

# Public Document Pack

**Gareth Owens LL.B Barrister/Bargyfreithiwr**

Chief Officer (Governance)

Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



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To: Cllr Teresa Carberry (Chair)

Councillors: Bill Crease, Paul Cunningham, Gladys Healey, Dave Mackie, Gina Maddison, Ryan McKeown, Andrew Parkhurst, Carolyn Preece, David Richardson, Jason Shallcross and Arnold Woolley

**Co-opted Members:**

Lisa Allen, Lynn Bartlett and Wendy White

24 November 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

**NOTICE OF HYBRID MEETING**  
**EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY, 30TH NOVEMBER, 2023 at 2.00 PM**

Yours faithfully

Steven Goodrum  
Democratic Services Manager

Please note: Attendance at this meeting is either in person in the Lord Barry Jones Council Chamber, Flintshire County Council, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire or on a virtual basis.

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. The live streaming will stop when any confidential items are considered. A recording of the meeting will also be available, shortly after the meeting at <https://flintshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team on 01352 702345.

## A G E N D A

### 1 **APOLOGIES**

**Purpose:** To receive any apologies.

### 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

**Purpose:** To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

### 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 3 - 22)

**Purpose:** To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on the 14 September 2023 and 19 October 2023.

### 4 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING** (Pages 23 - 36)

Report of Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator

**Purpose:** To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.

### 5 **SUSTAINABLE LEARNING COMMUNITIES UPDATE** (Pages 37 - 46)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure

**Purpose:** To update Members on the progress made with the Welsh Government's sustainable learning communities programme.

***Please note that there may be a 10 minute adjournment of this meeting if it lasts longer than two hours***

## **EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** **14 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Minutes of the remote meeting of the Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held on Thursday 14 September 2023.

### **PRESENT: Councillor Teresa Carberry (Chair)**

Councillors: Bill Crease, Paul Cunningham, Gladys Healey, Dave Mackie, Gina Maddison, Ryan McKeown, Carolyn Preece, David Richardson, Jason Shallcross and Arnold Woolley

**CO-OPTEEs:** Lynne Bartlett and Wendy White

**SUBSTITUTE:** Councillor Hilary McGuill (for Councillor Andrew Parkhurst)

**APOLOGIES:** Leader of the Council,  
Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure,  
Senior Manager (School Improvement),  
Senior Manager (Youth Justice and Flintshire Sorted),  
Senior Manager (Integrated Youth Provision)

### **CONTRIBUTORS:**

Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure,  
Cabinet Member for Social Services and Wellbeing  
Chief Officer (Education & Youth)  
Strategic Finance Manager (for minute number 23)  
GwE Officers: Phil McTague (Secondary Core Lead) Bryn Jones and David Edwards  
(Primary Core Leads) (for minute number 24)  
Senior Manager (Inclusion and Progression) (for minute number 25)  
Senior Manager (Business Support Services) (for minute number 25)

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officers

## **20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

Councillor Hilary McGuill declared a personal interest as her daughter was a teacher in Flintshire.

## **21. MINUTES**

29 June, 2023

The minutes of the joint meeting with the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on the 29 June 2023 were presented for approval.

The Chair referred to the information requested by Councillor Hilary McGuill regarding the four children who were not in Education, Employment or Training and Councillor McGuill confirmed that the information had been circulated to Members via e-mail.

The minutes of the joint meeting were approved, as moved and seconded by Councillor Hilary McGuill and Councillor Carolyn Preece.

13 July, 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on the 13 July 2023 were presented for approval.

Councillor Hilary McGuill referred to the consultation undertaken by NEWydd on the new menu with pupils and asked if an update could be provided following half term to include feedback from the pupils who had sampled the menu. The Chief Officer (Education & Youth) suggested that a briefing note on how the menu was being received by pupils be included on the forward Work Programme for the 30 November meeting.

The minutes of the meeting were approved, as moved and seconded by Councillor Gladys Healey and Councillor Hilary McGuill.

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meetings held on 29 June and 13 July, 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**22. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING**

In presenting the report, the Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator outlined the items being presented to the forthcoming meetings which were attached at Appendix 1 and reported that an additional item on the consultation of Member Role Descriptions would be presented to the next meeting on 19 October 2023. She also reported that an all Members workshop on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) had been arranged for the beginning of October and that confirmation of the dates and times would be sent to Members in due course.

Referring to the Action Tracking report at Appendix 2, the Facilitator confirmed that the first meeting of the School Parking Task & Finish Group was scheduled for Tuesday 19 September to consider and agree the Terms of Reference for the Group. Once agreed this would be shared with both the Environment & Economy and Education Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committees. All other actions were completed.

The Chief Officer (Education & Youth) suggested that the following reports be added to the Forward Work Programme (FWP) for the 1 February 2024 meeting:-

- Overview of summer A level and GCSE results following verification in December 2023; and
- Revision of Post 16 Strategy – to outline how the new national commission was developing.

Councillor Hilary McGuill referred to the statement issued by Townlynx and the possible disruption to part of the school bus service. Whilst she recognised that they had since reassured members of the public that changes to the service were not being implemented, she sought reassurance from the Council on what risk assessments were carried out if something similar was to happen again. The Chief Officer explained that it was her colleagues in Streetscene and Transportation who delivered school transport and therefore this matter would come under the remit of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee. She advised that the Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) had this matter included on the risk register for the school bus service and paid tribute to colleagues within the service who had worked tremendously hard to find alternative transport solutions for 1100 children. She was pleased that the matter had been resolved and that the bus service continued to be running.

In relation to risk assessments, Councillor Dave Mackie referred to a water main burst in Ewloe which had resulted in the schools in the area running out of water. He was concerned that the water company had not contacted the Council or schools to provide guidance/information on this matter. In response, the Chief Officer agreed to feedback the comments made by Councillor Mackie to the Emergency Management Team. The Chief Executive explained that matters of this nature were considered through contingency planning and were dealt with locally through the Emergency Management Response Team. He suggested that information on the Emergency Management Response Team be provided to the Committee in order to better understand the process. The Chair suggested that this be provided at a County Council meeting in order for all Members to understand the process. The Chief Executive agreed to consider how this information would be shared with all Members.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved by Councillor Carolyn Preece and seconded by Councillor David Richardson.

It was agreed that the two reports suggested by the Chief Officer be included on the FWP and would be picked up as actions arising from the meeting, together with the circulation of information on the Emergency Management Response Team.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be noted;
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises; and
- (c) That the progress made in completing the outstanding actions be noted.

## **23. CHANGE IN ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chair announced that there would be a change to the order of business and that agenda item number 6 would be considered before agenda item number 5.

## **24. SCHOOL RESERVES YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2023**

The Chief Officer (Education & Youth) introduced the report and thanked the Strategic Finance Manager for the work undertaken in bringing the report together which would also be presented to the Governance and Audit Committee and School Budget Forum. The report had also been shared with all Head Teachers.

Prior to presenting the report, the Strategic Finance Manager referred to table 3 shown in the report and advised that a revised version had been circulated to the Committee ahead of the meeting. This report had been expanded to include the first six months of the current financial year to provide an outline of the current situation in schools and the Strategic Finance Manager highlighted the budget reduction of 3% on top of inflationary increases to schools in the current financial year. The first part of the report outlined the situation with regard to reserves with Table 1 highlighting the reserves as at the end of the financial year 2022/23 compared with 2021/22. Information was provided on the impacts on primary, secondary and specialist school budgets with a fall from £12.5m to £7m with the appendix highlighting the percentages on a school-by-school basis.

The Strategic Finance Manager referred to Table 2 which highlighted how the reserves had moved over the last five financial years. There were concerns with regard to the resilience of the secondary sector when managing unforeseen circumstances, such as long-term absence and the impacts that this would have on the level of reserves held. The report also provided an analysis for the primary sector with six primary schools in negative reserves at the end of last year, with three which were fairly minor, but the other three were significant.

