

CYNGOR GWYNEDD

REPORT TO A MEETING OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET

Date of Meeting:	4 October, 2016
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Gareth Thomas Cabinet Member for Education
Contact Officer:	Iwan T. Jones, Corporate Director
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Title of Item:	Cabinet Member for 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 includes outlining the latest developments pertaining to promises made within the Strategic Plan; where we are with regard to measuring performance; the latest on the Department's savings and cuts programme.
- 1.2. We wish to remind you that all matters have already been the subject of discussions and have been scrutinised at meetings of the management team as well as the leadership team.
- 1.3. The conditional results of summer 2016 show that the performance in Gwynedd is generally good across all key stages, but there is room for improvement with the following:
 - **4.1.2 Primary Sector** – There is room to improve the performance of the Foundation Phase as it remained static for two years. I have requested that the Department scrutinise these figures over the coming months to see whether there are any obstacles.
 - **Secondary Sector** – A level results. 2016 figures show that 96.2% had gained A*- E grades at A level. This figure is -1.1% lower than the National figure and is the lowest figure in North Wales.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 2.1. In order to ensure effective performance management.

3. STRATEGIC PLAN PROJECTS

3.1. P1 Improve and Standardise Education Standards

- 3.1.1 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.
- 3.1.2 Since the last meeting, the project has confirmed the new model of supporting schools so that the system of school to school support can be strengthened and the outcomes of the key stages improved. It will be possible to see the effect of implementing the model in the categorisation of schools to be published in October.
- 3.1.3 A specification has been placed with GwE for 2016-17. One of the main priorities is to set up a monitoring and support programme for schools whilst implementing a support and challenge programme for primary and secondary schools within the different categories.

3.2. P2 Improving Leadership and Management

- 3.2.1 The purpose of this project is to improve the conditions for leaders in order to raise standards. We will implement proposals to improve leadership and management with the aim of moving toward the goal of having schools with non-contact headteachers, i.e. who do not teach children.
- 3.2.2 Gwynedd Council Cabinet has already supported the recommendation to consult with schools and governors on the core principles upon which the system of 'Education for Purpose for Gwynedd' will be founded. Since I last reported to you, the project has concentrated on designing a new leadership structure, and the concept of 'Ysgol Gwynedd'.
- 3.2.3 When following the method of 'Ysgol Gwynedd', it is necessary that changes be made to the regulatory and governing systems of schools.
- 3.2.4 Furthermore, the Education Department is in the process of setting up area offices that will promote this model of collaboration by streamlining and freeing up heads to lead effectively.

3.3. Programme for a Network of Viable Schools for the Future

3.3.1 P3 Ysgol Hafod Lon

The purpose of this project is to provide a new special school for pupils from Meirionnydd and Dwyfor following the decision to close the existing Ysgol Hafod Lon building.

The preparatory work of appointing and training staff and transferring pupils is ongoing so that the school can open at the beginning of November.

3.3.2 P4 Ysgol Bro Idris

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

The construction work is going ahead in accordance with the time frame laid out and discussions are still being held with the shadowing body of Ysgol Bro Idris to agree the staffing structure and arrangements for the new school. A Statutory Notice was issued on the proposal to close Ysgol Machreth on 14 June. No objections were received during the period of objection, and it was decided that the school would close on 31 August, 2016.

3.3.3 P5 Ysgol Glancegin

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

There is nothing further to report on the project since I last spoke to you, other than the construction work is taking place in accordance with the agreed timetable.

3.3.4 P6 Y Berwyn Catchment Area

Work to lay the new 3G synthetic surface on Maes Tegid is expected to be completed during the coming weeks. All pupils in the area will have access to this innovative resource which will allow sports to be played throughout the year, whatever the weather.

3.3.5 P7 Transforming the Provision of Additional Educational Needs and Inclusion

A report will be presented to the Gwynedd Council Cabinet on 13 September, 2016 and the Anglesey Working Group on 19 September, 2016 to seek approval:

- To adopt of one general Additional Educational Needs and Inclusion strategy for Gwynedd and Anglesey;
- To join in a formal partnership with the Isle of Anglesey County Council to implement the Strategy and adopt a new governance structure referred to in this report, which will replace existing Special Education Needs Joint-Committee;
- To delegate the right to the Head of Education Department, in consultation with the Head of Legal Department and Head of Finance Department, to agree and complete a Formal Agreement with the Isle of Anglesey County Council for the partnership;
- And, likewise, an Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding in the interim period in order that we may collaborate to arrive at this point.

On receipt of this recommendation the formal consultation process will begin with the affected workforce (end of September).

