

Public Document Pack

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To: Cllr Teresa Carberry (Chair)

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

Co-opted Members:

Lynn Bartlett and Wendy White

14 October 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF HYBRID MEETING
EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 20TH OCTOBER, 2022 at 2.00 PM

Yours faithfully

Steven Goodrum
Democratic Services Manager

Please note: Attendance at this meeting is either in person in the 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 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING** (Pages 5 - 16)

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.

4 **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY SUMMER PLAYScheme 2022** (Pages 17 - 20)

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

Purpose: To provide feedback on the Flintshire County Summer Playscheme 2022.

5 **ESTYN INSPECTION OF ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING (ACL) WITHIN THE NORTH EAST WALES ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP** (Pages 21 - 40)

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

Purpose: To present the Estyn Report on Adult Community Learning Partnership.

6 **LEARNING FROM THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE MONITORING GROUP** (Pages 41 - 46)

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

Purpose: To receive an update on progress and learning from the School Performance Monitoring Group.

7 COUNCIL PLAN DEVELOPMENT 2023/24 (Pages 47 - 54)

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

Purpose: To agree the proposed Priorities, Sub Priorities and Well-being Objectives for the Council Plan 2023-28.

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

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EDUCATION YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 20 th October, 2022
Report Subject	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking
Report Author	Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator
Type of Report	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

1.00	EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING
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">1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?2. Is it an area of major change or risk?3. Are there issues of concern in performance?4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?6. Is the issue of Public or Member concern?
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.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None as a result of this report.

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

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	None as a result of this report.

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

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

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Improvement Plan: 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>Thursday 1st December, 2022</p> <p>2.00pm</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 9</p>	<p>Council Plan 2022-23 Mid-Year Performance Reporting</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 & Youth)</p>
	<p>MTFS & Budget Setting 23-24</p>	<p>That the Committee reviews and comments on the Education, Youth and Culture cost pressures and overall budget strategy, and advises on any areas of cost efficiency it would like to see explored further.</p>	<p>Consultation</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education & Youth)</p>
	<p>Elective Home Schooling</p>	<p>To provide the Committee with an update on the levels of pupils being Electively Home Educated and the Council's oversight of this group of learners.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education & Youth)</p>
	<p>Integrated Youth Provision – Delivery Plan Update</p>	<p>To provide an update to the Committee on the Integrated Youth Provision Delivery Plan.</p>	<p>Consultation</p>	<p>Senior Manager Youth Justice and Flintshire Sorted</p>
<p>Thursday 2nd February, 2023</p> <p>2.00pm</p>	<p>Music Service Theatr Clwyd</p>	<p>To provide the Committee with information on the Music Service, including numbers of learners.</p>	<p>Information Sharing</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Education & Youth)</p>
	<p>School Parking</p>	<p>To provide information on the traffic regulation process and enforcement</p>	<p>Information Sharing</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) and</p>

		provision (referred by the Environment & Economy OSC)		Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
Thursday 23rd March, 2023 2.00pm	Anti-racist Wales Action Plan	To outline 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.	Assurance Monitoring	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
Thursday 11th May, 2023 2.00pm	Tackling Inequality	To outline how the Council supporting early childhood education and care, primary and secondary education and all forms of post-16 education, training and lifelong learning to ensure an equitable education system for all.	Assurance Monitoring	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
	Supporting Service Children in Education	To provide an update report to outline the priority actions of schools following the audit.	Information Sharing	Senior Manager – School Improvement
	Attendance & Exclusions	To provide Members with an overview of school attendance and exclusions and the role of the Portfolio’s support services in this area.	Information Sharing	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
Thursday 29th June, 2023 Joint meeting with S&HC	Safeguarding in Education including Internet Safety and Social Media	To provide an update on the discharge of statutory safeguarding duties in schools and the Education portfolio. To include information on Relationship and	Assurance Monitoring	Chief Officer (Education & Youth) and Healthy Schools Practitioner

Page 11	OSC - 2.00pm	Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018	Sexual Education and how this was contributing to reducing harm.	Assurance Monitoring	Senior Manager – Inclusion & Progression
		Looked After Children in Flintshire	To outline the approach to the identification and commissioning of post 16 education for Flintshire young people.	Assurance Monitoring	Senior Manager – Inclusion & Progression
		Supporting Refugees in Schools	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.	Information Sharing	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
	Thursday 13th July, 2023 2.00pm	Annual Report from Regional School Improvement Service, GwE	To receive an update on the support provided by the regional school effectiveness and improvement service, GWE and its impact on schools	Assurance Monitoring	Chief Officer (Education & Youth) and Managing Director of GwE
		Council Plan 2022-23 Year-End Performance	To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.	Assurance Monitoring	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)

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.	-

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Items to be scheduled

- Healthy Schools report - to include overview of Healthy Schools Programme, Challenges of Pandemic, Design to Smile and public health risk of Vape use by pupils – **As agreed during the July, 2022 meeting.**
- School Meals Service - to include overview of structural changes since moving across to NEWYDD, central production model, plans for universal roll out of Free School Meals and use of processed food in school meals - **As agreed during the July, 2022 meeting.**
- Update to be requested from IT on issues with PSPA, National infrastructure challenges in Flintshire - **As agreed during the July, 2022 meeting.**
- Recycling School Uniforms – **Referred to the Committee from the Environment & Economy OSC.**

REGULAR ITEMS

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
February/ March	School Modernisation	To update Members on the progress made with School Modernisation.	Senior Manager School Planning & Provision
May	Attendance & Exclusions	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	Self-evaluation on education services & learner outcomes	To update Members on overall service performance including Learner Outcomes.	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
June	Additional Learning Needs	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
July	Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (GwE)	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	School Balances	To provide the Committee with details of the closing balances held by Flintshire schools at the end of the financial year.	Finance Manager
Annually	Learning from the School Performance Monitoring Group (SPMG) -	To receive the annual report on progress and learning from the SPMG.	Senior Manager – School Improvement;
Annually	Social Media & Internet Safety - now part of Safeguarding Report to the Joint Scrutiny Committee	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
10.10.2022	3. Minutes	Cllr Andrew Parkhurst referred to page 14 of the minutes and asked if the Senior Manager (Inclusion and Progression) had spoken to colleagues in the Educational Psychology Service following the meeting. Claire Homard said that she would check this following the meeting.	Claire Homard	Response provided to Cllr Andrew Parkhurst via e-mail on 11.10.2022.	Completed
10.10.2022	4. Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking	Cllr Bill Crease referred to the information he had received from Claire Sinnott in response to a question he had asked on managing and monitoring internet access. He appreciated the information provided which related to pupils but sought clarity on how staff at schools internet access was monitored and managed. Claire Homard said that she would follow this up with Claire Sinnott following the meeting.	Claire Homard	Claire Homard has followed this up with Claire Sinnott following the meeting.	Ongoing
10.10.2022	5. Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (GwE) Annual Report 2021-2022	In response to a number of questions raised by Cllr Dave Mackie on the data presented in the annual report, Ceri Shotton suggested that these be picked up with GwE officers following the meeting, with the response shared with all Members of the Committee.	Ceri Shotton	Questions e-mailed to GwE officers on 14.10.2022.	Ongoing

