

Scrutiny Report



Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Part 1

Date: 5 February 2020

Subject **Education Achievement Service (EAS) Business Plan 2020-2021**

Author Scrutiny Adviser

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

Invitee:	Designation:
Ed Pryce	Assistant Director Policy and Strategy, Education Achievement Service (EAS)
Hayley Davies-Edwards	Principal Challenge Adviser, Education Achievement Service (EAS)
Sarah Morgan	Chief Education Officer
Andrew Powles	Deputy Chief Education Officer

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

- 1.1 Consider the contents of the Business Plan as part of the consultation process (**Appendix 1**);
- 1.2 Consider the main strengths and areas for development within Newport, as detailed in the LA Annex (**Appendix 2**);
- 1.3 Determine if it wishes to make any comments to the Cabinet to be considered together with the Draft EAS Business Plan 20-21.

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 The EAS is the school improvement service for the five Local Authorities in the consortium (Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen). The role of the EAS is to support, monitor and challenge schools with the purpose of raising education standards in South East Wales.
- 2.2 The Education Advisory Service (EAS) is required to submit an annual overarching regional Business Plan with accompanying annexes for each of the five Local Authorities (LAs). This Business Plan (2020-21) outlines the programme of work that is required to continue to accelerate outcomes for children and young people across all schools in South East Wales. The plan focuses on the urgent need to raise aspiration and accelerate improvement in pupil outcomes, improve the quality of teaching and leadership and build a self-improving system within and across schools and settings. The priorities for the Business Plan 2020-2021 have been derived from the progress that has been made towards the previous Business Plan and progress made across the region with the areas that have been identified as requiring improvements through self-evaluation processes and feedback from Estyn on the inspection of the EAS.

Previous Consideration of EAS Business Plan

- 2.2 Previously, the Education Advisory Service Business Plan for 2019-20 was reported to this Committee on 6 March 2019 and the Committee's comments were forwarded to the Cabinet when the EAS Business Plan was considered at its meeting on 13 March 2019.
- 2.3 **Partnership Committee Terms of Reference**
At the AGM meeting of Council held on 16 May 2017 a new Scrutiny Committee Structure was agreed including the Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships, the remit of which includes:

Holding partnerships to account for their performance.

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

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

The Committee should include questions on how the consortium is working together to create and implement its Business Plan 2020-21

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

- 3.1 The following information is attached for the Committees consideration:

Appendix A - Submission of Evidence to Scrutiny - Managing Director EAS;

Appendix 1 – Draft EAS Business Plan 2020-21;

Appendix 2 - Newport Local Authority Specific Annex 2020-21.

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

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

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

Suggested Lines of Enquiry

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

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

4.2 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

The Committee's consideration of the Draft EAS Business Plan should consider how the Partnership 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:
Long-term 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 delivery of the EAS Business Plan?
	How will changes in long term needs impact upon the EAS Business Plan in the future?
Prevention 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?
Integration 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 the delivery of the Business Plan impact upon the services of other public bodies and their objectives?

<p style="text-align: center;">Collaboration</p> <p>Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the organisation itself).</p>	Who will the Consortium work with to deliver the Business Plan ?
	How is the Consortium using knowledge / information / good practice of others to inform / influence the Business Plan?
<p style="text-align: center;">Involvement</p> <p>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.</p>	How has the Consortium sought the views of those who are impacted by the delivery of the Business Plan?
	How has the Consortium taken into account diverse communities in decision making?

4.3 Estyn Inspections

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

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

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

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

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

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

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

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

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

6. Background Papers

- [The Essentials – Well-being of Future Generation \(Wales\) Act](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2017-22](#)
- [Report and Minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships on 6 March 2019](#)
- [EAS Website](#)
- [Estyn's 2017 Inspection Report](#)
- Welsh Government action plan for Education in Wales: [Education in Wales: Our National Mission 2017 - 21](#)
- [Report to Annual Council 16 May 2017 upon New Scrutiny Committee Structure](#) (Item 10 of Report refers.)

Report Completed: 21 January 2020