4. MEASURING PERFORMANCE

4.1. Conditional Summer Results 2016

4.1.1 I attach a copy of the conditional results of summer 2016 in **Appendix 1**.

4.1.2 The conditional results show that the performance in Gwynedd is generally good across all key stages. These are the main messages:

- **Primary Sector:** There is room to improve the performance of the **Foundation Phase** as it has remained static for two years. I have requested that the Department scrutinise these figures over the coming months and see whether there are any obstacles.
- The performance of **Key Stage 2** has improved with an increase of +0.3% on the 2015 figure. This performance places Gwynedd in 7th nationally.
- **Secondary Sector:** The **Key Stage 3** percentage has once again been successful this year (92%), with the performance surpassing the expected benchmark for Wales since 2012 and significantly higher than the national figure for the past five years. Gwynedd has yielded the best performance throughout the authorities in Wales for four years and there has been further improvement with the 2016 figure (+0.7%). The performance continues to place Gwynedd among the best authorities in Wales, placing it second in 2016.
- The authorities have also seen improvement in the **Key Stage 4** performance. In 2016, a substantial increase of +5.2% can be seen in the percentage of those crossing the Level 2+ threshold (the equivalent of five GCSEs grades A to C including Welsh or English and Mathematics). The performance suggests that Gwynedd could be placed second among all Welsh authorities.
- **A level:** 2016 figures show that **96.2% had gained A*-E grades at A Level**. This figure is -1.1% lower than the national figure and is the lowest figure in North Wales. The number of young people who have **gained A*-A stands at 20.2%**, placing Gwynedd top in North Wales. It appears that the main weakness this year has been the number of U grades - 32. Some of the weakest performing courses have since been removed from the curriculum and will not run from September 2016 onward. Other partner arrangements have been made for teaching these subjects. Additionally, a new Education Officer has been appointed who will be responsible for the post-16 field within the County, and GwE has agreed to collaborate to improve standards in the field. This will take place jointly with the Gwynedd and Môn Post-16 Education Consortium.

4.2. Attendance

4.2.1 Outstanding improvement was seen in the attendance percentages of our secondary schools. Gwynedd is the first authority to reach a greater than 95% attendance for secondary and special schools, with the secondary schools reporting an average of 95.16%. 95% places us in first position among Welsh authorities. Attendance figures for primary schools have not been published, so I will be reporting on those next time.

4.3. School Inspections Data

4.3.1 I attach a copy of schools inspections data as **Appendix 2**.

4.3.2 It is evident that the inspections profile of Estyn has been very good since October 2015, with only one school entering Estyn's statutory category. During the 2015-16 educational year, Estyn held inspections at 13 schools [12 primary and 1 secondary]. At eight schools [61.5%], no follow up action was deemed necessary; at three schools [23.1%] the least intensive follow up category was awarded [Authority Monitoring]. In the majority of these cases, the main reason for the follow up activity was to improve attendance. At two schools [15.4%] it was deemed that a further monitoring visit by Estyn was required. No schools were placed in any statutory categories.

4.3.3 I attach a copy of all Education Department measures as **Appendix 3**. As a number of the measures are reported annually, final figures are expected at the end of December 2016.

5. FINANCIAL/SAVINGS SITUATION

5.1. Since I last reported to you, some progress can be seen with regard to Ffordd Gwynedd - Wages and Contracts Unit in 2016-17, and substantial savings are foreseen with Additional Learning Needs plan in future. Complications in solving both plans have led to some slippage, but I'm confident that there is acceptable progress by now, with a clear work programme in place.

5.2. Work is ongoing to achieve the £4.3m of schools savings which was part of the financial strategy approved in February 2016.

6. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

6.1. None to note.

7. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

7.1. Views of the Statutory Officers:

i. The Chief Executive:

"It is good to see such good progress with so many of the Strategic Plan projects. It is also good to see the initial report on the conditional results of the summer exams. By the Cabinet meeting, this matter will have been scrutinised by the Services Scrutiny Committee to see whether the success of the Project to Improve and Standardise the Quality of Education can be seen. The final point to be made is the importance of realising the savings referred to in paragraph 5 of the report. As the report suggests, realising some of the more complex schemes can be difficult but we must remain focused on them in order to ensure they are realised."

ii. The Monitoring Officer:

"Nothing to add from a propriety perspective."

iii. The Head of Finance Department:

"Nothing to add from a financial propriety perspective."

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 Conditional Summer Results 2016

Appendix 2 School Inspections Data

Appendix 3 Education Department Measures

Background Documents:

None.