ACTION TRACKING

APPENDIX 2

10.10.2022	6. Self-Evaluation Report Education Services 2021-22	In response to comments around the information provided within the reports and how this could be scrutinised, Claire Homard suggested that together with officers from GwE, a Member workshop is arranged to facilitate detailed discussions on the information presented in the report and also the previous GwE annual report.	Ceri Shotton	A workshop has been arranged with GwE officers for Monday 5 th December at 2pm.	Completed.
10.10.2022	8. Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFSM)	In response to concerns around staffing issues, Ceri Shotton suggested that these be raised with NEWydd when presenting their annual report at a future meeting of the Committee.	Ceri Shotton	Within the new terms of reference, NEWydd sits within the remit of the Corporate Resources OSC. An e-mail has been sent to the Democratic Services Manager to ask that this issue be picked up when NEWydd report to the Committee.	Completed.



EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 20 th October 2022
Report Subject	Flintshire County Summer Playscheme 2022
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Flintshire County Council continues to work closely in partnership with all Town and Community Councils and Welsh Government to deliver the county wide summer playscheme. This scheme has been operational since 1996.

The success of the summer playscheme is well evidenced with evaluations from children and young people, families and communities via our Town and Community Councils and partner organisations.

Playschemes are fully inclusive. There is special provision for children with disabilities through the Flintshire Buddy Scheme. Provision is also made through the medium of Welsh to meet the needs of Welsh speaking children.

The Flintshire summer playscheme programme was delivered in compliance with the Local Authority's Play Sufficiency Action plan 2022/2023.

The well-established partnership with local Town and Community Councils and the financial contribution they make to the playschemes continues to be invaluable in the delivery of this vital play opportunity for Flintshire children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Members acknowledge the effective partnership with local Town and Community Councils to deliver the universal playscheme offers for all children aged 5 -12 years across the county during the summer and 5 -17 years for the Flintshire Buddy scheme providing for children with disabilities
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2	Members acknowledge the contrition from Welsh Government for summer play schemes via the Holiday Playworks grant and urge Welsh Government to continue to make this funding available.
3	Members note the ongoing developments within the service to strengthen the relationships with partner organisations to ensure that the most vulnerable children in Flintshire are identified and provided with play opportunities in the summer.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE FLINTSHIRE COUNTY SUMMER PLAYScheme
1.01	57 site locations were available for Playschemes of 3, 4, 5 or 6 weeks duration across the county during the school summer holidays of 2022.
1.02	30 Town and Community Councils worked in partnership with the education portfolio's Play Team to deliver the summer playscheme.
1.03	All playschemes had a bilingual aspect for 2022 with two targeted Welsh Language sites at Oakenholt and Ysgol Glanrafon. There were 198 children registered to the Welsh Language playschemes
1.04	30 Children and young people were enabled to access their own local community playscheme via the Flintshire Buddy scheme (Funded separately by the Summer of Fun Grant).
1.05	A new digitalised system for registration of children at summer playscheme was developed in partnership with FCC IT. This was a 'pilot' for the county and ensured accurate recording, reporting and compliance with GDPR. The transition to an electronic system on site ran parallel with the existing paper system to assist with the digital divide in communities. 10% of registrations for the scheme were on paper. The digital system will be developed for future years. 40 I pads were funded by the Welsh Government AWPOG Winter of well-being (Capital) grant 2021/2022 to support this new approach.
1.06	A total of 3,975 children were registered across the county for playschemes. The number of daily registrations was 15,556. In total there were 1,102 two hour playscheme sessions delivered across Flintshire during the summer holidays.
1.07	Enthusiastic and well trained staff are critical to the delivery and success of the summer playscheme. This year 86 Flintshire residents were recruited, employed and trained. 82 of these were aged 18 -25 years.
1.08	Work was undertaken before Summer Playschemes via the Education and Youth Ukrainian working group. All playscheme documents were translated into Ukrainian and circulated via all services and partner agencies 10 Ukrainian children were registered to summer playscheme.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>Revenue: The revenue for summer Playschemes 2022 was received in the form of:-</p> <p>Contributions from Town and Community Councils £122K The AWPOG Holiday Playworks Grant £55K The AWPOG Summer of Fun Grant £20K</p> <p>These contributions and awards are received on an annual basis and it will be within the remit of the Play Development Officer to ensure continuation and resourcing for Summer 2023. The summer playscheme is dependent on this additional external funding.</p> <p>The Play Development Officer post which is responsible for the co-ordination of the summer playscheme programme is a post within the Integrated Youth Provision core budget.</p> <p>Capital: There are no implications for the approved capital programme for either the current financial year or for future financial years</p> <p>Human Resources: The recruitment, employment and training of a summer staff team within Play Development is entirely funded by revenue grants and contributions. The Council's HR team provide appropriate expert advice as required.</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	Impact Assessment - n/a.
3.02	Risk Management – the playscheme programme is subject to a risk assessment process and suitable mitigations are put in place. The schemes also are the subject of a rigorous health and safety assessment and management plan.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	In partnership with the participating Town and Community Councils consultations identified site locations in communities where delivery was prioritised.
4.02	Sensitive consultations were undertaken with appropriate agencies/partners to identify vulnerable children who required support to access the playschemes.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/Flintshire-Summer-Playscheme.aspx https://www.siryfflint.gov.uk/cy/Resident/Schools/Flintshire-Summer-Playscheme.aspx

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Janet Roberts, Play Development Officer Telephone: 01352 704155 E-mail: Janet.Roberts2@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	AWPOG – All Wales Play Opportunities Grant -Welsh government revenue/capital funding stream for the delivery of Corporate Play Sufficiency Annual Action Plans



EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 20 th October 2022
Report Subject	Estyn Inspection of Adult Community Learning (ACL) within the North East Wales Adult Community Learning Partnership
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is to provide members with the findings of the recent Estyn inspection of the North East Wales Adult Community Learning Partnership. Adult Learning in Flintshire is delivered in partnership with Wrexham local authority.

Estyn inspected the Partnership in May 2022 and the report was published on 7th September 2022.

Estyn judged the Partnership to be well led, with strong support from both local authorities in delivering provision for adults in the community across Flintshire and Wrexham. They found that leaders set very high aspirations for the partnership, the providers and for learners. The vision for the partnership is ambitious, and reflects Welsh Government policies for community learning.

The findings of the inspection mean that there is no requirement for any follow up by Estyn.