The Strategic Finance Manager confirmed that all schools had submitted their 2023/24 budget plans which had highlighted an increase in requests for support from the Finance Team, HR colleagues and colleagues in School Improvement. There had been higher levels of voluntary redundancies, and this information was included at Table 5 of the report. The Annual Workforce Census which would be carried out in November would provide a better understanding of the current situation, but it was felt the situation with regard to redundancy was not over yet as schools were using their reserves to manage this year with risks in 2023/24 or 2024/25. Table 6 within the report provided an estimate of the positions across all schools and an overview of the forecast information compared with last year was given.

The Chair commented that challenging times remained with an overall reduction in school reserves and felt that the report clearly highlighted the position with schools. She thanked Head Teachers and governing bodies for their work in striving to reduce costs and completely understood their reasons for speaking to the Council and GwE for help and assistance.

In response to a question from Councillor Gladys Healey on the allocation of school budgets, the Strategic Finance Manager explained that schools funding for the financial year was formulated after the Council had set its budget in mid-February. With regarding to funding for pay awards it was explained that an estimate of the funding was set aside as the teacher pay award and the support staff pay awards were not known in April 2023. The Council had budgeted for the cost, but these had not been

allocated through the funding formula until confirmation had been received with schools incurring the costs. This had worked well previously as schools had received the amount of the pay awards and not an estimate. The Chief Officer confirmed that schools agreed with this understanding that the money would be released into their budgets when the awards were settled and finalised. Communication with Head Teachers and governing bodies continued until the pay awards were settled.

In response to a question on school reserves the Chief Officer clarified that no school should be in detriment. The Strategic Finance Manager commented that schools should not be using reserves to fund pay awards as the risk was held centrally. As soon as the September pay award was confirmed with the Council receiving the Teacher Pay and Conditions document, the Teachers' pay would go up and the funding would be transferred to schools to cover that amount.

The Chief Officer appreciated the challenging year that Head Teachers and Governing Bodies had experienced. The commitment had been given the same as last year that as the budget for 2024/25 progressed that open and effective communication would continue with Head Teachers to keep them updated of the discussions being held prior to obtaining the legal and balanced budget in February.

The recommendation, as outlined within the report, was moved by Councillor Arnold Woolley and seconded by Councillor Hilary McGill.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee note the level of school reserves as at the 31 March 2023, and overview of schools' current financial position.

**25. ANNUAL REPORT FROM REGIONAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICE, GwE**

The Chief Officer (Education & Youth) introduced the report which provided a detailed overview of the work of the Regional School Improvement Service with Flintshire schools during the academic year 2022 -2023.

The report identified that there was a strong relationship between Flintshire County Council and the Regional School Effectiveness Service (GwE). There were robust procedures in place for setting a direction and holding the regional service to account. The specific roles of the Local Authority and the regional school improvement service in school improvement were explicit and clear to all stakeholders and they were effectively held to account by local scrutiny procedures.

The Chief Officer invited Mr. Phil McTague, Mr. Bryn Jones and Mr. David Edwards from GwE to further present the report.

Mr. Phil McTague (Secondary Core Lead) in presenting the report, explained that the service had moved forward from the pandemic to redesigning the Curriculum. He provided details of the four key areas, in relation to secondary schools, as follows:-

Key Area 1 – Improving Leadership

Key Area 2 – Improving Teaching and Learning

Key Area 3 – Curriculum and Provision  
Key Area 4 – Learner Progress and Standards

Mr. McTague drew Members attention to Appendix 1 of the report which provided a concise summary of the four key areas for secondary schools. He commented that improving leadership in schools was essential to the growth of any school and outlined changes in headship and challenges being faced by secondary schools across Flintshire. Information was provided on the headship profile, and it was confirmed that regular meetings were held to improve the quality of leadership with robust self-evaluation systems which were internal, service led, Local Authority informed but were now nationally profiled through the School Improvement Framework.

An overview of data planning in secondary schools was provided with the majority of schools having clear self-evaluation processes in place especially with training provided on improvement planning. Information on the targeted support plans in place for performance management in secondary schools was provided. An outline of the lessons which had been observed in schools and sixth form was provided together with an overview of the areas for the development required for the coming year.

Mr. McTague referred to the Curriculum and explained that all senior leaders in secondary schools were working hard in consolidating the vision for the design of the Curriculum, recognising strengths and working with stakeholders. All Flintshire schools were involved in alliances with other schools and an outline of the benefits was given and would become a part of the improvement framework moving forward. There were areas to address such as to continue to work on the transition and consistent approaches from years 5 to 8, to continue to hold meetings with the alliances that had been established so good practice could be shared and that GwE and Flintshire continued to work alongside schools to development assessment approaches and processes to track pupils in line with Curriculum changes.

Referring to Learner progress and standards it was explained that in most schools' pupils listen, showed respect to teachers and each other. The vast majority of lessons were delivered in a productive, structured environment with an eagerness to contribute to class discussions. Pupils were able to offer meaningful and in-depth verbal responses with a wide vocabulary used.

Mr. Bryn Jones and Mr. David Edwards (Primary Core Leads) drew Members attention to Appendix 2 of the report which provided a concise summary of the four key areas for primary schools. With regard to the primary sector an overview of the improving leadership across Flintshire schools was given together with information on the National Leadership programmes. School leaders were supported through the 360 degree plans, the School Partnership Programme and collaboration with secondary schools within cluster meetings. It was explained that when self-evaluation was effectively taking place in a holistic manner this linked improvement planning which then linked to support to address identified areas.

Mr. Jones referred to the 12 pedagogical principles which were embedded across Flintshire primary schools and further information was provided on this. Referring to areas of improvements, an overview of the in-school variants was provided together with the links to leadership in developing Welsh across the authority.



Information was also given on the Curriculum provision provided within primary schools together with information on the work undertaken post covid in schools to drive standards for pupil wellbeing and independence to facilitate good progress in learning.

The Chair commented that having read the report she felt the education workforce at all levels remained interested in honing their skills and expertise by undertaking continual professional development (CPD). She was pleased that continual professional development was provided as it demonstrated that they were valued and were interested in their wellbeing, developing their skills and their careers. She was also mindful of the effective checks and balances which quickly picked up concerns at individual and whole school levels.

Councillor Paul Cunningham welcomed the report which he felt highlighted the work being undertaken and showed that school staff were keen to develop their education to enhance their work strengths and strategies. Councillor Carolyn Preece supported the comments made by Councillor Cunningham and congratulated the portfolio and the team but said that there was always room for improvement.

In response to a question from Councillor Gladys Healey on assessments and statement for additional learning need, the Chief Officer confirmed that teachers were constantly assessing pupils with regard to their knowledge and understanding of concepts and skills. For those children who were having difficulties and not progressing there were well established processes to ensure that appropriate provision was put in place.

The Senior Manager (Inclusion and Progression) reassured the Committee that the new Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal (Wales) Act (ALNET) legislation would reduce the timescales from 26 weeks. Under ALNET schools were able to undertake this process as soon as a child was potentially identified as having additional learning need. This could be a parent, health professional or someone at the school and the assessment would start from this point. Training had been provided in schools with regard to their roles within ALNET with the timescales changed to ensure that pupils were not waiting too long for an assessment and to have their needs met.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services and Wellbeing commented that schools considered the wellbeing of all children across the Curriculum and cared about the child and the family. She was glad to see that mention was made of the Quiet Place and PGD funding which was put to good use in all schools. Schools should be celebrated for the work that they had undertaken with pupils in schools around well-being and safeguarding.

In response to a question from Councillor Dave Mackie on training courses, the Chief Officer explained that there had been an appendix which had not been attached to the report which provided training statistics and suggested that this be circulated to the Committee following the meeting. She felt that this report and the Self Evaluation Report provided reassurance that there was a very high degree of professional engagement at all levels from staff.

In response to a question from Councillor Mackie on GCSE outcomes, the Chief Officer explained that for a number of years the Local Authority was not permitted to

report individual school performance and this data was for schools to use themselves to drive their own improvement journeys. The portfolio strove to drive improvements in schools, and it was agreed that an updated report be presented to the February meeting once this year's results had been verified. She was reassured by Head Teachers and GwE colleagues that the improvement in schools was reflected in their individual self-evaluation documents and priorities in their School Improvement Plans. All schools had School Improvement Plans and support plans from GwE, and this was a priority to continue to drive up the outcomes for learners in their qualifications.

