



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning

### Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – 15 June 2023

# Performance against the Estyn recommendations following the 2022 Estyn inspection of Local Government Education Services

<b>Purpose:</b>	To brief the Panel on progress against the recommendations made following the 2022 Estyn Inspection of Swansea Local Government Education Services.
<b>Content:</b>	An overview of progress towards recommendations made by Estyn.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	Consider the information provided and give views.
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Cabinet Member for Education and Learning
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## 1. Background

1.1 Following the Estyn inspection of Local Government Education Services in June 2022, two recommendations were made. The first was to 'review post-16 provision to ensure that it meets the needs of all learners', and the second was to 'strengthen Welsh-medium provision across all ages and areas of the local authority'. Progress following the inspection to December 2022 was reported to the Education Scrutiny Performance Panel on 15 December 2022.

1.2 This report outlines progress to the end of the first half of the summer term 2023.

## 2. Progress against recommendation to 'review post-16 provision to ensure that it meets the needs of all learners'

2.1 A three-year post-16 strategy, outlined in the initial progress report, is now in operation for provision in Swansea. The key priorities within the strategies are

to deliver high quality provision, fair and supportive transition and to develop strong employability skills.

- 2.2 A memorandum of understanding for the successful transition of all school leavers in Swansea has been developed in draft for the 2023-2024 academic year for use between schools, post-16 providers of education and Careers Wales. The aim of the memorandum is to support the Young Person's Guarantee and Swansea's full curriculum offer by setting out the responsibilities of each organisation.
- 2.3 Meetings have taken place with all headteachers/senior leaders of 11-18 schools to discuss how learners now intending to stay in sixth form can access provision most suitable for them.
- 2.4 Sixth forms and colleges are working together on individual cases to combine timetables for learners where possible. It has been determined however, that a partnership model between schools and the College involving common timetables across Swansea is not feasible due to a range of challenges. Some sixth form schools across Swansea share resources and timetabling and some address shared delivery on a case-by-case basis. The next step will be to establish a cross-sixth form working group to further review opportunities for partnership working.
- 2.5 An extensive learner voice survey has been shared with sixth form learners to better understand their experiences of the provision on offer, the transition process, and their understanding of employability skills and pathways. There has been a high response rate and following the closure of the survey in June 2023 the results will be analysed in detail. Gower College have also agreed to participate in the survey, although this has not yet taken place. Further qualitative information from smaller focus groups in years 11, 12 and 13 have also taken place during May and June 2023 to complement the survey.
- 2.6 Opportunities for online/hybrid models of curriculum delivery at post-16 have been explored. Further planning and decision making will take place over the course of the next year, following analysis of the post-16 learner voice survey. Online/hybrid courses suitable to be delivered will be offered for a September 2024 start.
- 2.7 Joint professional learning activities have taken place with Gower College and schools during this academic year. This has included progression through the Curriculum for Wales and student mindset. Subject network meetings are planned for the next academic year in areas including Art, Health and Care, Careers and Work-Related Experiences and professional learning opportunities such as poverty support.
- 2.8 Transition funding has been allocated to schools with sixth forms to ensure collaboration between schools, further education institutions, education and work-based learning providers, local employers and businesses takes place and for all learners to have opportunities to visit local post-16 providers to understand the range of courses and training on offer. Regular meetings continue with Careers Wales to support this work.

- 2.9 For post-18 progression, the Seren Academy continues to deliver sessions and opportunities to sixth form and college students.
- 2.10 The Reaching Wider partnership, a partnership between several educational institutions in South West Wales that aims to inspire and raise aspirations for young people who typically would not consider progression from sixth form to college or university, continue to target groups of young people who live in the most deprived areas of Wales or are Looked After Children. Swansea University presented the work of the partnership to the post-16 forum in February.
- 2.11 In order to support the skills needs as part of the Swansea Bay City Deal, work is ongoing with University of Wales Trinity St David and Swansea University to support the Skills and Talent initiative in Health and Wellbeing. This will support post-16 provision and progression opportunities. The next step will be to undertake mapping of progression routes through a targeted area of Health and Wellbeing provision offered at pre-16, post-16 and beyond.

### **3. Progress against the recommendation to ‘strengthen Welsh-medium provision across all ages and areas of the local authority’**

- 3.1 Following approval by Cabinet for Swansea’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) in July 2022 that was subsequently approved by Welsh Government, a delivery plan has been developed and submitted to Welsh Government outlining key workstreams to be delivered within the first five years of the strategy. Progress of this plan is being closely monitored and the first annual progress report will be submitted to Welsh Government in July 2023. It has been agreed with Welsh Government to submit a revised delivery plan to reflect changes during the first year of the Plan.
- 3.2 Discussion of the key priorities regularly takes place with Partneriaeth Addysg Gymraeg Abertawe, PAGA (Swansea Welsh Education Partnership). Working groups have been established for marketing, transition, Early Years and staffing. Welsh-medium provision for ALN is included as part of a wider review that aims to ensure sufficient specialist provision across the County.
- 3.3 Since the adoption of the WESP, options have been explored for increasing the equity of offer for Welsh-medium childcare and primary school provision. This work continues with consideration of locations for additional Cylchoedd Meithrin and with WESP priorities feeding into the development of Swansea’s Strategic Outline Programme for submission as part of the Welsh Government’s Sustainable Communities for Learning rolling programme.
- 3.4 Before the development of the WESP, Swansea had moved to a peripatetic model of provision for latecomers for primary aged pupils. As part of our WESP, and with the support of Welsh Government grant funding, there was an opportunity to trial a centre for primary latecomers based at YGG Tan-y-lan. This pilot is continuing until the end of the 2022/2023 academic year. At that time, an evaluation will take place of the model of provision that works for Swansea going forward. In the secondary sector, the local authority is working

with both Welsh-medium secondary schools to research a latecomers' model that can be trialled in Swansea, again utilising Welsh Government grant funding. This work continues. A leaflet has been developed to provide information for families including how their children will be supported in their Welsh language journey and also how to help at home. The leaflet features a logo designed by a pupil in Ysgol Y Cwm.

- 3.5 Swansea schools' Siarter Iaith journey continues to move forward well, with a number of schools recently receiving bronze, silver and gold accreditations. The Siarter Iaith is a project introduced by the Welsh Government to allow all schools in Wales to promote the Welsh language, to develop a Welsh ethos and encourage pupils to improve their Welsh language skills. The Siarter provides a framework for schools to follow in order to achieve the awards. Most recently, Gowerton School have been awarded the Gold award – only the second secondary school in Wales to do so.
- 3.6 Additional information has been added to the Swansea Council website around the benefits of Welsh-medium education. Further enhancements to support the promotion of Welsh-medium provision have been identified and will be published on the website during the summer term.
- 3.7 As part of a review of Welsh-medium specialist provision, Welsh-medium clusters have been working together with the local authority to identify potential models for Welsh-medium specialist provision in the future. YGG Bryniago has begun capital enhancements including a changing area and refurbishment of other rooms.
- 3.8 Staffing through the medium of Welsh has been raised as a significant challenge in all key priority areas. This includes Early Years staff, teaching staff, support staff and staff with sufficient ALN expertise. The staffing working group are identifying opportunities for organisations to work in partnership to promote employment opportunities through the medium of Welsh at an early stage, when learners are making decisions about their future education and career paths.

#### **4. Legal implications**

- 4.1 There are no legal implications within this report.

#### **5. Finance Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications within this report.

#### **6. Equality & Engagement Implications**

- 6.1 The report is for information and not for decision.

**Appendices:** None