Estyn has invited the Partnership to prepare two case studies. The first on its work in relation to family learning and the second on establishing a new Adult Learning Community partnership. These will be published in due course on Estyn's website.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	The Education, Youth and Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the findings of the Estyn Inspection and be assured by the positive outcomes for adult community learning provision in Flintshire.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE ESTYN INSPECTION OF ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING
1.01	<p>In 2021-2022, both Flintshire and Wrexham received significant increases in their Community Learning Grant (CLG) funding. This enabled both local authorities to look to further develop the provision offered to adult learners.</p> <p>The North East Wales Adult Community Learning Partnership was established in April 2021. It is a partnership between Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council. The partnership has commissioned five lead providers to deliver most of its Welsh Government funded provision. These are Aura Leisure and Libraries (employability courses in Flintshire), Caia Park Partnership (employability courses in Wrexham), Coleg Cambria (essential skills in Wrexham), Deeside Community Trust (engagement courses in Flintshire) and Groundwork North Wales (essential skills in Flintshire).</p> <p>In addition to the five lead providers, the partnership benefits from a wider partner base. This includes representation from Adult Learning Wales, Coleg Cambria, the Department for Work and Pensions, Communities for Work, voluntary sector organisations and other providers for health and well-being support.</p> <p>In 2021-2022, despite the challenges of the pandemic, 2,100 learners enrolled on the partnership's courses.</p>
1.02	<p>Key findings from the inspection were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Partnership, established in April 2021, is well led and has strong support from both local authorities;• Leaders set very high aspirations for the partnership, its leaders, the providers and learners;• The vision for the partnership is ambitious, and reflects Welsh Government policies for community learning;• There is a good balance and useful range of courses for adults;• Learners make sound progress in their literacy, numeracy, digital and ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) sessions;• Many learners experience an increase in their confidence and willingness to go on to more formal learning;• Tutors establish a good rapport with their learners;• The Partnership has a realistic understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement.
1.03	<p>Estyn recognised that the Partnership understands its own strengths and areas for improvement and has clear quality improvement planning processes. Areas for improvement are identified appropriately, including more consistent approaches to quality assuring teaching and learning across the wider Partnership and developing a data management system to track outcomes and learner progression that will support the rapid growth of learners accessing provision.</p>

	<p>There were four recommendations from the inspection:</p> <p>R1. Increase opportunities for adult learning in the community bilingually and through the medium of Welsh</p> <p>R2. Track, monitor and evaluate learners' long-term progress through the partnership's provision</p> <p>R3. Develop a partnership approach to self-evaluation and improvement of learning and teaching across all the partnership's provision</p> <p>R4. Improve opportunities for learners to receive advice and guidance about joining the partnership's provision</p>
1.04	<p>Each year, the Welsh Government provides local authorities with funding for Adult Community Learning for people over 19. The Welsh Government provides guidance on the use of the funding and local authorities are required to submit a service delivery plan to the Welsh Government annually. Local authorities must demonstrate that they are working in partnership with local providers to deliver adult learning in their area. The Welsh Government analyses and discusses these plans with the local authority.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>Welsh Government provides local authorities with funding for ACL and provides guidance on the use of the funding in an annual letter (Adult Community Learning Service Delivery Plans Guidance). Local authorities are required to submit an ACL service delivery plan and a strategic plan to Welsh Government annually. Local authorities must demonstrate that they are working in partnership with local providers to deliver adult learning in their area. The Welsh Government analyses and discusses these plans with the local authority.</p> <p>The Partnership is also very active in looking for additional funding to innovate and further enhance provision. This is noted by Estyn in their report.</p>
2.02	<p>The strategic responsibility for ACL provision within Flintshire sits within the Education and Youth Portfolio. The Community Learning Grant enables some provision for a co-ordinator role across both local authorities but this is not sufficient for the resource requirements of delivering an effective service. Capacity within the school improvement service was therefore increased in 2021 to enable the portfolio to meet the growing demands of this valuable provision, through additional Learning Adviser support for Adult Learning.</p> <p>Estyn noted that senior officials and managers from both authorities play an important role in managing and overseeing the Partnership.</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	<p>There are no specific risks arising from this report and subsequent actions. The Education Portfolio has a detailed risk assessment which outlines key risks related to the delivery of education services and method statements which describe how these risks are managed. These are regularly reported to the Education, Youth and Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The partnership has also established a quality committee to monitor and review the partnership’s self-evaluation processes and evaluate outcomes across the partnership. The quality committee contains appropriate senior leader representation and membership from partnership organisations.</p>
3.02	<p>Anti-poverty Impact – Flintshire County Council seeks to mitigate the impact of poverty through its partnership work programme. Adult Community Learning is key to delivering priorities which aim to support the wellbeing and mental health of citizens and to alleviate poverty and inequality.</p> <p>Adult Community Learning supports the Welsh Government’s agenda for tackling poverty and its wellbeing agenda set out in the Well Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) (2015), particularly in meeting the needs of older learners.</p> <p>The Adult Community Learning Partnership seeks to contribute to this by supporting adult learners to have positive aspirations and to learn and achieve their potential. It will help ensure that specified groups of learners have access to a range of provision that will help them to develop the skills and knowledge to secure a better future for themselves.</p>
3.03	<p>Equalities Impact – The 2019 inspection of Flintshire’s education services undertaken by Estyn recognised good practice in provision for pupils’ wellbeing and additional learning needs. This continues to be reflected in Flintshire’s values, strategy, provision and outcomes.</p> <p>The 2022 Estyn inspection of the ACL partnership identified that provision is focused on the needs of learners in their communities. The report provides assurance that “<i>senior leaders and partnership members work closely to develop provision that focuses on hard-to-reach learners and those in need of considerable support before they can progress to more formal learning opportunities.</i>”</p>
3.04	<p>Use of the grant funding and quality of provision will continue to be monitored by the Flintshire and Wrexham ACL Partnership and by Welsh Government. Regular update reports will be provided to Education and Youth Portfolio and an annual report to the Education, Youth and Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee.</p>

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None required.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Estyn Inspection Report.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>The priorities for the delivery of Adult Community Learning are set out in the Welsh Government Adult Learning in Wales (2017) guidance.</p> <p>https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/adult-learning-in-wales.pdf</p> <p>Estyn Thematic Report/ Engagement work: Further education and adult learning in the community sectors update – autumn 2021</p> <p>https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-report/engagement-work-further-education-and-adult-learning-community-sectors-update</p>

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Vicky Barlow, Senior Manager for School Improvement Telephone: 01352 704019 E-mail: vicky.barlow@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Estyn - Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales</p> <p>Adult Community Learning (ACL) – non statutory education of people over the age of 19 in adult basic education (literacy and numeracy), digital literacy) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).</p> <p>Community Learning Grant (CLG) - Welsh Government provides funding each year for the provision of ACL through this grant to local authorities.</p>

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Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on the adult learning in the community provision
of**

**Wrexham and Flintshire Adult Learning in the Community
Partnership**

**The Guildhall
Wrexham
Wrexham
LL11 1AY**

Date of inspection: May 2022

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Wrexham and Flintshire Adult Learning in the Community Partnership

The North East Wales Adult Community Learning Partnership was established in April 2021. It is a partnership between Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council. The partnership employs five lead providers to deliver most of its Welsh Government-funded provision. These are Aura Leisure and Libraries (employability courses in Flintshire), Caia Park Partnership (employability courses in Wrexham), Coleg Cambria (essential skills in Wrexham), Deeside Community Trust (engagement courses in Flintshire) and Groundwork North Wales (essential skills in Flintshire).