In response to a question from Councillor Hilary McGuill around trauma counsellor support for refugee young people, the Chief Officer referred to the Local Authority's self-evaluation report which included pupil wellbeing, trauma informed practice and impact of adverse childhood experiences. The report outlined the support and training that staff had undertaken in schools to support pupils using trauma informed practices and this was referenced in the report.

The Senior Manager (Inclusion and Progression) confirmed that there was a lot of work being undertaken in schools around trauma informed practice. An awareness raising event had been held for senior local authority officers and school-based staff which had included the Chief Officer. Access was also being provided to the 11 day Trauma Informed Diploma. This was initially being targeted at the designated person for looked after children in schools but had been extended wider. This opportunity provide a detailed insight into trauma informed practice which would be targeted for children who were looked after. Schools were being encouraged to develop their awareness of trauma informed practice, and this was being driven by all senior officers across the portfolio to ensure that this also filtered across all of the services. She then referred to the Young Persons Counselling Service which worked closely with the refugees and emphasised the importance of clarity on the roles of the Council's services and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) practitioners as these were quite different roles. She outlined the different ways of working in the primary and secondary sectors and referred to the CAHMS in Reach service which operated under the Health Board and were allocated to all schools. This service was working on the mental health training programme for schools to ensure that staff received appropriate training to enable them to identify mental health needs and provide that level of support from a school perspective.

The recommendation, as outlined within the report, was moved by Councillor Paul Cunningham and seconded by Councillor Arnold Woolley.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee note the Annual Report 2022-2023 and the positive impact of the regional service in supporting Flintshire schools, maintaining the focus on effective and successful schools.

**26. SELF-EVALUATION REPORT EDUCATION SERVICES 2022-23**

In introducing the report, the Chief Officer (Education & Youth) explained that the report had been produced in line with the current Estyn Framework for the Inspection of Local Government Services which focused on outcomes, equality of education services,

leadership, and management. She confirmed that Estyn were coming to the end of the current inspection cycle, and they expect to have completed their inspections by the end of summer 2024.

The Chief Officer advised that Estyn were currently developing a new framework from Autumn 2024 onwards. It was explained that whilst the Authority was inspected in 2019 it was likely that the next inspection could be near the front of the new framework, with planning work ongoing for the commencement of the next cycle of inspections. The recommendations made by Estyn were highlighted within the report which also provided a detailed summary of work being undertaken in response to the recommendations.

Councillor Hilary McGuill sought clarification on the Condition Grades listed as A,B,C and D identified as part of the Suitability Survey. The Chief Officer explained that surveys were undertaken on the school estate on a cyclical bases, which included inspections on the suitability of the building to deliver appropriate educational provision. There was also a survey of the condition of school buildings against industry standards and this information was used to determine where essential maintenance or a radical school modernisation programme was required. She suggested that the Senior Manager School Place Planning provide a short briefing note to explain the differences in the condition grades to the Committee following the meeting.

The recommendation, as outlined within the report, was moved by Councillor Hilary McGuill and seconded by Councillor Carolyn Preece.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee note the outcome of the Education Portfolio's annual self-evaluation report on the quality of education services for the period 2022-2023.

**27. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE**

There were no members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.00 p.m. and ended at 4.14 pm)

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**Chair**

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**EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**19 OCTOBER 2023**

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held on Thursday 19 October 2023.

**PRESENT:**

Councillors: Paul Cunningham, Gladys Healey, Dave Mackie, Gina Maddison, Ryan McKeown, Andrew Parkhurst, David Richardson, Jason Shallcross and Arnold Woolley

**CO-OPTeES:** Lisa Allen, Lynne Bartlett and Wendy White

**SUBSTITUTIONS:**

Councillor Glyn Banks (for Councillor Bill Crease), Councillor Gillian Brockley (for Councillor Teresa Carberry) and Councillor Mel Buckley (for Councillor Carolyn Preece)

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Councillor David Coggins Cogan (attended as an observer)

**APOLOGIES:**

Chief Officer (Education & Youth)

**CONTRIBUTORS:**

Councillor Ian Roberts (Leader of the Council); Councillor Mared Eastwood (Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure); Councillor Paul Johnson (Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement) and Chief Executive

For minute number 31

Strategic Finance Manager and Strategic Finance Manager (Education)

For minute number 32

Senior Manager (School Improvement) and Senior Manager (Business Support Services)

For minute number 33

Senior Manager (Flintshire Youth Services) and Lead Officer (Play Development)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officers

**28. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING**

The Facilitator informed the Committee that in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, a Chair would need to be appointed for the meeting.

Councillor Davie Mackie nominated Councillor Paul Cunningham and this was seconded by Councillor Mel Buckley. On being put to the vote, Councillor Cunningham was appointed Chair for the meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Paul Cunningham be appointed as Chair for the meeting.

**29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

Councillor Dave Mackie referred to Agenda Item 5 and sought clarification on whether he should declare an interest as he was a member of two Town and Community Councils. The Facilitator advised Members that that provided this information had been included on their Code of Conduct Form then they did not need to declare an interest during the meeting.

**30. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING**

In presenting the report, the Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator outlined the items listed on the Forward Work Programme which was attached at Appendix 1. There were no proposed changes, but Members were referred to the additional items included for the 1 February 2024 meeting.

Referring to the Action Tracking report at Appendix 2 it was confirmed that a workshop was being arranged to look at the new menu which would be attended by the Chair and Vice Chair, with feedback provided to the Committee. With regard to the Self-Evaluation Report Education Services 2022-23 it was confirmed that Jennie Williams would be preparing a Briefing Note on the school condition grades which would be circulated to the Committee.

Councillor Dave Mackie referred to the training data appendix from the GwE Annual Report, which had been circulated to the Committee following the last meeting. He explained that the information that he had requested had been as follows:-

- What training was being offered to teachers in Flintshire;
- What training was being devised;
- What was the purpose of the training;
- How many people were expected to attend the training.

Councillor Mackie asked if the training data document could be refined to include the above information explaining that he would be happy to meet with officers to discuss this. The Facilitator agreed to pick this up with officers following the meeting.

Councillor Mackie also referred to Out of County Placements and reflected on a workshop held a number of years ago which had been helpful. He asked if this could be included on the FWP for Members to gain a better understand of what was involved and also maybe assist with possible solutions to the budget pressure. He also

suggested that a workshop be provided to Members on Out of County Placements following every County Council election.

The Facilitator advised that Out of County Placements fell under the terms of reference of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee. She agreed to pass on the request following the meeting and ask that the Committee be invited to any consideration on this matter. With regard to the request for a workshop she agreed to speak to the Democratic Services Manager to ask that it was included on the forward planning for future workshops for Members.

Councillor Gladys Healey spoke in support of the comments made by Councillor Mackie around Out of County Placement and referred to a proposal within her ward which would support young people and assist with reducing the budget overspend. She asked if an update could be provided on this. The Facilitator agreed to speak to officers in Social Services with regard to Councillor Healey's request for information.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved by Councillor Arnold Woolley and seconded by Councillor Dave Mackie.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be noted;
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises; and
- (c) That the progress made in completing the outstanding actions be noted.

**31. BUDGET 2024/25 – STAGE 2**

The Strategic Finance Manager introduced the report the purpose of which was to review and comment on the budget pressures and cost reductions under the remit of the Committee.

