

CYNGOR GWYNEDD

REPORT TO A MEETING OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET

Date of Meeting:	2 January, 2018
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Gareth Thomas, Cabinet Member for Education
Contact Officer:	Iwan T. Jones, Corporate Director
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Title of Item:	Education Performance Report

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update you on what has been achieved in the field for which I, as Cabinet Member for Education, have responsibility. This will include outlining the latest with the pledges in the Strategic Plan; where the performance measures have reached; and the latest in terms of the savings and cuts schemes.
- 1.2. I wish to remind you that all the matters have already been discussed and scrutinised in meetings of the management teams, which also included representatives from the scrutiny committee.
- 1.3. On the whole, I am comfortable with the performance of the projects of the Council's Plan, however, I acknowledge that some elements of these projects have slipped. Some areas are receiving special attention by the Department in order to improve performance and these are the areas that I will keep an eye on over the coming months:
 - Raising Standards in the Foundation Phase (up to 7 years);
 - Ensuring that the principles of 'Education for Purpose for Gwynedd' are submitted to the Cabinet as soon as possible;
 - The Bangor Project - Working on the three preferred options for Bangor and submitting them to the Cabinet as soon as possible;
 - Bala Campus Project;
 - Re-profiling additional schools' savings.

2. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. The Cabinet is requested to approve re-profiling realising £263,000 of the "Additional Schools' Savings" scheme, which aimed to deliver £4.3m of savings during the period 2015/16 to 2018/19, by slipping £65,000 to be delivered in 2021/22 and £198,000 to be delivered in 2020/21.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 3.1. In order to ensure effective performance management and that we respond pro-actively to the need to achieve efficiency savings as expected.

4. STRATEGIC PLAN PROJECTS

4.1. P1 Improve and Reconcile Education Standards - Foundation Phase & Key Stage 4

4.1.1 The purpose of this project is to improve and reconcile education standards across Gwynedd in order to ensure that children and young people attain the highest standards so that they may gain qualifications and skills, by focusing on the Foundation Phase and KS4.

4.1.2 Again this year, the figures of the Summer 2017 results show that **86.6% of children achieved the foundation phase indicator, namely the tests for 7 year olds**. This figure is lower (74%) for children who receive free school meals. It is fair to say that these results are disappointing, especially in light of the regional and national results. It is believed that one or a combination of factors could have influenced the results, but there is no conclusive evidence to prove this at present.

4.1.3 I have already asked the Education Department to analyse the situation and scrutinise why we have not seen improvement with this measure. The Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee has also expressed concern about the results of the Foundation Phase, the Department has therefore commissioned GwE to investigate the situation.

4.1.4 As the results and performance of the Foundation Phase is a cross-regional issue, GwE has agreed to investigate the factors across the north. As the original brief has been extended to include the North Wales region, I have expressed my concern that this will have an impact on when we will receive the information about Gwynedd schools. I have emphasised that I wish to see a copy of GwE's report on the situation of the Foundation Phase in Gwynedd as soon as possible. I am also awaiting a clear work programme noting the short, medium and long-term intervention needed to tackle the situation.

4.1.5 I will elaborate on the results of Key Stage 4, namely GCSEs at 16 years old, in part five of the report - Measuring Performance.

4.1.6 Although this project does not focus on A Level results and on the post-16 situation in the County, I have emphasised that I am expecting the Department to submit a report to the Cabinet on the results, including vocational courses as soon as possible.

4.2. P2 Improving Leadership and Management

4.2.1 The purpose of this project is to improve the conditions for leadership in order to raise standards. We will implement proposals to improve leadership and management with the aim of moving towards the goal of having schools with non-contact headteachers, i.e. who do not teach children.

4.2.2 The work of scoping options and opportunities to strengthen leadership is currently under way, and ties in with the work of consulting with schools and governors on the principles of 'Education for Purpose for Gwynedd' which took

place some months ago. I intend to present the findings to the Cabinet in March 2018.