In addition to the five lead providers, partnership has a wider partner base with representation from Adult Learning Wales, Coleg Cambria adult skills core provision, the Department for Work and Pensions, Communities for Work, the voluntary sector organisations and other providers for health and well-being support.

Provision for accredited English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses in the area is provided by Coleg Cambria, funded through their further education grant. The partnership provides a small amount of non-accredited ESOL provision to engage new learners.

The Office for National Statistics Annual Population Survey for 2020 reports that Wrexham has a population of approximately 136,000. About 20% of the population is aged 65 and over. Flintshire has a population of approximately 157,000. About 21% of Flintshire's population is aged 65 and over.

In 2021, the rate of employment in Wrexham was 75%, slightly above the Welsh average of 73%. In Flintshire, the employment rate was 78%, also above the Welsh average.

In 2021, in general terms, the working-age population in Flintshire was slightly more highly qualified than in Wrexham although in both areas the proportion of working-age adults with level 3 or 4 qualifications was lower than the Welsh average. Wrexham had a higher proportion of working-age adults without qualifications or with qualifications at level 2 than the Wales average. Flintshire also had a higher proportion of working-age adults without qualifications than the Welsh average, but matched the Welsh average for the proportion of working-age adults with qualifications at level 2.

In 2021, average (median) gross weekly earnings in Wrexham was £564. This was the 8th highest of the 22 Welsh local authorities. In Flintshire, the median gross weekly earnings was £574, the sixth highest of the 22 Welsh local authorities.

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2019 shows the proportion of small areas within each local authority that are in the most deprived 20% was 12% for Wrexham (eighth least deprived in Wales) and 11% for Flintshire (sixth least deprived). This indicates that both local authorities had areas of deprivation and disadvantage but had fewer than the majority of local authorities in Wales.

In 2021, the percentage of Welsh speakers aged three or over in Wrexham was 27%. In Flintshire, it was 24%. This compares to 30% nationally.

The Welsh Government has recently reorganised the funding allocations for adult learning in the community partnerships across Wales. In 2021-2022, both Flintshire and Wrexham received significant increases in ALC funding.

During 2021-2022, 2,100 learners enrolled on the partnership's courses.

Summary

The newly established North East Wales Adult Community Learning Partnership is well led and has strong support from both local authorities in delivering provision for adults in the community across Flintshire and Wrexham. Leaders set very high aspirations for the partnership, the providers and for learners. The vision for the partnership is ambitious, and reflects Welsh Government policies for community learning.

The partnership has venues in appropriate locations, including a new, well-equipped multi-purpose centre, Ty Calon, and centres in community venues in rural and urban areas across the two authorities.

There is a good balance and useful range of courses for adults who want to become re-engaged with education, to improve their job prospects, upgrade their English language skills (English for speakers of other languages – ESOL), develop their literacy, numeracy or digital skills or improve their health and well-being. There is also a small but growing family learning provision, where parents and their children play and learn together, for example through learning the heritage skills of wool felting, at the children's schools. The partnership's bilingual and Welsh-medium provision for learners is underdeveloped.

Learners make sound progress in their literacy, numeracy, digital and ESOL sessions. In health and well-being sessions, learners enjoy activities that promote good physical and mental health, make new friends and develop new skills. Through taking part in these courses, many learners experience an increase in their confidence and willingness to go on to more formal learning.

Tutors establish a good rapport with their learners. Most plan well for sessions, and support learners effectively to structure their individual development plans and set learning and personal targets. In many cases, tutors bring experience from other professions, which enhances their teaching. They are understanding and supportive of learners with complicated and vulnerable backgrounds.

The partnership provides useful information to prospective learners through hard copies of prospectuses and bilingual information online on social media platforms, although online access to information for prospective learners who do not use social media is limited.

Tutors and managers review and adjust support for learners with additional learning needs on essential skills and ESOL courses. Tutors in ESOL classes provide sensitive and valuable pastoral support when signposting learners who are refugees to agencies that can assist them.

The partnership has a realistic understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement and has clear quality improvement planning processes. It has identified appropriate areas for improvement including more consistent approaches to quality assuring teaching and learning and developing a data management system to track outcomes and learner progression.

Recommendations

- R1 Increase opportunities for adult learning in the community bilingually and through the medium of Welsh
- R2 Track, monitor and evaluate learners' long-term progress through the partnership's provision
- R3 Develop a partnership approach to self-evaluation and improvement of learning and teaching across all the partnership's provision
- R4 Improve opportunities for learners to receive advice and guidance about joining the partnership's provision

What happens next

The provider will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Estyn will invite the provider to prepare two case studies on its work in relation to family learning and establishing a new ALC partnership, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Main findings

Learning

In literacy and numeracy classes, many learners make sound progress in developing their skills from their starting points. Many learners, particularly those studying in familiar community settings, engage well with their studies. As a result of their formal learning, they become involved in wider community activities, including involving their friends and wider family in learning, engagement or community activities.

The majority of learners have individual learning plans, which identify their overall goals and learning aims. In a few cases, these are used effectively to identify learners' short term learning goals and help learners understand what they need to do to improve. In other cases, learners know what they need to improve through detailed written or verbal feedback. A few learners do not have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve. A few are not clear about their strengths and weaknesses at the beginning of a programme of study in literacy or numeracy.

The partnership offers both accredited provision and informal engagement courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). In both accredited and informal provision, learners make solid progress in developing their English language skills, and, where appropriate, attain qualifications well. In engagement classes, learners also develop and attain additional useful skills and qualifications, such as the driving licence theory test and digital skills.

In the partnership's varied engagement provision, in addition to developing craft or practical skills, learners enjoy an opportunity to be creative and become aware of new learning opportunities. For example, in a wood craft session, learners combine an opportunity to chat and socialise with developing skills in using hand tools to repair and repurpose pallets and used furniture. They measure, follow plans and drawings and produce work of which they are proud. Learners use IT facilities at the session to research design projects, apply for jobs and manage their finances. In sugar craft, learners make and customise cakes for friends and family. In addition to learning these craft skills, they learn basic business skills and how they can sell the produce to supplement their incomes. In an art class for adults with additional learning needs, learners express themselves through art projects, music and performance and produce work of a high standard.

In family learning sessions, parents and carers study with their children in the school. For example, parents in one school learn wool felting with their children. Along with other skills, the parents learn heritage craft skills and how they might use these to make saleable gifts and craft products. The children have fun with their parents and develop hand-eye co-ordination and fine motor skills. Both parents and children benefit from learning and working together.