The Strategic Finance Manager and Strategic Finance Manager (Education) provided a presentation on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Budget Setting 2024/25 which covered the following points for the Education & Youth Portfolio:

- Purpose and Background
- The additional budget requirement for the Council
- Additional Budget Requirement – Ongoing Risks
- Overall Position after initial solutions
- Summary and Conclusions
- Summary Education and Youth Cost Pressures
- Education & Youth Budget Reductions
- The 2024/25 Budget Challenge – our approach
- Education and Youth Budget Reductions (1)
- Education and Youth Budget Reductions (2)
- Summary Education and Youth Budget Reductions

- Education and Youth Budget Reductions (3)
- School Cost Pressures
- Summary Schools Cost Pressures
- School Budget Reductions
- Education and Youth Portfolio and Schools Ongoing Risk
- Out of County
- Next Steps for the Budget Setting Process 2024/25
- Budget Process – Stage 2
- Budget Process – Stage 3 (Final)

Councillor Dave Mackie in referring to the presentation, recommended that the following items be included on the Committee's Forward Work Programme, which was seconded by Councillor Jason Shallcross:-

- Recruitment and Retention – A report on issues around recruitment and retention within the Education & Youth Portfolio; and
- Demographics – A report on demographics and how this would impact future budgets.

In response to a question on safeguarding by Councillor Mackie, the Senior Manager (School Improvement) commented that since the pandemic the level of complex cases in schools had increased. It was explained that schools had significant responsibilities when it came to Safeguarding and Child Protection with the portfolio providing additional support to schools with up-to-date advice and guidance. Safeguarding was complex and continually changing especially with regard to online safety. It was explained that because Safeguarding was prioritised that this placed increased pressure on the team and their capacity to support schools.

In response to the suggestion made by Councillor Mackie for the additional items around recruitment and retention and demographics, the Strategic Finance Manager (Education) advised that the issues around recruitment and retention was a wider issue affecting all portfolio's, therefore consideration would need to be given on how this could be taken forward. She also explained that there was evidence of changes in demographics and that these should be expected in the future. It was highlighted that the demography in the specialist provision was increasing in numbers and complexity. There were reductions in the numbers of pupils in primary schools and she explained how this year a larger year 6 group of pupils had been transitioning to secondary schools with smaller nursery and reception classes. This unfortunately would impact schools as the regulations required that 70% of school funding was based around pupil numbers, with funding following the pupils. It was difficult to predict forecasts around demography and any reductions in school budgets should also consider the demographic reductions in schools.

Responding to Councillor Andrew Parkhurst's question on staff increases, the Strategic Finance Manager confirmed that this would equate to an increase in staff in the School Improvement Team, which would be a recruitment of an additional part time post. There would also be an increase in the team of Health & Safety Monitoring Officers.



In response to Councillor Parkhurst's question on the changes in staff terms and conditions in Youth Services, the Senior Manager (Flintshire Youth Services) provided an overview of the work which was being undertaken with regard to maximising assets. Referring to the staffing element he clarified that staff had previously been paid against a JNC pay scale and it was proposed to move all staff across to the NJC pay scale. This would ensure that the service ran as efficiently as possible together with increasing the provision and presence on the street.

Councillor Andrew Parkhurst referred to the increase in demand and complexity of Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) and asked whether the reduction in the need for external placements could reduce the cost estimated for 2025/26. The Strategic Finance Manager explained that the budget pressure shown for 2025/26 was a gross position of increasing costs of staff and resources needed at Plas Derwen. She said that she would speak to Senior Manager Inclusion Services following the meeting around what information on estimates could be provided to the Committee.

Councillor Parkhurst also referred to recommendation 5 shown in the report and said that he had difficulty in providing areas of possible cost efficiency as Members had not been provided with a breakdown of the Education and Youth portfolio budget line by line. The Strategic Finance Manager referred to information provided to Members last year which provided a breakdown of portfolio budgets and said this could be circulated to the Committee if it felt it would be useful. Councillor Parkhurst welcomed the additional information being circulated following the meeting.

Councillor Glyn Banks referred to the Out of County figure of £500,000 included in the forecast and asked if this should be shown as a £1m projected overspend. In response the Strategic Finance Manager said it was showing as an £1m in year overspend currently in the Monitoring Report recently presented to Cabinet. There was some anticipated demand included in this figure as a contingency which would be monitored throughout the year with placements moving in and out of the service. This required constant review and it may need to be increased as things progressed throughout the year.

Councillor Arnold Woolley referred to demography and the reduction in the numbers coming into schools and asked if this was linked to the increased number of children who were now home schooled. In response, the Strategic Finance Manager did not think that this was related. The numbers were falling in primary schools but there was not an equivalent increase in the home-schooling figures. The Senior Manager (School Improvement) commented that this forecast related to a fall in birth rates which had been monitored for a number of years and was difficult to predict. She explained how the funding for key stage 4 and key stage 3 pupils was allocated.

The Leader of the Council advised that the Education & Youth Portfolio had been forecasting the expected decline in primary school numbers for a number of years. He referred to the pressures a few years ago when a large year 7 group was moving through schools. He did not feel that this was the same and even though there was quite a decline in the primary year groups that this was due to the natural population cycles. He understood how difficult this was for schools and governing bodies with the difficult decisions that had to be made. He reminded Members that the Education budget was the largest budget within the Council, with the schools delegated budgets

amounting to 80/90% which was delegated to financial decisions made by schools and governing bodies in Flintshire. He agreed that it was important that there was scrutiny of the remainder of the budget left within the Education Department. If parts of the Council's budget were ringfenced at this early stage it had implications on the cost reductions for other department such as Social Services or Streetscene.

Councillor Dave Mackie referred to the comments made by the Leader. He referred to the 3% cut to every school in their budgets last year and had spoken with finance officers about how this had been implemented. He understood that this would carry on every year as it was in the base budget. It was possible for a small number of schools to take the money out of their balances, but this did not apply to all schools, and he was aware of some schools which had insufficient balances in order to fund that cut in the budget. He said that this was a specific cut in the budget for every school whether there was a positive balance in funding or not.

The Leader responded to clarify that the way it was administered was through the Schools Delegated Budgets but the intention of it was that it was a hit on school balances. He appreciated not every school had balances and when the balances report was produced some schools managed their balances well with other schools having pressures that they had to deal with. The Council had to produce a balanced budget and unless additional resources were forthcoming then Council Tax increase was the only other place to raise funds. He referred to the Council's decision to keep Council Tax at 5% last year when inflation was at 10% and costs were increasing. This was a very concerning situation for everyone and the Council wished to provide the best services for Flintshire.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved by Councillor Arnold Woolley and seconded by Councillor Gladys Healey.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Education and Youth portfolio's cost pressures be noted;
- (b) That the Schools' budget cost pressures be noted;
- (c) That the Education and Youth portfolio's options to reduce budgets be noted;
- (d) That the options to reduce the delegated schools' budget be noted;
- (e) That a report on issues around recruitment and retention be included on the Committee's Forward Work Programme; and
- (f) That a report on Demographics and how this would impact future budgets be included on the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

**32. FLINTSHIRE COUNTY SUMMER PLAYScheme 2023**

The Senior Manager (Flintshire Youth Services) introduced a report to provide feedback on the Flintshire County Summer Playscheme 2023.

The Lead Officer (Play Development) provided a detailed update on the Summer Playscheme 2023, reporting that Flintshire offered a total of 56 safe site locations for playschemes, with the duration of these schemes spanning 3, 4, 5, or 6 weeks, depending on the specific requirements of the Town and Community Councils. In total 3,681 children registered county-wide for Playschemes, resulting in a total daily registration count of 11,907. 1,200 play sessions were delivered, or 8,000 hours of contact time. 69 staff were employed on short term contracts for the Summer where they received 5 days of training prior to delivery. In continuation with the commitment to fighting holiday hunger, 5,000 bottles of water and 3,000 snacks bars were provided.

This year's Summer Playschemes introduced Welsh language into play activities across all sites which aligned with Flintshire County Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. Additionally, at least one Welsh-speaking staff member was present at 10 sites which enabled a more extensive provision for Welsh-speaking children. Also, during the summer of 2023, 32 children and young individuals enrolled in the Buddy Scheme, granting them access to their local community Playscheme. The Buddy Scheme supported inclusivity, accessibility, and engagement for all children, regardless of their abilities. The funding for the Buddy Scheme was secured through the Families First grant.

The Lead Officer (Play Development) reported that the Playschemes were supported by 30 Town and Community Councils with a variety of schemes provided. As part of recommendation 3, outlined within the report, it was proposed to change this to either a 3- or 6-week scheme. This would assist with the management and staffing of the sites, and it was explained how having two 3 weekly sites could benefit a community. Currently it was difficult to grow the service and he referred to the recommendation that Town and Community Councils consider the possibility to commit in principle to a 3-year funding cycle which would enable long term objectives and provision in communities to be considered.