4.2.3 Consequently, this project has focused on promoting and taking advantage of the support and training programmes provided to headteachers and prospective headteachers. This training includes national (Welsh Government) and regional (GwE) leadership programmes. A number of the headteachers have participated in the training sessions, and eight prospective leaders are following CPCP courses this year.

4.2.4 I have expressed my wish to see a clear project plan and strong management arrangements for this project, so that we refine the project and address the challenge of strengthening and improving leadership in our schools.

4.3. Programme for a network of viable schools for the future

4.3.1 P3 Bangor Project

The purpose of this project is to review primary education in Bangor in order to ensure sustainable future provision while responding specifically to the increase in demand for places in the Penrhosgarnedd area.

Welsh Government has confirmed that they have set aside £6.3m to invest in the provision of education in the Bangor catchment area.

A number of meetings have been held with the headteachers, governors and councillors in the area, and meetings have been held with the Catchment Area Review Committee (CARC). The purpose of the CARC is to identify and discuss options by giving local input to agree on a preferred option which will respond to future education needs in the area.

The discussion has reached a situation where three options have been identified. The Department has invited observations on these options as part of a consultation in the area. The aim at present is to reach an agreement on one option soon, and I intend to submit this option to Cabinet in February.

The Department has noted slippages with this plan as the original intention was to submit the favoured option in December. This means that the implementation timetable is tight, however, I have received confirmation from the Department that this slippage will not have an impact on the earmarked financial investment. (Welsh Government & Private Sector funding).

I have also asked the Department to ensure that local members and members of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee are part of the discussions on these options. The report on the options will also be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee.

4.3.2 P4 Y Gader Catchment Area - Ysgol Bro Idris

The purpose of this project is to establish an All-through Catchment Area School for 3-16 year olds in the catchment area of Ysgol y Gader, Dolgellau.

Ysgol Bro Idris was officially opened on 7 September 2017 following £4.34 million of capital expenditure. I will be keeping an eye on this school's measure of success and will be receiving feedback on this regularly.

4.3.3 **P5 Ysgol Glancegin**

The purpose of this project is to secure an investment to provide a new building for Ysgol Glancegin, which is located in Maesgeirchen, Bangor.

The new building was opened for 240 pupils (including 30 nursery spaces) in Maesgeirchen in September 2017.

Recently, £60,000 of Flying Start funding has been approved to site an additional cabin for nursery age children in order to secure early years education on the estate.

However, I understand that there has been some delay in transporting some of these cabins from the Dolgellau site to Maesgeirchen. I have had a discussion with the Property Service to ensure swift resolution to this in order to ensure that this does not affect the children's education in the area.

4.3.4 **P6 Ysgol y Berwyn Catchment Area - Bala Learning Campus**

The purpose of this project is to create a 3-19 Welsh-medium Learning Campus on the current site of Ysgol y Berwyn.

This project is slipping as it was originally intended to open to Campus in September 2018. Following input from head teachers, Governors and the catchment area's local members, it was concluded that it would be more practical to open the campus in September 2019. This will allow adequate time to undertake the work associated with establishing the school as an entity.

On 24 October, the Cabinet approved to carry out a statutory consultation to close Ysgol y Berwyn, Ysgol Beuno Sant and Ysgol Bro Tegid on 31 August 2018, and establish a 3-19 Learning Campus on the existing Ysgol y Berwyn site to open on 1 September 2019. The consultation will come to an end on 10 January.

Despite the slippage, this will not have an impact on the construction timetable, and it is anticipated the new facilities will be available to local residents from September 2018. I am eager for the Department to establish clear arrangements for the school's community purpose, namely the Library and Leisure element.

The Department is also working closely with Ysgol Bro Tegid, Ysgol Beuno Sant and Ysgol y Berwyn and their governing bodies to establish a transition plan for the town's primary schools.

The timetable for the school is very tight and consequently, I will be keeping a close eye on this project over the next crucial months.