On courses with a clear vocational and employability focus such as nail care and beauty therapy, learners develop vocational skills well. They apply nail treatments confidently and competently, and attain qualifications in customer services and reception skills, which help prepare them for self-employment or further study.

However, a few learners on courses across the partnership do not fully understand the range of options for further study available to them.

In many sessions across the partnership, learners make good progress during the session. At present, the partnership's own systems do not record in sufficient detail how learners move between courses and between levels through the partnership over time. As a result, it is not possible to accurately identify, at a partnership level, the long-term progress that learners make.

In a few sessions, learners use or learn Welsh terms or receive some exposure to the Welsh language, for example through everyday conversational use of Welsh or through teachers' assessment comments and praise using Welsh terms. In a few ESOL classes, learners develop an awareness of everyday Welsh terms, such as the days of the week. However, the partnership currently has no provision offered bilingually or through the medium of Welsh. As a result, no learners study or take part in programmes bilingually or through the medium of Welsh and most learners do not develop their Welsh language skills significantly.

Well-being and attitudes to learning

As a result of the impact of the pandemic, the partnership reports higher numbers of learners with anxiety, low confidence, and wellbeing concerns. Many learners across the partnership report that their mental health has improved significantly through their learning and that they have overcome initial anxieties such as attending face-to-face sessions and meeting new people.

In comparison to previous years, learners' rates of attendance are lower due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic, especially for those learners with childcaring responsibilities. The majority of learners inform their tutors in advance if they are unable to attend or if they are to arrive late to class.

Most learners enjoy the social interaction of their learning experiences such as meeting people and making friends after prolonged periods of isolation. Learners from a few courses have arranged their own clubs and groups where they meet outside of their classes to support each other through difficult times in their lives. Learners with additional learning needs (ALN) have used their learning experiences to become more independent and socially confident.

Many learners use their learning experiences to enhance their lives, such as supporting their parenting and caring responsibilities or taking part in volunteering roles in their communities. The majority of learners in ESOL classes use their language skills to communicate with friends and colleagues.

A majority of learners have improved their employment and career prospects as a result of the new skills they have acquired through their learning. For example, learners studying a foundation counselling course use their skills to support their current employment in a mental health charity. Learners studying on the essential teaching assistant course aspire to improve their career progression.

A few learners, from the refugee community benefit from provision to meet their specific needs in helping them to integrate into their communities, for example

through bespoke courses in addition to their ESOL courses, on driving, family support or digital skills.

Most learners demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and nearly all enjoy their courses. They have shown a strong preference for returning to face-to-face learning and most engage enthusiastically in their classes, through contributing to discussions with their peers, answering questions and producing written work. In online sessions, many learners contribute by answering questions and through use of the chat function. In an online Welsh language and culture course, learners engage in lively discussions about Welsh history.

Nearly all learners feel safe, both in face-to-face provision and when participating in online sessions. Nearly all have good, mutually respectful relationships with their tutors. Many learners feel the sessions enable them to share opinions and speak openly and safely about their life experiences.

As a result of listening to learners, the partnership has developed its provision to include first aid courses and family history courses. However, very few learners are aware of the impact their views have in improving their experiences.

Teaching and learning experiences

As part of its formation, the partnership has carried out a useful review of adult learning in the community provision across its area. The review has helped the partnership to understand better where potential learners are located and the types of courses that stimulate learners' interest and meet their needs.

The partnership is proactive in putting on provision which aligns closely with the needs of the region and those of learners. It works effectively with its lead providers and a wider circle of partners, including voluntary organisations, to provide a diverse range of educational opportunities to meet learners' differing needs and aspirations. The partnership offers a good balance of accredited and non-accredited, short and long courses. The curriculum continues outside of traditional academic term dates, meaning that learners have better continuity in the learning.

The partnership uses non-accredited short courses well to attract hard-to-reach learners who are less confident about entering or re-entering education. These courses often focus appropriately, for example, on health and well-being while embedding literacy, numeracy and digital skills within the content. As well as advertising the courses through a range of methods, such as social media, leaflets and posters, the partnership encourages learners on non-accredited courses to share their experiences with their friends and families to encourage their future participation.

The partnership offers a range of useful accredited courses for learners who need to develop their qualifications' profile to enter work or to improve their positions within work. The accredited courses are mostly focused on the development of literacy, numeracy and digital skills and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). These courses are mostly 'roll-on, roll-off', which helps learners to learn at their own pace and takes account of their personal circumstances.

The partnership's provision for learners to develop their Welsh language skills is currently underdeveloped. However, the partnership has a clear strategy to increase the opportunities for Welsh language speakers to participate in adult learning in the community courses through the medium of Welsh.

The partnership is developing specialised provision with a range of providers beyond its core partners. For example, the work being undertaken with the Heritage Skills Trust provides skills training in shortage areas and employment opportunities, such as in the renovation of steam trains and the repair of masonry. Applying these heritage skills and being involved in employment increase learners' sense of well-being and pride.

The partnership has venues in appropriate locations. These range from new centres, such as the multi-purpose Tŷ Calon centre, to community venues in rural and urban areas across the two counties. Through its review, the partnership has identified the need to extend the range of venues located in communities to provide easier access for learners near their homes.

The partnership is gradually extending its family learning programme into primary schools across the two local authorities. The programmes include a range of different topics to engage parents and carers and their children. For example, 'Unwinding the Wool' introduces parents and children to the heritage skills of wet felting and dry felting. The activities bring parents and children together to share in fun activities in which are embedded literacy, numeracy, digital, creative and problem-solving skills, among others. Where parents wish, they can enrol on other courses to further continue their own learning. The success of the programme is encouraging other schools to request family learning specific to their situations; for example, one school has requested family learning sessions in English for speakers of other languages.

Nearly all tutors are well qualified in their subjects, have good subject knowledge and establish a good rapport with learners. In many cases, tutors bring experience from other professions, which enhances their teaching. They are understanding and supportive of learners with complicated and vulnerable backgrounds. Most tutors plan well for sessions, and they support learners effectively to structure their individual development plans and set learning and personal targets.

Nearly all tutors use a range of well-chosen resources which engage learners' interest and provide a scaffold for learning. In many cases, over the last two years of the pandemic, tutors have created online materials. This has allowed them to have a useful bank of materials with which to support learners who may have to miss a class at any time.

In most cases, tutors use questions effectively to challenge and to stimulate learners' thinking, and their speaking skills. They provide useful verbal feedback for learners during sessions. In other cases, tutors provide detailed written feedback in response to learners' written exercises. In a very few cases, tutors' session planning, questioning and pace in sessions are not effective enough to motivate and maintain learners' interest.

Many essential skills, family learning and ESOL teachers provide initial assessment for learners. However, the partnership's plans to use a single initial assessment tool

for all learners to ensure a consistent picture of learners' baselines in literacy and numeracy are not yet fully in place.