The Lead Officer (Play Development) also reported that the Flintshire Play Development was planning an innovative and sustainable future to the delivery and commitment to children in Flintshire. Using the successful summer holiday provision as a blueprint, the aim was to provide holiday provisions during all school holidays. The benefits of this commitment were outlined within the report.

Councillor Ryan McKeown asked how many children who attended the summer playschemes in 2023 received free school meals, how this compared to previous years and was there comparable data on children receiving school meals across Flintshire. He referred to the 25 schemes which ran 4- or 5-week schemes across the summer of 2023 and asked whether officers envisaged these schemes increasing to 6 weeks or reducing to 3, as proposed in recommendation 3. He also asked when contact would be made with Town and Community Council's around proposed changes for the Summer Playscheme 2024.

The Lead Officer (Play Development) clarified that the service did not hold information on children attending the scheme who were eligible for free school meals but information they did hold could be shared with the relevant officers for an analysis to be made. With regard to the 25 lead sites, he said the increase to a 6-week provision

would not have a significant financial impact. He also confirmed that letters to Town and Community Councils were currently being drafted.

Councillor McKeown clarified that the information on the number of children eligible for free school meals attending the playscheme would be helpful and he felt this could be considered as part of the work of the School Meal Working Group. The Senior Manager (Flintshire Youth Services) said that this was something that they would support and that the service had been involved with the delivery of the fun food and fitness and tackling holiday hunger programmes. He outlined the complexities in delivering food to sites which were run for a small number of hours a day, but he said the service would support involvement from a play and youth prospective.

Councillor Dave Mackie referred to the Leeswood Transition Club, details of which had been provided at Appendix 6 of the report and suggested that the Committee receive a fuller report on the success of the scheme at a future meeting. The Lead Officer (Play Development) confirmed that he would be happy to provide a further report to the Committee.

Councillor Mackie asked if consideration was given to the different populations within each of the Town and Community Councils, with the smallest having 278 properties and half of the Town and Community Council's holding budgets of less than £50,000 per year. He felt that it could be difficult for some to provide additional funding to move towards an increased 6-week scheme and an all-year school holiday scheme. In response, the Lead Officer (Play Development) understood the financial challenges faced and said that work was being undertaken collectively to assess whether additional funding streams were available. He clarified that those Town and Community Councils who funded 4 weeks schemes could drop to 3 weeks providing a financial saving but if a Town or Community Council was funding two 4-week sites then these could continue as a 6-week one with the community benefitting from a whole summer provision rather than a shorter scheme at the beginning of the summer holidays.

Councillor Andrew Parkhurst raised concern around the glitches with the IT system which had not allowed parents to enrol their children a few days before the schemes were due to start and that the advertising literature hadn't been available until a few days before which meant that some parents were unaware the provision was running. In response, the Lead Officer (Play Development) confirmed that they had been made aware of the IT glitches and that they had been resolved in a timely manner. He agreed that advertising literature had been late and confirmed that work was being undertaken now in readiness for the promotional campaign next year to ensure that this did not happen again.

Councillor Glyn Banks referred to the 5,000 bottles of water provided and suggested that re-usable bottles be provided on the first day of the scheme which children could re-fill themselves and bring with them to the remaining days of the scheme. He said that this would assist with the reduction in use of plastic and also provide a financial benefit which could be used for prizes/certificates to children in promoting recycling. The Lead Officer (Play Development) supported this suggestion from Councillor Banks.

Councillor Banks also provided information on the two schemes supported within his ward which covered a high number of villages. He referred to the proposal for Town and Community Councils to commit to a three-year funding cycle and asked if certainty could be provided that there would be no financial increase during the three-year period. In response, the Lead Officer (Play Development) reported that discussions would be held with Town and Community Councils, and he reported on the work being undertaken with regard to next year's sites. Referring to the three-year funding he said the predicted costs would be provided with the intention of not shifting from this unless there was a significant change. For those Town or Community Councils who provided their own schemes he fully supported this and reported that training was offered to their staff at no cost to ensure that all play provision in Flintshire was being carried out in the same way.

Councillor Banks sought clarification on recommendation 1, as outlined in the report and the Leader of the Council confirmed that the Committee was being asked to support the proposal to speak to Town and Community Councils on a three-year funding cycle. The Facilitator suggested that, following the comments from Councillor Banks, recommendation 1 be amended to "that the Committee support Youth Services in liaising with Town and Community Councils around a three-year in principle funding cycle for community play provision.;"

The Chair thanked officers for the report and was pleased to see the information on the number of sites provided, children participating and that the buddy scheme was still in operation. He was also pleased to see that this was supported by the 3 Ukrainian and 10 Welsh speaking team members and that the Welsh language was being promoted.

The first recommendation, as amended, and remaining recommendations, as outlined in the report, were moved by Councillor Glyn Banks and seconded by Councillor Dave Mackie.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Committee support Youth Services in liaising with Town and Community Councils around a three-year in principle funding cycle for community play provision;
- (b) That the Committee endorse Youth Services to work with a range of partners, such as Adult Community Learning to offer an extensive training package for all Play Development team members to ensure quality Play Work delivery was of the highest standard;
- (c) That the Committee endorse Youth Services to liaise with Town and Community Councils to opt for either three or six-week sites only, to allow for ease of recruitment, planning, business continuity and efficient use of resources;
- (d) That the Committee endorse the 'Transition Programme' by Flintshire Play Development and Youth Services, in order to effectively prepare children for the next stage of their lives through play-based coping strategies, which had been shown successful in the past academic year; and

- (e) That the Committee commit to supporting the Play Sufficiency Action Plan through advocacy, attending meetings, and attending local events which would help develop the PSA Action Group, champion inclusivity, attract additional external funding, increase community engagement and help create stronger networks which would have a positive impact on children’s health and wellbeing.

**33. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE**

There were no members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 4.04 pm)

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**Chair**



## EDUCATION YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> November, 2023
<b>Report Subject</b>	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking
<b>Report Author</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work programme of the Committee of which they are Members. By reviewing and prioritising the Forward Work Programme Members are able to ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

The Committee is asked to consider, and amend where necessary, the Forward Work Programme for the Education Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The report also shows actions arising from previous meetings of the Education Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the progress made in completing them. Any outstanding actions will be continued to be reported to the Committee as shown in Appendix 2.

### RECOMMENDATION

1	That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme and approve/amend as necessary.
2	That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.
3	That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions.

## **REPORT DETAILS**

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING</b>
1.01	Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Improvement Plan.
1.02	<p>In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?</li><li>2. Is it an area of major change or risk?</li><li>3. Are there issues of concern in performance?</li><li>4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?</li><li>5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?</li><li>6. Is the issue of Public or Member concern?</li></ol>
1.03	In previous meetings, requests for information, reports or actions have been made. These have been summarised as action points. Following a meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee in July 2018, it was recognised that there was a need to formalise such reporting back to Overview & Scrutiny Committees, as 'Matters Arising' was not an item which can feature on an agenda.
1.04	It was suggested that the 'Action tracking' approach be trialled for the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Following a successful trial, it was agreed to extend the approach to all Overview & Scrutiny Committees.
1.05	The Action Tracking details including an update on progress is attached at Appendix 2.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	None as a result of this report.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	In some cases, action owners have been contacted to provide an update on their actions.



<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	None as a result of this report.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Forward Work Programme  Appendix 2 – Action Tracking for the Education Youth & Culture OSC.

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	Minutes of previous meetings of the Committee as identified in Appendix 2.  <b>Contact Officer:</b> Ceri Shotton Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702305 <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk">ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk</a>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<b>Improvement Plan:</b> the document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council. It is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to set Improvement Objectives and publish an Improvement Plan.

