



City and County of Swansea

Notes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Schools**

Committee Room 3A, Guildhall, Swansea

Wednesday, 18 October 2017 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor M Sykes (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
D W Helliwell
L J Tyler-Lloyd

Councillor(s)

M Durke
L R Jones

Councillor(s)

L S Gibbard
M A Langstone

Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas

Co-opted Member(s)

Co-opted Member(s)

Other Attendees

Officer(s)

Helen Morgan - Rees
Michelle Roberts
Brian Roles

Hub Head of Education Improvement
Scrutiny Officer
Head of Education Planning and Resources

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): B Hopkins and S M Jones

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

None

2 Notes and Conveners letter from Panel meeting on 21 Sep 2017

Notes were agreed with two clarifications made to both the notes and Conveners letter from the 21 September, namely

- *We were encouraged to hear about the memorandum of understanding that has been agreed with schools detailing the support that will be provided to enable children to return to school.* Clarification: There is not as such a memorandum of agreement in place but there is a clear memorandum of understanding around managed moves in Swansea.
- *The panel were pleased to hear about behaviour self-evaluation toolkit for schools that has been designed and that this will form part of the Challenge Advisors visit.* Clarification: The self-evaluation toolkit is in the process of being developed but not complete at this current time. It is hoped that it will be complete by the end of the Autumn Term 2017.

3 Education Improvement Service (EIS) Performance Update

The Hub Head of the Education Improvement Service (EIS) for Neath Port Talbot and Swansea, Helen Morgan-Rees attended the meeting and presented an update on the performance, priorities and capacity of the School Improvement Service in Swansea.

The following issues were raised discussed by the Panel:

- Consortia in Wales currently deliver school improvement services, Swansea are part of the ERW Consortia, which is an alliance of six local authorities including Neath Port Talbot, Powys, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Swansea. ERW has a business plan and this is aligned to the local priorities.
- The Business Plan contains school improvement actions, governance arrangements and corporate improvement actions. All priorities are linked to measureable outcomes in schools.
- There are ten objectives across the three Consortia operation plans for 2016/17. Success is rated in relation to improve outcomes (impact) and qualitative feedback (quality control). Of the ten objectives the panel focused on the following particularly:
 - *Improve outcomes in Foundations Phase*, where they heard that there has been a slight improvement in the Foundation Phase indicator. Further work is required to reduce the gap in performance of free school meals pupils.
 - *Improve outcomes in maths, numeracy, English and literacy*: improvements have been seen across all phases apart from key stage 4. Changes in the national qualifications have had an impact on the results across the Board at key stage for and a similar pattern has been shown across Wales. Further work includes support for English and Mathematics at secondary level.
 - *Improve provision for digital competence*: build on requirement of new Digital Competence Framework. Further work includes ensuring adequate staffing. The Panel wished to emphasise the importance of ensuring that schools have the staff trained and the facilities needed for pupils to become digital competent. Especially in light of the City Deal and what this will have to offer. The Panel felt that it was important that we are ahead of the game, using people who have the 'know how' like local business and the university to move this agenda forward quickly and effectively. The Panel will ask the Cabinet Member for more information on how schools and local authority are included others like the private sector and the university to in moving this particular aspect forward as quickly as possible to ensure our up and coming pupils are prepared for the opportunities the City Deal may offer.
 - *Monitor and evaluate schools effectively*: the panel were informed that it can be difficult to get an honest dialogue with a few schools. Further work required to stabilise staff to ensure consistency and explore new methods.
 - *Build leadership capacity in schools*: there is a good range of provision afforded to develop staff in schools currently. Must ensure that provision is in line with new National Academy for Leadership.

