place ensures that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council’s delivery of services, contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and ensures that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.
- 6.2 This report relates to the Committee’s Work Programme, Actions from Committee’s and Information Reports that support the achievement of the Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the Law and Regulation Service Plan, Objectives, Actions and Measures and the Wellbeing objectives:

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

### 7 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

- 7.1 The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 which came into force in April 2016 sets the context for the move towards long term planning of services.
- 7.2 **General questions**
- How is this area / policy affected by the new legislation?
  - How will this decision / policy / proposal impact upon future generations? What is the long term impact?
  - What evidence is provided to demonstrate WFGA has been / is being considered?
  - Evidence from Community Profiles / other data?
  - Evidence of links to Wellbeing Assessment / Objectives / Plan?

### 7.3 Wellbeing Goals

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

### 7.4 Sustainable Development Principles

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

## 8 Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2017 - 2022](#)
- The Corporate Assessment and [follow up assessment](#).

Report Completed: 9 November 2022

**Appendix 1**

**Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships  
– Forward Work Programme Update**

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<b>Wednesday, 7 December 2022 at 5pm</b>		
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
<b>Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)</b>	Examine proposals for the next steps in the developments of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence regional team.	<b>Head of Children and Young People Services</b>  <b>Corporate Safeguarding Manager</b>
<b>Shared Resource Services (SRS) Update</b>	<b>Performance Scrutiny – Effectiveness of Partnership Arrangements</b>  The Committee received a performance update in December 2021 and requested an updated Action Plan to monitor progress in 12 months.	<b>SRS Chief Officer</b>  <b>Head of People and Business Change</b>  <b>Digital Services Manager</b>  <b>Digital Information Project Officer</b>

<b>Wednesday, 2 February 2022 at 5pm</b>		
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Potential Invitees</b>
<b>Education Achievement Services (EAS) Business Plan</b>	<b>Performance Scrutiny – of the EAS Partnership and its achievement of the objectives within the Business Plan and consider the impact of the plan for communities within Newport</b>  The Business plan is the regional strategic plan for accelerating educational outcomes during 2017-2018. It sets out the priorities, programmes and outcomes to be achieved by the Education Achievement Service on behalf of the South East Wales Consortium. The South East Wales Consortium is required to submit to the Welsh Government a three-year Business Plan that will be updated annually and the local authorities Scrutiny Committees are consulted as part of this process.	<b>EAS Representative</b>  <b>Chief Education Officer</b>  <b>Deputy Chief Education Officer</b>

**Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships  
– Forward Work Programme Update**

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<p><b>One Newport Wellbeing Plan 2022-23 Q2 Performance</b></p>	<p><b>Performance Monitoring of the delivery of the Wellbeing Plan by the PSB</b> Statutory obligation within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2014 for this item to be included on the work programme.</p>	<p><b>One of the Leads for each of the interventions which are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>The Newport Offer;</b></li> <li>- <b>Strong Resilient Communities;</b></li> <li>- <b>Right Skills;</b></li> <li>- <b>Green and Safe Spaces;</b></li> <li>- <b>Sustainable Travel.</b></li> </ul>
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**Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships**

**ACTION SHEET – 5 October 2022**

	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
1	<b>One Newport Well-being Plan Annual Report 2021-22</b>	The Committee made the recommendation that Community Safety should be considered as a work programme item for future scrutiny.	<b>Scrutiny Team</b>	<b>ACTIONED – Safer Newport Update added to the Forward Work Programme. Topic to be discussed at the meeting being held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023.</b>

**ACTION SHEET – 26 October 2022**

	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
1	<b>Gwent Regional Integration Fund</b>	The Committee considered the financial liabilities and implications of the new Regional Integration Fund and its tapered funding model.	<b>Scrutiny / Regional Partnership Board</b>	<b>ACTIONED – Comments from the Committee forwarded to officers on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022. The Committee wished to make comment to Welsh Government that now is not the time for the tapering funding model as the challenge at present climate is too great. The Committee requested that deadlines be pushed back for the tapered funding model until 2024.</b>

1	<b>Gwent Regional Integration Fund</b>	The Committee ask if the comments from the other partnership members where this has been presented could be shared.	<b>Scrutiny / Regional Partnership Board</b>	<b>ONGOING –Request forwarded to officers on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022. When comments are received, Scrutiny Adviser will forward to Committee.</b>
1	<b>Gwent Regional Integration Fund</b>	The Committee requested for a report on the work of the Regional Partnership Board will be brought back to the Committee.	<b>Scrutiny / Regional Partnership Board</b>	<b>ONGOING –Request forwarded to officers on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022. Scrutiny Adviser to liaise with RPB to organise a date to add report to Committee’s Forward Work Programme.</b>
1	<b>Gwent Regional Integration Fund</b>	The Committee ask if they could be provided with the figures of the amount of unpaid carers there are in Newport.	<b>Scrutiny / Regional Partnership Board</b>	<b>ONGOING –Request forwarded to officers on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022. When figures are received, Scrutiny Adviser will forward to Committee.</b>
1	<b>Gwent Regional Integration Fund</b>	Members asked if they were able to be advised of the outcome of tomorrow’s meeting with the Ministers	<b>Scrutiny / Regional Partnership Board</b>	<b>ONGOING –Request forwarded to officers on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022. When information is received, Scrutiny Adviser will forward to Committee.</b>