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**CURRENT FWP**

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible / Contact Officer
<p><b>Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2024</b>  2.00pm</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 27</p>	<p><b>GCSE and A-Level Results</b></p>	<p>To provide the Committee with the GCSE and A-Level results across Flintshire from the summer 2023.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education &amp; Youth)</p>
	<p><b>Revision of Post 16 Strategy</b></p>	<p>To outline how the new national commission was developing.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education &amp; Youth)</p>
	<p><b>Feedback from Youth Justice Service Peer review</b></p>	<p>To Provide Members with an overview of the outcomes from the recent peer review.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education &amp; Youth), and Senior Manager Youth Justice Service</p>
	<p><b>Council Plan 2023-24 Mid-Year Performance Reporting</b></p>	<p>To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education &amp; Youth)</p>
<p><b>Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2024</b>  2.00pm</p>	<p><b>Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan</b></p>	<p>To update on how the Council is meeting the requirements of the Welsh Government Anti-racist Wales Action Plan in line with the development of the new Curriculum for Wales.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Senior Manager for School Improvement</p>
<p><b>Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2024</b></p>	<p><b>Attendance and Exclusions</b></p>	<p>To provide Members with an overview of school attendance and exclusions and the role of the</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education &amp; Youth), and Senior Manager Inclusion Services</p>

<p><b>2.00pm</b></p>		<p>Portfolio’s support services in this area. The Home-Schooling Officer to also be invited to the meeting to outline the work and support being provided.</p>		
<p><b>Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2024</b></p> <p><b>Joint meeting with S&amp;HC OSC - 2.00pm</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Page 28</b></p>	<p><b>Safeguarding in Education including Internet Safety and Social Media</b></p>	<p>To provide an update on the discharge of statutory safeguarding duties in schools and the Education portfolio. To include information on Relationship and Sexual Education and how this was contributing to reducing harm.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education &amp; Youth) and Healthy Schools Practitioner</p>
	<p><b>Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018</b></p>	<p>To outline the approach to the identification and commissioning of post 16 education for Flintshire young people.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Senior Manager – Inclusion &amp; Progression</p>
	<p><b>Children Looked After in Flintshire</b></p>	<p>To provide an update on the provision for Looked After Children. And to provide an update on the challenges, positive working and how young people were supported through the pilot to provide funding directly to looked after children leaving care.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Senior Manager – Inclusion &amp; Progression</p>
	<p><b>Social Media and Internet Safety</b></p>	<p>To provide Members with an update on the Portfolio’s Social Media and Internet Safety policy and provision.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Learning Adviser - Health, Well-being and Safeguarding</p>

<p><b>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2024</b></p> <p><b>2.0pm</b></p>	<p><b>Council Plan 2023-24 Year-End Performance</b></p>	<p>To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education &amp; Youth)</p>
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**INFORMATION REPORTS/BRIEFING PAPERS TO BE CIRCULATED TO THE COMMITTEE**

Item	Purpose of information report	Month
Health & Safety in Schools	Information report on accidents during the academic year and the actions taken to support schools in achieving healthy and safe environment.	December
Parking Outside Schools	To provide information from the Highways Team on legislation around parking outside schools and the mechanism in place for joint working with the Police and Schools.	-
Policies for dealing with bullying in Schools	To provide information on School Policies for dealing with instances of bullying.	-

**Items to be scheduled**

- Recycling School Uniforms – **Referred to the Committee from the Environment & Economy OSC.**
- Tackling the Impact of Inequality on Education Outcomes – to include information on work being undertaken linking with colleagues across North Wales and the regional skills board partnership to better understand the labour market, job opportunities and career aspirations – **suggested at May and July 2023 meeting.**
- Tackling the Impact of Inequality on Education Outcomes – specific report around the ‘Ask Ceri’ resource and what impact this was having following its re-launch – **suggested at May 2023 meeting.**

- Healthy Schools Scheme and Healthy & Sustainable Pre-School Scheme (HSPSS) – That the Committee be advised / consulted on the aims & objectives when the scheme is relaunched – **suggested at July 2023 meeting**
- Consultation on Member Role Descriptions - To consult Members on the draft role descriptions as provided in the revised draft Model Constitution – **moved from October, 2023 to be allocated to a new meeting date**
- Leeswood Transition Club – To receive a fuller report on the success of the scheme – **suggested at October meeting**

**REGULAR ITEMS**

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
February/ March	<b>School Modernisation</b>	To update Members on the progress made with School Modernisation.	Senior Manager School Planning & Provision
May	<b>Attendance &amp; Exclusions</b>	To provide Members with an overview of school attendance and exclusions and the role of the Portfolio’s support services in this area.	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
September	<b>Self-evaluation on education services &amp; learner outcomes</b>	To update Members on overall service performance including Learner Outcomes.	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
June	<b>Additional Learning Needs</b>	To update members on the implementation of national ALN reforms in schools and the role of the Portfolio’s support services in this area.	Senior Manager – Inclusion & Progression
September	<b>Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (GwE)</b>	To receive an update on progress with the development of the regional school effectiveness and improvement service, to include a presentation from the Chief Officer of GwE.	Chief Officer (Education & Youth) & GwE Senior Officers
September	<b>School Balances</b>	To provide the Committee with details of the closing balances held by Flintshire schools at the end of the financial year.	Finance Manager

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<b>Month</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>	<b>Responsible / Contact Officer</b>
<b>Annually</b>	<b>Learning from the School Performance Monitoring Group (SPMG)</b>	To receive the annual report on progress and learning from the SPMG.	Senior Manager – School Improvement;
<b>Annually</b>	<b>Social Media &amp; Internet Safety - now part of Safeguarding Report to the Joint Scrutiny Committee</b>	To receive an annual report assurance/monitoring.	Healthy Schools Practitioner

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**ACTION TRACKING FOR THE EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Meeting Date	Agenda item	Action Required	Action Officer(s)	Action taken	Timescale
14.09.2023	7. Self-Evaluation Report Education Services 2022-23	Cllr Hilary McGuill sought clarification on the Condition Grades listed as A,B,C and D identified as part of the Suitability Survey. Claire Homard suggested that Jennie Williams provide a short briefing note to explain the differences in the condition grades following the meeting.	Claire Homard / Jennie Williams	Information circulated to Members of the Committee via e-mail.	Completed
19.10.2023	3. Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking	<p>Cllr Dave Mackie referred to the training data appendix from the GwE Annual Report, circulated to the Committee following the last meeting. He explained that the information requested had been as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What training was being offered to teachers in Flintshire;</li> <li>• What training is being devised;</li> <li>• What was the purpose of the training;</li> <li>• How many people are expected to attend the training.</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Mackie asked if the training data document could be refined to include the above information and said that he would be happy to meet with officers to discuss this following the meeting.</p>	Vicky Barlow / Ceri Shotton	Information circulated to Members of the Committee via e-mail.	Completed

		Ceri Shotton agreed to pick this up with officers following the meeting.			
19.10.2023	3. Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking	<p>Cllr Dave Mackie referred to the ongoing risk and projected overspend in the current financial year for Out of County Placements, as shown in the budget report later on in the Agenda. He referred to a workshop held a number of years ago which he said had been helpful to inform Members what was involved in Out of County Placements. He asked if this issue could be put on the FWP for Members to better understand what was involved and also maybe assist with possible solutions to the budget pressure. He also suggested that information be provided to Members on Out of County Placements following every County Council election. Ceri Shotton advised that Out of County Placements fell under the terms of reference of the Social &amp; Health Care OSC and that she would pass on the request following the meeting and also ask that the Committee be invited to any consideration on this matter.</p>	Ceri Shotton	<p>Item added on Social &amp; Health Care OSC FWP for the meeting scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024.</p> <p>E-mail also sent to the Democratic Service Manager to request that a workshop on Out of County Placements be included in the future workshop timetable following County Council elections.</p>	Completed.
19.10.2023	4. Budget 2024/25 – Stage 2	As shown in recommendation (e) that a report on issues around recruitment and retention be added to the FWP. It was explained that this was a wider issue affecting all portfolio's, therefore	Ceri Shotton	Discussion ongoing on how this information is to be presented to Members.	On-going

		consideration would need to be given on how this could be taken forward.			
19.10.2023	4. Budget 2024/25 – Stage 2	As shown in recommendation (f) that a report on demographics and how this would impact future budgets be added to the FWP.	Ceri Shotton	Added to FWP as 'items to be scheduled'.	Completed.
19.10.2023	4. Budget 2024/25 – Stage 2	Cllr Andrew Parkhurst referred to the increase in demand and complexity of Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) and asked whether the reduction in the need for external placements could reduce the cost estimated for 2025/26. Liz Thomas explained that the budget pressure shown for 2025/26 was a gross position of increasing costs of staff and resources needed at Plas Derwen. She said that she would speak to Jeanette Rock following the meeting around what information on estimates could be provided to the Committee following the meeting.	Liz Thomas / Jeanette Rock		
19.10.2023	4. Budget 2024/25 – Stage 2	Cllr Parkhurst also referred to recommendation 5 within the report and said that he had difficulty in providing areas of possible cost efficiency as Members had not been provided with a breakdown of the Education and Youth portfolio budget line by line. Liz Thomas referred to information provided to Members last	Liz Thomas	Information circulated to Committee Members via e-mail.	Completed.