Care, support and guidance

The partnership provides useful and appropriate information to prospective learners through hard copies of prospectuses and bilingual information online on social media platforms. The partnership uses these media efficiently to inform and guide learners at different stages on their learning journey. However, the experience of learners who do not wish to create social media accounts to engage with the partnership is different from those who do have such accounts. The partnership recognises the need to create a one-stop portal online to ensure equality of access and experience for prospective and present learners.

The partnership's learner handbook provides learners with a useful range of information, including guidance on financial support and how to use and access online learning platforms. Many learners report that the courses offered are beneficial to their mental health and well-being and the partnership focusses clearly on providing a wide range of support for learners and removing barriers to learning, for example by providing a creche in the Tŷ Calon centre.

In the best examples, tutors provide very helpful individual assistance to learners in their sessions. Tutors and managers review and adjust support for learners with additional learning needs (ALN) on essential skills and ESOL courses in useful quarterly meetings. Tutors in ESOL classes provide sensitive pastoral support when signposting learners who are refugees to agencies that can assist them. In courses for learners aspiring to be teaching assistants, learning coaches offer valuable additional support outside of formal sessions to assist learners to set personal targets and assess their progress.

On the whole, individual providers in the partnership track and monitor the progress of learners suitably. However, processes to track the progress of learners across the partnership in an overarching strategic manner are at an early stage of development. This, and the development of a management information system, are recognised as action points by the partnership in its improvement plan.

Providers within the partnership promote healthy lifestyle choices positively. The partnership focuses relevantly on promoting online safety and provides beneficial advice and guidance to tutors and learners.

A few learners take on responsibilities and contribute positively towards learner voice activities. The partnership does not have a consistent and overarching learner voice and course evaluation framework across providers, although it is aware of this in its improvement planning.

The partnership's arrangements for safeguarding and for educating learners about the dangers of radicalisation and extremism are appropriate. Procedures for recruitment and safeguarding of all the lead providers align with the corporate safeguarding policies of Flintshire and Wrexham local authorities. The partnership's lead providers present regular and detailed updates in quarterly meetings on health

and safety, disclosure and barring service (DBS) compliance, staff safeguarding update training and issues relating to extremism and radicalisation.

Leadership and management

The newly-formed partnership has strong support from both local authority chief education officers and from elected members. Senior officials and partnership managers from both authorities play an important role in managing and overseeing the partnership. Leaders at all levels model strong leadership and high expectations of partners and all members share the partnership's vision. The needs of learners in their communities are at the heart of the provision. Senior leaders and partnership members work closely to develop provision that focuses on hard-to-reach learners and those in need of considerable support before they can progress to more formal learning opportunities.

The partnership has used a tendering and commissioning model to appoint five lead providers who, along with Coleg Cambria and Adult Learning Wales, provide nearly all the provision. Leaders set very high aspirations for the partnership, the providers and for learners. The vision for the partnership is ambitious, and mirrors Welsh Government policies for community learning and for Wales to be a country of a second chance for learning.

Partners work well together on a basis of frankness, openness and honesty that allows challenge. They understand their roles and responsibilities, and the nature of each other's provision. This avoids duplication of classes and unhelpful competition. The partnership is active at seeking out additional funding to innovate and to further enhance provision. For example, access to one-to-one coaching has been developed through the Reaching Wider initiative.

There is thorough planning to assess the needs of learners in the two local authority areas using a variety of demographic, labour market information and intelligence from the large number of organisations that make up the wider partnership. The partnership plays an active role in helping communities to develop, and in assisting learners to overcome barriers to learning.

The partnership plans for succession planning carefully and effectively, to ensure that the smooth running of the partnership continues. This is supported by robust policies, strategies, and development plans. The partnership meets on a quarterly basis to review progress and is flexible in changing and adjusting as the provision develops.

Senior leaders have a clear awareness of the partnership's own strengths and areas for improvement. They recognise the challenges that lie ahead, and display a commitment and determination to address these, for example in developing a data management system to track outcomes and learner progression and developing mechanisms to capture learner voice feedback across the partnership.

The partnership's quality assurance and self-evaluation processes involve quarterly meetings with all lead providers. The meetings discuss observations, performance management and safeguarding. The partnership uses information from these meetings to plan its priorities for professional learning across the partnership well.

Individual lead providers currently operate their own quality assurance processes, including lesson observations. However, the current methodology and effectiveness of lesson observations are variable across partners. As a result, the partnership does not have a clear oversight of teaching and learning across the partnership.

The partnership has recently established a quality committee to monitor and review the partnership's self-evaluation processes and report and quality improvement plan and evaluate outcomes across the partnership. The quality committee contains appropriate senior leader representation and membership from partnership organisations. It is too early to assess the impact of the committees' work.

The partnership has also established a curriculum group to increase collaboration and dissemination of information between partners. There are already examples of how partner organisations have benefited through this participation in terms of sharing of good practice, ideas and useful contacts.

The partnership provides effective professional learning for staff, including themes such as digital delivery, neuro diversity and understanding issues relating to extremism and radicalisation.

Evidence base of the report

Before the inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the learner and staff questionnaires

During the inspection, inspectors normally:

- meet the chair of the partnership, governors (where appropriate), senior and middle leaders and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the partnership's work
- meet learners to discuss their work, to listen to their views about various aspects of their provider
- visit a broad sample of sessions
- observe and speak to learners outside of sessions
- look closely at the partnership's self-evaluation processes
- consider the partnership's quality improvement planning and looked at evidence to show how well the partnership had taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a wide range of partnership documents, including information on learner assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body (where appropriate), information on learners' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of learners, and records of staff training and professional learning

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the partnership and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

The report was produced in accordance with Section 77 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 20 th October 2022
Report Subject	Learning from the School Performance Monitoring Group
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview to the Education, Youth and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work of the School Performance Monitoring Group (SPMG). The purpose of the SPMG is to provide support and challenge to schools which are underperforming. It also includes a focus on ensuring that the resources of the Local Authority and the Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service for North Wales (GwE) are being appropriately directed to schools to support them in making progress and improving outcomes for their learners.