4.3.5 **P7 Transforming the Provision of Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion**

The purpose of this project is to transform the service for children with additional learning needs.

In accordance with the resolution, a Strategy for Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion will be implemented fully from September 2017, jointly with Anglesey.

The work of restructuring the service has now come to an end, and has affected 126 members of staff across the two authorities and ALN Joint Committee, which came to an end in August 2017. There are a number of empty assistant posts which will need to be appointed to the posts in the next few weeks. A huge challenge is facing the schools in terms of assistants with the relevant skills, and the situation is worse in some areas.

The Early Years field has been raised as an issue that needs specific attention because the earlier these conditions are identified, the sooner the provision and proper support can be given to the child. This is a matter to be discussed with the Children and Supporting Families Department and we are eager for this to be woven into the Family Support Strategy that the Department is currently working on.

4.3.6 **P9 Young People using the Welsh language socially**

The purpose of this project is to ensure a robust follow-up and to build upon the Language Charter's success that is operational in Gwynedd's primary schools.

A Secondary Sector Language Strategy was formed and adopted. Input to the Strategy was received by secondary learners of various linguistic backgrounds, including native Welsh speakers, fluent learners, and learners with a more basic proficiency. The purpose of the strategy is to set clear expectations and directions for the county's secondary schools on the techniques of changing language habits and the different ways of influencing on the pupils' social language within and outside the school.

Each school has drawn up a self-evaluation and an action plan in response to the Strategy, and these plans are going through the challenge process.

A #Conference was held for representatives of the School/Language Council at each secondary school in Gwynedd during the autumn. The purpose of the #Conference was to prepare young people to discuss the Welsh language and to identify activities that they would be eager to hold in order to promote the Welsh language amongst their peers.

5. **MEASURING PERFORMANCE**

5.1. **Performance Measures**

5.1.1 I attach a copy of the Department's measures in **Appendix 1**.

5.2. **Summer 2017 Results**

5.2.1 **Primary Sector:**

Foundation Phase (7 years old)

As I have already noted, under project P1, the results of the Foundation Phase are disappointing this year and show a decrease to 86.6% compared with 2016. This places Gwynedd in position 15 out of 22 authorities, which is a lower position than last year. I am awaiting a further report on the situation and what we can do to improve the results.

Key Stage 2 (up to 11 years old)

A very good performance was seen in Key Stage 2, with a significant increase of 2.3% on the 2016 results which resulted in Gwynedd being in first place in the North Wales region. The attainment results of children who receive free school meals (FSM) were 85.2% - the best result to date. The best performance to date was also seen across all subjects. An assessment guide was distributed to all schools in January 2017, and I feel that the response of schools and their use of this has had a positive impact on assessment and has improved consistency.

5.2.2 **Secondary Sector:**

Key Stage 3 (11-14 years old)

A strong performance was seen once again this year, with Gwynedd schools ranked at the top of the region's schools for the Core Subject Indicator, which is the expected level for Welsh or English, Mathematics and Science (92.8%).

Key Stage 4 (14-16 years old - GCSE)

The performance of Key Stage 4 and GCSE results was disappointing this year, as there was a drop. These results reflect the National drop.

The percentage of pupils who attained five GCSE *A-C grades, including Welsh, English and Mathematics was 58.3% in Gwynedd this year. Although this figure is lower than last year (65.9%) Gwynedd's performance continues to be in 1st position in the north Wales Region and 5th at a national level, the expected position.

The main reason for the drop is the changes to the examination process and syllabus for subjects such as Mathematics and English which has had a significant impact on GCSE results this year in Wales, especially in regards to *A-C grades. It is therefore difficult and unfair to compare this year's figures with the 2016 results.

Despite this, the percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals and who attained five GCSE *A-C grades, including Welsh, English and Mathematics was 45.4%, compared to 26.2% at a north Wales regional level. This again reflects the emphasis given to ensure that every young person in the county succeeds.