		year which provided a breakdown of portfolio budgets and said this could be circulated to the Committee if it felt it would be useful. Cllr Parkhurst welcomed the additional information being circulated following the meeting.			
19.10.2023	5. Flintshire County Summer Playscheme 2023	Councillor Dave Mackie referred to the Leeswood Transition Club, details of which had been provided at Appendix 6 of the report and suggested that the Committee receive a fuller report on the success of the scheme at a future meeting. The Lead Officer (Play Development) confirmed that he would be happy to provide a further report to the Committee.	Matt Hayes / Ceri Shotton	Added to FWP as 'items to be scheduled'.	Completed.



## EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
<b>Report Subject</b>	Sustainable Communities for Learning Update
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The School Modernisation Team have made significant progress in the School Modernisation Programme since the last report to Education, Youth and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee (February 2022), despite the ongoing challenges due to various global issues which have been impacting prices in the construction market. In the main, the Programme has been maintained and delivered within anticipated timelines.

The report informs the Education, Youth and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee of progress of the School Modernisation Programme across a wide number of projects.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Education, Youth and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of the report and progress of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.
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## **REPORT DETAILS**

1.00	<b>BACKGROUND AND CONSIDERATIONS</b>
1.01	<p><b><u>Childcare programme</u></b></p> <p>As reported previously, the Welsh Government made capital grants available to councils for the purposes of childcare provision between 2019-2022. The primary purpose of the capital programme is to facilitate and support the co-location of the Foundation Phase and Childcare provision wherever possible. Cabinet approved the following projects for a first wave of investment into childcare facilities and progress is as follows: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Westwood CP School, Buckley – Completed</li> <li>• Ysgol Derwen, Kinnerton - Completed</li> <li>• Ysgol Maes Y Felin, Holywell – Completed</li> <li>• Ysgol Sychdyn – Completed</li> <li>• Ysgol Merllyn, Bagillt – Completed</li> <li>• Aston Family Centre (WG, Flying Start Grant) – Completed</li> <li>• Ysgol Bro Carmel, Carmel - Completed</li> <li>• Ysgol Yr Esgob, Caerwys. – Completed</li> <li>• Ysgol Y Llan, Whitford - Site works commenced October 2023, anticipated to complete by March 2024</li> <li>• Ysgol Glan Aber, Bagillt. – Project not progressed due to significant planning challenges which could not be overcome</li> </ul>
1.02	<p><b><u>Childcare programme</u></b></p> <p>Cabinet and Welsh Government have also already approved £1.2m as part of a second wave of Childcare Grant investment to include a new Welsh medium childcare facility for the Ysgol Croes Atti new school. This project was brought forward to coincide with the new school development to ensure the Council capitalised on the opportunity to have a wraparound childcare facility on the same site as the new school. The objective is to improve provision for Welsh medium education in the Flint area – a key strand of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategy Plan. Construction is expected to be complete by September 2025.</p>
1.03	<p><b><u>Ysgol Castell Alun, Hope</u></b></p> <p>The £7.6m project to construct a new build three storey Art and Design Technology (DT) &amp; classroom block was completed and occupied at the start September 2021 as planned. The refurbishment and resurfacing of existing All Weather Pitch was completed in August 2023.</p>
1.04	<p><b><u>Ysgol Croes Atti, Glannau Dyfrdwy site</u></b></p> <p>The project funded through the Welsh Government Childcare Grant and Welsh Government Sustainable Communities for Learning investment programme forms part of an extended work package which will see an investment of circa £1.1m in the Glannau Dyfrdwy site was completed and occupied in December 2022. The objective of this investment improves</p>

	<p>provision for Welsh medium education in the Shotton area - a key strand of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategy Plan.</p>
1.05	<p><b><u>Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint</u></b></p> <p>The proposed new Welsh medium school will replace the existing Ysgol Croes Atti, located on Chester Road, in Flint and is a significant project supporting the Welsh Education Strategic Plan, as this will be the first new Welsh medium school build by the Council since its inception in 1996. The Project will also be a Net Zero Carbon (NZC) school.</p> <p>Also included in the Project is a standalone facility that will provide a wraparound childcare provision, a space for adult community learning and an immersion resource to aid transition from primary school to Welsh medium secondary school.</p> <p>Progress is as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning permission granted January 2022</li> <li>• A Design and Build contractor has been engaged</li> <li>• Full Business Case (FBC) approved in August 2023</li> <li>• Construction activities due to commence in 2023</li> <li>• School Occupation - September 2025</li> </ul>
1.06	<p><b><u>Drury C.P.</u></b></p> <p>In November 2021, Cabinet approved to consult through 'The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, School Organisation Code' for an enlargement of the premises at Drury C.P. School. Delivery of enlargement of Ysgol Drury C.P. could not proceed until such time that statutory proposals to increase the capacity of the schools have been published, consulted upon and agreed by Cabinet. The process commenced in March 2022 and approved by Cabinet in December 2022. Progress relating to the building expansion is as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Design and Build contractor has been engaged</li> <li>• Submission of SOC/OBC planned in January 2024, and Full Business Case (FBC) planned to be submitted to Welsh Government in April 2024</li> <li>• Planning permission to be submitted November 2023</li> <li>• Anticipated that a paper will be presented to Cabinet in spring 2024, requesting approval to enter into construction phase.</li> </ul> <p>Thereafter, subject to approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anticipated commencement of construction works July 2024</li> <li>• School Occupation - September 2025</li> </ul>
1.07	<p><b><u>Mynydd Isa – 3-16 Campus, Mynydd Isa</u></b></p> <p>The proposed project replaces Mynydd Isa Argoed High School and Mynydd Isa C.P. which is the last remaining primary provision operating on splits sites (separate infants and junior provision). This is Wales's first Mutual Investment Model (MIM) and a WG pathfinder project. The Project will also be the Council's first Net Zero Carbon (NZC) school. Progress is as follows.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning permission granted January 2022</li> <li>• A design and Build contractor has been engaged</li> <li>• Full Business Case (FBC) approved in October 2022</li> <li>• Construction activities commenced November 2022</li> <li>• Anticipated completion July 2024</li> <li>• School/s Occupation - November 2024 (Phase 1)</li> </ul>
1.08	<p><b><u>Penyffordd C.P.</u></b></p> <p>A new primary school was constructed to replace the former infant and junior school with the school taking occupation of the new facility in September 2019. The original planning approval for the new school at Penyffordd included a planned two classroom extension which would increase the capacity of the school to 375 FT pupils.</p> <p>This project was brought forward due to local demand and funded in the main from a combination of Section 106 developer contributions to education and financially topped up the Council's own capital programme.</p> <p>Delivery of the scheme could not proceed until such time that statutory proposals to increase the capacity of the schools have been published, consulted upon and agreed by Cabinet. The process commenced in March 2022 and approved by Cabinet in December 2022.</p> <p>Progress relating to the building expansion is as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Design and Build contractor has been engaged</li> <li>• Construction commenced July 2023</li> <li>• School Occupation - April 2024</li> </ul>
1.09	<p><b><u>Saltney/Broughton Area Review</u></b></p> <p>Officers are currently working with the Headteachers in the Broughton and Saltney area have collaboratively developed documents which have been used to consult with their communities on the future of Primary and Secondary school provision in the area.</p> <p>An early engagement process seeking community views took place in spring 2023. Outcomes of early engagement are to be presented to Cabinet.</p>
1.10	<p><b><u>Welsh Medium Provision - Buckley/Mynydd Isa Area</u></b></p> <p>The Council submitted an expression of interest for additional Welsh Government Welsh Medium (WM) funding. The submission highlights the need for new WM start up provision within Buckley/Mynydd Isa Area, as identified within the Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and was approved by Welsh Government. Welsh Government have approved through their Welsh Medium grant £5m in Capital and £606,950 revenue for two years for a Welsh Medium 3-11 start up in the area, as identified in the Councils (WESP). Work is underway to review site options for this new start up provision.</p>