The group provides elected members with the opportunity to strengthen their knowledge of performance at individual school level in both the primary and secondary sector and actively work alongside officers in providing the necessary challenge and support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Education, Youth and Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee receives the report on the work undertaken by the School Performance Monitoring Group and notes the transition from national categorisation of schools to the new school improvement framework.
2	The Education, Youth and Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to confirm those members who would be available to represent the Committee at meetings of the School Performance Monitoring Group.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE MONITORING GROUP
1.01	<p>The criteria for identifying schools requiring monitoring was previously based on two main factors – those schools which were categorised as being in an Amber or Red support category by the local authority & GwE, as part of the national categorisation model, and those in an Estyn follow up category i.e. Estyn Review or the statutory categories of Significant Improvement or Special Measures.</p> <p>The Welsh Government suspended school categorisation for the 2020 to 2021 and 2021 to 2022 academic years, as part of its measures to reduce pressure on schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. Regional consortia and local authorities continued to work in partnership with schools to help provide them with the support they need to improve and to successfully implement reforms.</p>
1.02	<p>Prior to the pandemic, Estyn announced that inspections of schools would cease from September 2020 to August 2021 as the system moved towards implementation of the new curriculum. Estyn planned to continue to carry out follow up work for schools in Estyn categories. As a result of the pandemic however, all inspection work was suspended from 16th March 2020. Follow up work with schools in categories began again during the autumn term of 2021 and pilot inspections for schools in summer term 2022.</p> <p>From September 2022, Estyn have begun to inspect their schools under their new framework with plans to increase the number of inspections from September 2024. Moving forward, there are plans for Estyn to inspect schools more frequently.</p>
1.03	<p>In the summer term of 2022, the Welsh Government published a new school improvement framework, ensuring that learner progression and well-being is at the heart of all efforts to deliver high standards and aspirations. This means that National Categorisation has finished and will be replaced by a robust self-evaluation system where good practice can be shared and failure is urgently addressed</p> <p>As a result of these changes, there has been a need to review how schools are identified as needing to be monitored by the School Performance Monitoring Group. This has been part of the national and regional discussions on evolving regional processes to support schools on their self-improvement journey. Engagement with schools should facilitate the early identification of schools that are in need of support, to prevent them becoming a school causing concern.</p>
1.04	<p>The Headteacher and Chair of Governors of the identified schools are usually invited to a minimum of two meetings per academic year – the first to establish the context for the school’s current performance and strategies for improvement; the second, usually within two terms, to measure the impact of those strategies on pupil outcomes. Where the level of intervention required is high, meetings can be held on a termly basis. Headteachers are invited to share any documentation that exemplifies the</p>

	<p>work they are doing e.g. School Improvement Plans, data profiles, pupil tracking documents, samples of pupils' work. During the last two years, these meetings have been held online as a result of Covid.</p> <p>Wherever appropriate, outcomes of Estyn inspections or revisits are included in these discussions. The meetings provide the opportunity for the Headteacher and Chair of Governors to demonstrate their strength of leadership in tackling the issues faced by their school and outline progress in the implementation of the school's Post Inspection Action Plan.</p> <p>Officers are able to consider appropriate interventions and support needed by the school. Support is provided by Supporting Improvement Advisers (SIA) within GwE and by local authority services e.g., Welsh Language support, Integrated Youth Provision, Finance, Governance and Human Resources, as determined by the improvement priorities identified for each school.</p> <p>The GwE Flintshire Core Lead for primary or secondary schools and the Supporting Improvement Adviser attached to the school are invited to attend the meetings. Their reports and verbal contributions to the meeting on progress being made at the school provide a very useful source of evidence. At the end of each meeting action points are agreed and a summary report produced which is shared with SPMG members and the school.</p>
1.05	<p>It is the decision of the SPMG as to whether a school can be removed from the scrutiny of the panel because it has made sufficient progress, or whether it needs to remain because there are still outstanding performance issues to be addressed.</p>
1.06	<p>Since the last report to scrutiny in 2019, 3 primary schools and 3 secondary schools have been subject to monitoring by the SPMG. The challenges of the pandemic have meant necessary delays to the process as schools focused on firstly providing emergency childcare in the first period of lockdown and then subsequent periods of remote learning. At the end of the summer term 2022, there were 2 primary and 2 secondary schools under monitoring by the SPMG. The small number of schools reflects the very positive Estyn profile for schools in Flintshire.</p>
1.07	<p>The process recognises that sustainable school improvement takes time and that many of the challenges faced by schools are complex. The SPMG continues to identify common themes in relation to effective school improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The capacity of the leadership provided by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team, through effective self-evaluation and targeted improvement planning. • The strength of the governing body in understanding the school's position, their role in monitoring the school's performance and their capacity to hold the school to account. • The effectiveness of pupil tracking systems to identify those pupils at risk of under-performing and use of appropriate intervention strategies delivered by well- trained staff.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong commitment by the leadership team to ensure all staff have access to high quality, ongoing professional development. • The degree to which the school has a model of distributive leadership e.g. using other senior and middle managers effectively to ensure the success of the improvement journey.
1.08	<p>Through the work of the SPMG, members and officers have reflected that the process continues to be effective in contributing to an improvement in primary and secondary school outcomes over time, particularly in schools where there are significant and long term challenges.</p> <p>When Estyn inspected the local authority in the summer of 2019, they recognised that the portfolio’s arrangements for identifying schools causing concern work well, and in most cases lead to effective actions.</p> <p>The inspection identified that <i>“Officers and elected members in Flintshire know their schools and settings well and can outline clearly the relative strengths and areas for improvement. They recognise specific issues facing individual schools causing concern and act in a timely way to put in place the most appropriate support in collaboration with GwE”</i>.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Officer and Elected Member time.
2.02	Resources provided by GwE as part of the Service Level Agreement.
2.03	Resources within the Education & Youth Portfolio to provide specific short term interventions to support an improvement priority.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	<p>Poor performance places an individual school at risk in a number of ways e.g. it develops a poor reputation within the local community; it is more likely to have a poor Estyn inspection outcome; there is a potential for a drop in pupil numbers which then impacts on funding levels. These issues can all have a major outcome on the long term sustainability of a school.</p> <p>Having a number of schools performing badly with low pupil outcomes and poor Estyn judgements would also place the Council and GwE at risk as poor school performance is one of the main criteria used by Estyn and the Welsh Audit Office to make judgements about the quality of these organisations and their ability to effectively deliver core educational services.</p> <p>The SPMG has a proven track record of identifying schools at risk and providing the appropriate levels of challenge and support to enable the school to accelerate its own improvement journey. This has resulted in the Council having to make very limited use of formal powers of intervention.</p>

	The Education Portfolio has a detailed risk assessment which outlines key risks related to the delivery of education services and method statements which describe how these risks are managed. These are regularly reported to the Education, Youth and Culture Overview Scrutiny Committee.
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4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None required.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Welsh Government statutory guidance for schools and local authorities: schools causing concern https://gov.wales/schools-causing-concern-statutory-guidance-schools-and-local-authorities

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Vicky Barlow, Senior Manager for School Improvement Telephone: 01352 704019 E-mail: vicky.barlow@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	SPMG – School Performance Monitoring Group established in the Education and Youth Portfolio comprising officers and elected members Estyn – Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector for Education & Training in Wales GwE – Regional School Improvement Service for North Wales

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EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 20 th October, 2022
Report Subject	Council Plan 2023-28
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure; and
Report Author	Chief Executive; and Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council Plan for 2023 - 28 has been reviewed and refreshed to reflect the key priorities of the Council for the five-year term of the new administration.

The 'super-structure' of the Plan comprises of seven priorities and relevant sub-priorities. The seven priorities take a long-term view of recovery, projects and ambitions over the next five years. The priorities and sub-priorities relevant to the Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee are shown at Appendix 1.