- The EIS has improved and developed by engaging fully with regional partners to provide a clear professional learning prospectus and menu of support to schools. The breadth of leadership support to schools has improved. The strategic opportunities for schools to work with others have increased.
- The progress in teaching and learning. The EIS supports improvement in Welsh, English, Mathematics, additional learning needs and digital competence. There is also well co-ordinated support for new teachers. Further support can be brokered via the ERW central Team. Good support for leaders in schools to improve key areas of teaching. The use of HWB is improving collaboration across schools. As a result teachers have better access to useful resources, networks and training materials.
- Consistency in teacher assessment has been facilitated by attendance and guidance from officers at cluster moderation events. School have been encouraged to develop electronic learner profiles and there has been continuation in Foundation Phase moderation. There is generally greater consistency and accuracy in teacher assessment. There is now greater emphasis on progress of individual pupils and it is likely that future performance measures will place greater emphasis on children rather than data.
- The barriers to further improvement identified as
 - Uncertainty and lack of clarity about the role of ERW in delivering a school improvement services. This may create unhelpful tensions and misconception for employees and services users
 - Unstable staffing levels can hamper continuity and progression in the service provided to schools
 - Publication of National Categorisation outcomes works against the trust and rapport required for schools and challenge advisors to work in a collaborative way
 - Pace of change for schools does not always provide time and space for self-improvement. The effect on the wellbeing of headteachers continues to be a concern.
 - Overuse of data may be an impediment to school and challenge advisors in knowing what individual pupils can and cannot do
 - Regionally agreed core visits to schools are perceived to be creating a workload issue for headteachers and this is at odds with reducing workload.
 - The simple act of monitoring a school is becoming less authentic as a result of electronic systems that cannot compete with real time.
 - School to school support and collaboration. Highly effective school on school support but can be impacted upon by external factors like for example Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).
- School improvement officer capacity, including challenge advisors, in Swansea Council is currently at the optimum level of 12 core funded full time employees. However not all support is delivered by challenge advisors and is brokered for example performance specialists.
- Professional development, the panel ask about the professional learning available to teachers and the consistencies in which this is taken up. There is a lot of interschool activity around professional learning and more cost effective ways of developing staff than sending of courses like mentoring, lesson challenge etc. There is a performance management process in place across school where training needs are monitoring and identified.

- Support and challenge for pupil referral unit and both special schools in Swansea is progressing well with a dedicated challenge advisor and performance specialist.
- There are four key priorities for the next year and they are:
 - Improve the quality of leadership and its impact on outcomes
 - Improve the quality of teaching and learning experiences
 - Reduce the impact of poverty on attainment
 - Deliver high quality and bespoke support, challenge and intervention to schools
- There is a correlation between optimum capacity of challenge advisors and the ERW school improvement risk register for Swansea. If the number of challenge advisors fall below optimum there is a heightened risk of schools falling into Estyn follow up categories because of weaker monitoring and evaluation of schools.

4 Quality in Education (QED) and 21st Century School Programme

The Head of Education Planning and Resources, Brian Roles, attended the meeting to discuss progress with the Quality in Education and 21st Century Schools Programme. The following issues were discussed:

- Band A progressing well and have completed projects at Newton, Glyncollen, Burlais, Gowerton and Pentre'r Graig primary schools and YGG Lonlas, with works at YG Gwyr and Pentrehafof under construction. The only outstanding is delivery of new build for Gorseinon Primary School due to the village green application. The total investment in Band A programme is £51,310,000 with 50% funded by Welsh Government.
- For Band B the grant for capital projects remains at 50%. The grant rate for Mutual Investment Model is 75%. Voluntary aided schools receive 85% from Welsh government and require 15% from the voluntary body.
- The priority investment schemes are identified through the following criteria: standards, risk, condition, specific suitability issues, landscape, basic need (where there is a clear shortfall in places), sufficiency (surplus places), viability, sustainability and deliverability.
- Major priority options are identified through extensive stakeholder engagement.
- The robustness of Swansea's programme has been repeatedly scrutinised by Welsh Government and is subject to their ultimate approval,
- The proposed submission to the Welsh Government reflects the natural development of the previously approved long term strategy but also reflects further consideration of changes in demands and priorities.
- The proposed key submission areas for Band B includes:
 - Transitional spending from Band A for Gorseinon Primary School
 - Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) facility
 - Delivering commitments within the Welsh Education Strategic Plan
 - English-medium Secondary provision
 - English-medium Primary Provision
 - Aided sector needs
 - Special Schools Review
 - Wider Area Transformation

- Welsh Government funding for Bank B will be £600m capital and £500m revenue for whole of Wales. The available funding is unlikely to support the anticipated scale of bids from local authorities. The revenue aspect will be provided by a Mutual Investment Model a form of public private partnership. The Mutual Investment Model unlike traditional forms of PPP includes long-term obligations to secure community benefits, create apprenticeships and training places for Welsh workers and for sustainable development, in which the private partner will be required to support the delivery of the Well-being and Future Generations Act.
- Swansea should hear about the outcome of the submission for Band B in late 2017.
- Looking to potentially identify four schemes for the Mutual Investment Model but this will be in the longer term.
- Potential risks and barriers to programme moving forward include4:
 - Getting full submission grant for Band B
 - Complexity of Mutual Investment Model
 - Meeting local contributions always a challenge
 - Officer capacity to deliver schemes
 - Construction industry capacity to deliver schemes
 - Voluntary aided body contribution

5 Workplan 2017/2018.

The next meeting of the Panel will be on the 16 November at 2pm and will take place in Olchfa School.

The meeting ended at 5.50 pm

Chair