1.11	<p><b><u>Universal Primary Free School Meals</u></b></p> <p>Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru have made a commitment to ensure all primary school aged children can access a free school meal by 2024.</p> <p>Implementation of universal primary free school meals (UPFSM) has been phased, the first phase of rollout in Flintshire commenced in September 2022 to Reception aged children, a further phasing commenced in April 2023 to Year 1 and 2 aged children and by September 2023 to Year 3 and 4. The final phase of roll out to Year 5 and Year 6 will be completed by April 2024.</p> <p>The Council has been allocated capital grant funding, totalling £3.029m to support the procurement of equipment and works to enable UPFSM rollout. A significant amount of work has been completed and will continue into 2024 to ensure the infrastructure, equipment, resource and processes are in place to enable full implementation of UPFSM.</p>
1.12	<p><b><u>Additional Learning Needs (ALN)</u></b></p> <p>The Council has been allocated capital grant funding by Welsh Government, totalling £2.019m. The aim of the grant is to optimise pre-16 learning environments for those with additional learning needs (ALN) and increase accessibility to promote inclusive practice, support learning and pupil wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Ysgol Pen Coch</b></p> <p>Some of the ALN capital grant has been already identified and used to benefit the learners using the Ysgol Pen Coch hydro pool. Most of the capital funding has been identified to increase capacity at Ysgol Pen Coch. Options for the site and use of the grant are currently under review.</p> <p>To increase capacity requires statutory proposals under The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The Authority in due course will seek a mandate to consult from Cabinet.</p>
1.13	<p><b><u>Community Facility Grant and Sports Wales Projects</u></b></p> <p>The Council has been allocated capital grant funding by Welsh Government, totalling £1.05m. The objectives of the grant are to address ministerial priorities (namely raising attainment of disadvantaged learners and tackling the aspiration gap; learners and staff wellbeing; being a second chance nation; winning the technology race and supporting the Welsh language). Using the grant criteria community demand on school sites had been assessed to develop/increase community access/facilities. Work is underway to deliver a range of projects meeting the grant criteria across the school network.</p> <p>The following projects have been delivered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Castell Alun All Weather Pitch lighting replacement/upgrade</li> <li>• Hawarden High School Male Sports Changing Room refurbishment</li> <li>• Hawarden High School Sports Hall refurbishment</li> </ul>

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	Decisions to commit to capital expenditure investing in assets to deliver high quality services efficiently have long term implications for future revenue budgets. Consideration must be given to schemes to ensure that they are affordable, sustainable and therefore prudent.
2.02	The estimated capital and associated debt revenue costs arising from the schemes within this report are set out on a scheme by scheme basis.
2.03	The estimated associated debt revenue costs arising from the project are included in the Council Medium Term Financial strategy.
2.04	The following Welsh Government Grants are fully funded (100%); Childcare, Welsh Medium, Flying Start, Community Learning, Universal Primary Free School Meals and Additional Learning Needs.
2.05	The Welsh Government 21st Century schools programme is funded as follows:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital – Schools : 65% WG / 35% LA</li> <li>• Capital – PRU / ALN Schools : 75% WG / 25% LA</li> <li>• MIM is funded at an intervention rate of 81% Welsh Government and 19% Council (through revenue budgets of both organisations).</li> </ul>

<b>3.00</b>	<b>IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT</b>										
3.01	All projects are managed using a risk register. Risks are managed accordingly, and financial risks are managed through a project contingency. Any high-level risk which cannot be managed with the projects/programme will be incorporated into the risk register for the Education and Youth Portfolio.										
3.02	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles <table border="1" data-bbox="319 1433 1372 2060"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ways of Working Principle</th> <th>Impact</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Long-term</td> <td>Positive – ensures that high quality education places are available to communities to meet demand of specialist educational need.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> <td>Positive – preventing inappropriate placements for the most vulnerable learners.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> <td>Positive – ensuring the appropriate education provision integrates children from varying backgrounds.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> <td>Positive – partnership arrangements in-house and with external parties including school governing bodies.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ways of Working Principle	Impact	Long-term	Positive – ensures that high quality education places are available to communities to meet demand of specialist educational need.	Prevention	Positive – preventing inappropriate placements for the most vulnerable learners.	Integration	Positive – ensuring the appropriate education provision integrates children from varying backgrounds.	Collaboration	Positive – partnership arrangements in-house and with external parties including school governing bodies.
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	Involvement	Positive - The proposed projects involves a range of stakeholders to enable its delivery.
3.03	<p>Well-being Principle Impacts</p> <p>Against the seven well-being goals of the Act, the potential impact of the report and its recommendations would be evaluated as follows:-</p>	
	Prosperous Wales	Positive impact Capital investment directly benefits local supply chain/economy. Ensuring our schools are in the right place and of the right type.
	Resilient Wales	Positive impact Use of sustainable and recycled materials during construction, more energy efficient, potential reduction in carbon emissions.
	Healthier Wales	Positive Impact Improved physical infrastructure and facilities which positively impact on the wellbeing of the school and its community.
	More Equal Wales	Positive Impact Equalities Impact Assessments are already embedded in school culture. Opening up more education places to those who need them.
	Cohesive Wales	Positive Impact School network widens/reduces its number of places for education provision through delivery of new and refurbished facilities of the right type in the right place.
	Vibrant Wales	Positive Impact Enables new and refurbished facilities to improve, both curricular, extra-curricular and community use of school buildings.
	Globally Responsible Wales	Positive Impact Capital investment, delivers a more sustainable product, local spend and added benefits for apprenticeships, work experience in construction.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT</b>
4.01	Reports on the Strategic Outline Plan for the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme have previously been to Education & Youth Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.
4.02	Some projects within the programme will require statutory proposals. These will be carried out based subject to Cabinet mandate and based on WG's School Organisation Code legal framework. Determination on statutory proposals are the responsibility of Cabinet.
4.03	For projects that have been delivered planning permission approval has been given. For projects not yet delivered, consultation will be required through the planning application process at the appropriate stage of development.
4.04	Meetings and conversations have taken place with Childcare Providers to provide information and guidance on the development of business cases which have formed an integral part of assessing the sustainability of proposals.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	None.

<b>6.00</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS</b>
6.01	<b>Contact Officer:</b> Jennie Williams, Senior Manager, School Planning and Provision <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 704015 <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:jennie.williams@flintshire.gov.uk">jennie.williams@flintshire.gov.uk</a>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<b>Sustainable Communities for Learning</b> - Is a collaboration between the Welsh Government (WG), the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and local authorities. It is a major, long-term and strategic capital investment programme with the aim of creating a generation of 21st century schools in Wales.
7.02	<b>MIM</b> - The Mutual Investment Model is the Welsh Government's new form of Public Private Partnership.
7.03	<b>Capital funding</b> - Capital funding is usually linked to acquiring or improving a long-term asset such as equipment or buildings.

7.04	<b>Revenue funding</b> - Is linked to items that will be used within a year. Examples include salaries, heating, lighting, services and small items of equipment.
7.05	<b>School Organisation Code</b> – The new School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2018 makes Local Authorities responsible (rather than the Welsh Ministers prior to October 2018) for the determination of most statutory school organisation proposals that receive objections.

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