The Council Plan 2023 - 28 will be published in a similar format to previous years, identifying actions aimed at achieving the Well-being objectives, priorities and sub-priorities. National and regional issues/risks which could impact on the achievement of these priorities will be identified and monitored.

Part 2 of the Council Plan will be considered by all Overview and Scrutiny committees to ensure full coverage of Part 1 of the Council Plan 2023/28 and its respective measures and their targets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	That the Committee support the proposed Priorities, Sub-priorities and Well-being objectives of the Council Plan 2023-28, as set out at Appendix 1.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	COUNCIL PLAN 2023-28
1.01	It is a requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 for organisations to ‘set out any actions to increase the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements.’ Plans for organisations should be robust; be clear on where it wants to go; and how it will get there.
1.02	A full review has taken place to ensure the appropriateness and relevance of the well-being objectives, priorities, and sub-priorities going forward. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• priority actions that continue from 2023 onwards for sustained attention• priority actions which could be removed as they have been completed or become operational (business as usual); and• emerging priority actions for 2023-28
1.03	The proposed structure of the Council Plan 2023-28 consists of seven priorities, well-being objectives, and sub-priorities as follows: Priority: Poverty Well-being Objective: Protecting our communities and people from poverty by supporting them to meet their basic needs and to be resilient Sub-priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Income Poverty- Child Poverty- Food Poverty- Fuel Poverty- Digital Poverty Priority: Affordable and Accessible Housing Well-being Objective: Housing in Flintshire meeting the needs of our residents and supporting safer communities Sub-priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Housing Support and Homeless Prevention- Housing Needs and Housing Options- Social Housing- Private Rented Sector- Empty Properties Priority: Green Society and Environment Well-being Objective: Limiting and enhancing the impact of the Council’s services on the natural environment and supporting the wider communities of Flintshire to reduce their own carbon footprint Sub-priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Phosphates Mitigation- Carbon Neutrality- Climate Change Adaptation- Flood Risk Management Strategy- Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment- Fleet Strategy

- Green Environment
- Flintshire Forest
- Green Access
- Renewable Energy
- Active and Sustainable Travel Options
- Circular Economy

Priority: Economy

Well-being Objective: Connecting communities and enabling sustainable economic recovery and growth

Sub-priorities:

- Rural Regeneration
- Levelling Up
- Town Centre Regeneration
- Business
- Transport Connectivity
- Digital Infrastructure
- Local Development Plan (LDP) Targets
- Spending Money for the benefit of Flintshire
- Reducing Worklessness

Priority: Personal and Community Well-being

Well-being Objective: Supporting people in need to live as well as they can

Sub-priorities:

- Independent Living
- Safeguarding
- Direct Provision to support people closer to home
- Local Dementia Strategy
- A Well-connected, Safe and Clean Local Environment.

Priority: Education and Skills

Well-being Objective: Enabling and Supporting Learning Communities

Sub-priorities:

- Educational Engagement and Achievement
- Digital Learning Opportunities
- Learning Environments
- Learning Community Networks
- Specialist Educational Provision
- Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP)
- Well-being

Priority: A Well-managed Council

Well-being Objective: A responsible, resourceful and trusted Council operating as efficiently as possible

Sub-priorities:

- People
- Anti-Racist and Anti-Discriminatory Council
- Financial Resilience
- Flintshire Assets
- Digital
- Partnerships

1.04	The final Council Plan will be available as a web-based document published on the Flintshire County Council website following adoption by County Council in June 2023.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
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2.01	Resource implications have been considered during preparation of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Capital Programme and will continue to be monitored during the regular budget monitoring and financial review arrangements.
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3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
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3.01	All Members will have the opportunity to consider and review the content of the draft Well-being objectives, priorities and sub-priorities including the opportunity to scrutinise targets set for 2023-28.
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4.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
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4.01	<p>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Long-term</td> <td rowspan="5">The Council Plan 2023-28 continues to be aligned to the Sustainable Development Principles across all of their working. A full integrated impact assessment will be carried out for Council Plan 2023-28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Involvement</td> </tr> </table> <p>Well-being Goals Impact</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Prosperous Wales</td> <td rowspan="7">Council Plan 2023-28 continues to provide evidence of alignment with the Well-being Goals. Specific strategic and policy reports include impact and risk assessments.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Resilient Wales</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Healthier Wales</td> </tr> <tr> <td>More equal Wales</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cohesive Wales</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vibrant Wales</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Globally responsible Wales</td> </tr> </table> <p>Council's Well-being Objectives The Council's Well-being objectives have been reviewed as part of this exercise. The refreshed set Well-being objectives is found within this report in section 1.03.</p>	Long-term	The Council Plan 2023-28 continues to be aligned to the Sustainable Development Principles across all of their working. A full integrated impact assessment will be carried out for Council Plan 2023-28	Prevention	Integration	Collaboration	Involvement	Prosperous Wales	Council Plan 2023-28 continues to provide evidence of alignment with the Well-being Goals. Specific strategic and policy reports include impact and risk assessments.	Resilient Wales	Healthier Wales	More equal Wales	Cohesive Wales	Vibrant Wales	Globally responsible Wales
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5.00	APPENDICES
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5.01	Appendix 1: Council Plan 2023-28 – Proposed Priorities, Sub-priorities and Well-being Objectives relevant to the Education, Youth & Culture OSC.
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6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Sam Perry, Performance and Risk Management Support Officer Telephone: 01352 701476 E-mail: Sam.perry@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	Council Plan: the document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council.
8.02	Medium Term Financial Strategy: a written strategy which gives a forecast of the financial resources which will be available to a Council for a given period, and sets out plans for how best to deploy those resources to meet its priorities, duties and obligations.
8.03	Council Plan Part 2: the document which underpins the Council Plan, which captures Measures, Tasks and Risks.

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Council Plan 2023-28 Development – Proposed Priorities

The following table provides an overview of proposed priorities for the Council Plan 2023-28

PRIORITY:	Poverty
Description/ Well-being Objective	Protecting our communities and people from poverty by supporting them to meet their basic needs and to be resilient
Child Poverty	Definition: Children who do not have access to adequate food, clothing, shelter and education to lead a healthy and active life

Priority Name	Education and Skills
Description/ Well-being Objective	Enabling and Supporting Learning Communities
Educational Engagement & Achievement	Definition: Providing diverse learning opportunities to support educational achievement in schools and communities
Digital Learning Opportunities	Definition: Supporting education engagement and achievement through proactive use of accessible digital media
Learning Environments	Definition: Creating aspirational and flexible learning environments
Learning Community Networks	Definition: Supporting our learning communities to engage and achieve through extensive partnership working unpinned by common safeguarding practices
Specialist Educational Provision	Definition: Extending local capacity to support learners with additional learning needs (ALN)
Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	Definition: Working with schools and partners to support the Welsh Government’s strategy to enable one million Welsh speakers by 2050
Well-Being	Definition: Working with schools and partners to provide opportunities for children, young people and the education workforce to engage in activities which support their emotional health and well-being

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