I am yet to receive the results of Looked After Children and I have pressed on the Department to ensure that I receive them before they are scrutinised at the Corporate Parent Panel.

A level:

The situation with A Level results is encouraging this year. The percentage who attained grades *A-E across all subjects (97.3%) was an increase compared to 2016 (96.2%). In addition, there was an established increase in the percentage that gained grades A or better (25.5%) one higher than the figure for Wales (25.0%) and it is encouraging that A*-E percentage was 100% across the majority of subjects and this reflects the advice and guidance provided to our young people.

5.2.3 **Attendance & Exclusions:**

Although these figures are management data in effect, I am eager to share them with you as there is a clear link between the attainment levels of children and young people and their school attendance.

The attendance percentage for Primary and Secondary Schools is exceptional, which places us amongst the highest in Wales. Despite this, I am aware that there are pockets of the County where attendance is challenging and I have asked the Department to target those schools.

I am also proud to note that there were no exclusions in our schools during the year.

5.2.4 **Categorisation Data and Inspections:**

I attach a copy of the categorisation data and inspections in Appendix 2. The main matter I want to raise with you is the latest situation in regards to Ysgol Rhosgadfan which was placed in special measure by Estyn in July 2017. The department has confirmed that great steps have been taken to improve the school, with an improvement in the management structure and governors. A discussion is required about the long-term leadership options for the school.

6. FINANCIAL/SAVINGS SITUATION

- 6.1. It is anticipated that £358,816 (86%) of the Education Department's savings for 2017/18 will be timely achieved, with £58,000 which remains of the scheme to raise a fee for childcare element within the Breakfast scheme, slipping to 2018/19. Following a delay in implementation. The Department has deferred this shortcoming until 2018/19, along with £38,681 of the "Ffordd Gwynedd - Payroll and Contracts Unit " which has slipped from 2016/17 following the expansion of the original aim.
- 6.2. Up to now, £3,738,010 has been realised from the 'School Efficiency Savings' scheme, which aims to realise £4.3m of savings in the period 2015/16 to 2018/19. The Cabinet has previously decided to bridge £298,990 from the scheme until 2019/20, where it is anticipated that the sum will be realised. Also, the delay from establishing the new school in Bala means that it will not be possible to realise the £65,000 saving until 2021/22. There will also be a delay in realising further savings of £198,000. In light of reduced grant funding from Welsh Government to schools in 2018/19, it would be difficult to reduce the quantum for schools this year in order to realise the savings.
- 6.3. Therefore, I'm asking the Cabinet to re-profile £65,000 of savings from Y Bala to 2021/22, and the remaining £198,000 to 2020/21 in order to give the Department time to develop their ideas and realised these savings
- 6.4. On the whole, I do not anticipate a problem in realising the remainder of the savings schemes for 2018/19.

7. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

7.1. Views of the Statutory Officers:

i. Monitoring Officer:

"No Comments from a propriety perspective"

ii. Head of Finance Department:

"I confirm that the observations noted in part 6 of the report are a true representation of the situation in terms of realising Education/Schools' savings.

Given the circumstances (Welsh Government to reduce specific school grants by 2018/19), I will re-profile £263,000 of the 2018/19 savings within the Council's Financial Strategy (£65,000 to be realised in 2021/22 and £198,000 to be realised in 2020/21); pending the Cabinet's approval of the recommendation made in part 2.1 of the report with regards to a part of the £4.3m school savings.

I also note that part 4.3 of the report refers to progress with some of the Council's main capital schemes, namely '21st Century Schools' which is up-to-date for the Gader Catchment Area, Berwyn Catchment Area, Ysgol Glancegin and schools in Bangor."

7.2. Views of the Local Member:

7.2.1 Not a local matter.

7.3. Results of Any Consultation:

7.3.1 None to note.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Education Department Measures

Appendix 2 School Inspections Data and Categorisation

Background Documents:

None.