

# Public Document Pack

## Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

### Bridgend County Borough Council



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Gofynnwch am / Ask for:

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

**Dyddiad/Date:** Tuesday, 28 November 2023

Dear Councillor,

#### **SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1**

A meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 will be held in the Hybrid in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB on **Monday, 4 December 2023 at 11:00.**

#### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence  
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest  
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008 (including whipping declarations)
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 8  
To receive for approval the minutes of the meeting of 01/12/2022
4. Universal Primary Free School Meals(UPFSM) and Operational Issues within the Catering Service 9 - 20

#### Invitees:

Councillor Jon-Paul Blundell – Cabinet Member Education

Lindsay Harvey - Corporate Director – Education and Family Support

Robin Davies – Group Manager, Business Support

Louise Kerton – Team Manager – Catering Services

Robbie Owen - Headteacher, Penybont Primary School

Chris Jones – Headteacher, Llangynwyd Primary School

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

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7. Urgent Items

To consider any item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Yours faithfully

**K Watson**

Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

Councillors:

RJ Collins  
M J Evans  
H Griffiths  
D M Hughes

Councillors

M Jones  
J Llewellyn-Hopkins  
I M Spiller  
T Thomas

Councillors

JH Tildesley MBE  
A Williams  
AJ Williams  
E D Winstanley

Registered Representatives

Angela Clarke  
Samantha Lambert-Worgan

Church in Wales Representative  
Parent Governor Representative - Special  
School

# Agenda Item 3

## SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 - THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2022

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 HELD IN REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2022 AT 11:00

#### Present

Councillor A Williams – Chairperson

RJ Collins  
T Thomas

M J Evans  
AJ Williams

H Griffiths  
E D Winstanley

D T Harrison

#### Apologies for Absence

M Jones and J Llewellyn-Hopkins

#### Registered Representatives

Rev Canon Edward Evans      Church in Wales  
-

#### Officers:

Lucy Beard	Scrutiny Officer
Robin Davies	Group Manager - Business Strategy and Performance
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Alix Howells	Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager
Rachel Keepins	Democratic Services Manager
Jessica Mclellan	Scrutiny Officer
Michael Pitman	Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services
Gaynor Thomas	School Programme Manager

#### Invitees:

#### 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

#### 2. WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN (WESP)

The Cabinet Member for Education and the Corporate Director – Education and Family Support made opening remarks.

The Group Manager - Learner Support briefly presented the report, the purpose of which was to update the Committee as to the implementation and the progress of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, a 10 year plan due to end in 2032.

The Chairperson thanked the Cabinet Member and Officers and Members discussed the following:

- Whether Councillors could observe the Welsh Education Forum (WEF).
- The School Improvement Group, which focussed on improving the standards in all Bridgend schools in line with WESP which was attended by the Chair of SOSOC 1 providing a link from the Committee

## SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 - THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2022

- The availability and quality of resources for education in Welsh, the finances to source required textbooks and, given the pressure on budgets, the significant investment in digital information available by way of “one to one” chrome book availability within the Welsh Medium schools and further resources available within the online platform via Hwb.
- The outcome of the consultation, which was widely distributed, feedback from members of the WEF and amendments made, the measures undertaken to ensure that Estyn’s requirements were met including: revisiting the membership of WEF, establishing subgroups to ensure a wider reach, steps taken, and information on the work completed had been shared with subgroups.
- The aims and delivery timescale of the action plan to be submitted to Welsh Government (WG) on 16 December 2022 which was a comprehensive 5 year plan generated by all stakeholders and delivery partners and would be shared as soon as approval was granted.
- The financial mechanisms that will be explored, additional funding received by local authorities from the WG following a commitment to implement WESP including the funding for the 4 hubs, modernisation of schools and further investments through negotiations with WG.
- Catchment areas for Welsh Medium Schools, current legislation not allowing for cross county catchment, and consideration of a Welsh seedling school.
- Parents discontinuing children’s education in the medium of Welsh from nursery to primary and the creation of a Welsh Medium seedling school.
- Variability in transition rates, the location of schools being a factor, opening childcare hubs in Bro Ogwr and the seedling school to facilitate the transition, and a new development in Bettws and Blackmill being created to assist.
- Fewer children joining Welsh Medium secondary school because their families are not Welsh Speakers and parents sending children to Welsh Medium primary schools due to proximity, and capacity within the English medium schools.
- Praise for quality of Welsh Medium education, the quality of facilities, costs of refurbishment and maintenance work for schools in the borough, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools modernisation and plans to move Llangynwyd to a more up to date facility.
- The sufficiency in relation to the expected growth regarding relocating Ysgol Bro Ogwr and increasing the pupil numbers, the Pupil Admission Number in the 10 year WESP, further plans to increase provision in the east of the Borough and a significant expansion at Bro Ogwr.
- The Welsh Language impact assessment form developed by the local authority formulated as part of consultation so questions as to the adverse effect on the Welsh Language would be asked and contributions and proposals from stakeholders will be requested as to whether the Welsh or English languages will have an impact.
- The expansion of the Welsh Medium provision in the Borough, including the doubling of capacity of Ysgol Y Ferch O'r Sger school in Cornelly and a Welsh medium school in Porthcawl in the form of the seedling school.

## SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 - THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2022

- Positivity about the support from the Directorate and praise and recognition for headteachers of the Welsh Medium schools for the services provided and the work done by schools.
- The commitment to meeting additional learning needs for children in the Welsh Medium, the moderate learning difficulty centre opened and recognised in conjunction with the development of Ysgol Bro Ogwr, the need for an observation class through the medium of Welsh, and the focus to promote, market and celebrate, recognising the work of staff and headteachers.
- The importance of sustaining growth in Bridgend, the intention to offer post 16 qualifications in collaboration with Llanhari, to offer the best level of qualifications to learners to bring back those qualifications as Teachers.
- Challenges and actions needed for the recruitment and retention of staff and incentivising them to train and remain in the profession.
- The need to work with Estyn to understand the challenges faced by the Welsh medium sector and subject specialism, the need for Qualifications Wales to ensure the qualifications are equally available in both English and Welsh and the resources aligned.
- The importance of working with other providers, e.g. Bridgend College and the involvement of Central South Consortium with English medium schools to facilitate qualifications in Welsh being made available.
- Action being taken to promote the Welsh Language with the business communities including, in discussion, with Bridgend College about how they could engage with employers, increasing the throughput of learners who were comfortable to work in Welsh, recognising and celebrating what those who are qualified in the language can bring to local businesses, and working with various Officers to advertise jobs in their magazine.
- Opportunities available for teachers in the English medium to learn and convert to teaching in the Welsh medium, with Central South Consortium offering support depicted in Subgroup outcome 6 and 7.
- Many schools had taken up the offer to take a sabbatical to learn Welsh and move from the English medium to the Welsh Medium and the WG grant being used to increase capacity and entice teachers from the English medium to Welsh.
- The leaflet being provided to parents to raise awareness and encourage Welsh medium education from pre-birth age, that indicated pathways in Welsh medium education to help parents and carers to make positive and informed choices.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions for the Invitees, thanked the Invitees for their attendance and, advised that they may leave the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** Following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee made the following Recommendation:

1. That the Cabinet Member for Education raise with the Welsh Government Minister for Education whether there should be a change in legislation to allow for schools not in the Bridgend County Borough to be included in

Bridgend catchment areas to ensure parents have availability close to their homes to transition their children from primary to secondary education.

and the Committee requested:

2. A written response from the Cabinet Member for Education setting out how Members can feed into the Welsh in Education Forum to include detail on attending meetings and providing input.
3. A written response regarding the subgroups for the five-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) including an action plan and delivery timetable to enable the Committee to monitor in the future.
4. The Governance and Action plan; visibility of projects mapped out to show routes of governance and how various projects will be monitored.
5. An update, when appropriate, on the provision of Welsh Medium education in the South East of the County with input from the Corporate Director for Education and Family Support and written feedback from the Cabinet Member for Education following his meeting with the Welsh Government Minister for Education.
6. Further information on the financial implications of the implementation of the WESP to include detail on what has been done thus far to source additional funding and from where and how future funding would be obtained to maintain the WESP Co-Ordinator position.
7. Data on how many learners travel into County Borough from outside the catchment areas to attend the Welsh Medium Schools and more information on the support available to parents who would like their child(ren) to receive a Welsh Medium education or would like them to have the opportunity to develop the Welsh language in English Medium Schools.
8. An update on the timescale for the refurbishment of Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd and its place in priority compared to all schools being considered for maintenance required.

3. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the Committee with the Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appendix A for discussion and consideration, requested any specific information the Committee identified to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wished to attend, requested the Committee to identify any further items for consideration on the FWP having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.3, asked the Committee to note the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meeting in Appendix B and asked the Committee to note that the FWP and Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet for the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members discussed the consistent budget pressure due to the Authority's generous home to school transport offer and agreed that it would likely be considered in more detail during Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget discussions.

The Committee requested that the following item be considered for addition to the 2023-24 Annual Forward Programme at the next Scrutiny Planning Meeting for SOSC 1:

- The Action Plan relating to the 5-year WESP to include performance monitoring and risk management. Members requested that schools who have begun implementation of the WESP be invited to discuss their experiences.

Members requested that English and Welsh-medium schools be included in the scope of the Catchment Areas Information Report to be provided.

There were no further items identified for consideration on the FWP having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.3, and this could be revisited at the next meeting.

There were no requests to include specific information in the item for the next meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee approved the FWP in Appendix A, subject to the incorporation of the above requests, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in Appendix B and noted that the FWP, Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet and any updates from the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of COSC.

4. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

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<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>4 DECEMBER 2023</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>UNIVERSAL PRIMARY FREE SCHOOL MEALS (UPFSM) AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES WITHIN THE CATERING SERVICE</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>LINDSAY HARVEY (CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>ROBIN DAVIES (GROUP MANAGER, BUSINESS SUPPORT)</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>There is no effect on policy framework or procedure rules.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<b>The report provides an update on the implementation of universal primary free school meals (UPFSM) across Bridgend schools. The report also identifies how the UPFSM offer is currently impacting on the Catering Service and schools and provides a general update on some of the difficulties faced by the Catering Service and schools in respect of progressing full implementation by September 2024.</b>

## 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 (SOSC1) with an update on progress in respect of the implementation of Welsh Government’s universal primary free school meals (UPFSM) initiative and to identify the main associated operational issues within the Catering Service.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The implementation of the roll-out of Welsh Government’s commitment to UPFSM started in September 2021. Welsh Government’s expectation is that all primary school-age pupils will have the option to benefit from a free school meal by September 2024. However, each local authority has been allowed to determine the phasing of implementation, based on the acknowledgement that each local authority’s position is unique.
- 2.2 Following Welsh Government’s Cabinet statement released by Jeremy Miles MS (Minister for Education and Welsh Language) on 17 December 2021, regarding the roll-out of UPFSM, officers immediately started work to ensure that adequate school kitchen and dining facilities would be in place in time for implementation of the first phase in September 2022. Surveys of kitchens were commissioned across all primary and special schools to help identify where changes to spaces, equipment,

services, and storage were required. When the surveys were complete, the Catering Service arranged to meet with each school during March 2022 to discuss the results of the surveys and plan a way forward. This work contributed to each school being 'kitchen ready' to deliver the UPFSM offer.

- 2.3 However, it was acknowledged at the time, that there may be other non-catering issues, specific to individual schools. Questions were developed, which each school was asked to respond to, to act as an aide memoire in identifying relevant issues, and to allow schools to start planning for any changes that would likely be needed in order to fully implement UPFSM.
- 2.4 Principally, these 'school ready' questions related to:
- The possible impact on the school timetable and the overall timing of the school day.
  - The requirements for adequate lunchtime support/supervision.
  - The adequacy of dining facilities/access.
  - The administration of the offer in each school.
- 2.5 It is important to note that, at this time, the pandemic was ongoing and there were additional considerations regarding COVID-19-related controls and risk assessments that further complicated the needs of each school to plan for implementation of UPFSM.
- 2.6 It is apparent, from the implementation journey to date, that the situation in each school is unique, not least due to the mix of old and new school buildings and general access to facilities and resources, both physical and human, across each school. Furthermore, the impact on schools should not be underestimated, with schools having varying levels of support staff available to them, with the requirements for supervision of the dining facilities, an important additional burden on schools. No additional revenue funding has been provided by Welsh Government to support schools implement this initiative. However, significant capital grant has been provided and this is identified later in this report.
- 2.7 The socio-economic mix of pupils varies from school to school and in some schools a large percentage of pupils are already eligible for free school meals (eFSM) due to socio-economic circumstances. Therefore, the introduction of UPFSM in these schools is likely to have less impact operationally, as a larger proportion of pupils are already eligible for free school meals. At the end of the summer term 2022-2023, in August 2023, there were 3,755 primary-school age eFSM pupils from 12,866 in total (that is, 29.1%).
- 2.8 Furthermore, in some schools, the uptake of school meals (whether paid or due to eFSM) is relatively low. In others, the overall uptake is high. This means there are varying challenges across schools to absorb the likely additional numbers of pupils eligible for a free meal, under the UPFSM offer.

### 3. Current situation/proposal

#### UPFSM

- 3.1 As already identified, the implementation of UPFSM is challenging. Table 1 below shows the current (January 2023) population of primary school pupils in Bridgend.

**Table 1**

**Primary school-age population (January 2023 - Pupil Level Annual School Census)**

Age Range	Year Group	Primary Schools	Special Schools	Pupil Referral Unit	Total Pupils
2 - 3	Nursery	261	0	0	261
3 - 4	Nursery	1,419	0	0	1,419
4 - 5	Reception	1,491	12	0	1,503
5 - 6	Year 1	1,554	13	0	1,567
6 - 7	Year 2	1,594	13	1	1,608
7 - 8	Year 3	1,597	18	0	1,615
8 - 9	Year 4	1,576	19	0	1,595
9 - 10	Year 5	1,676	24	0	1,700
10 - 11	Year 6	1,698	35	1	1,734
<b>Total</b>		<b>12,866</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13,002</b>

- 3.2 With Welsh Government's expectation that all primary school-age pupils are eligible for a free school meal, based on the current cohort of pupils, 13,002 pupils will be eligible from September 2024.
- 3.3 The implementation of UPFSM across primary school year groups has been broken down into several phases. It is important to note that planned timescales as shown in Table 2 below, are not committed and are subject to several dependencies, in particular, the completion of significant capital investment across many schools.

**Table 2**

**Current status of the implementation of UPFSM for each primary school year group (November 2023)**

Year group	Planned implementation	Status	Current daily cost of a school meal
Nursery	January 2024	Planned	£2.20
Reception	September 2022	Implemented	Free
Year 1	April 2023	Implemented	Free
Year 2	April 2023	Implemented	Free
Year 3	September 2023	Implemented	Free
Year 4	April 2024	Planned	£2.20
Year 5	September 2024	Planned	£2.20
Year 6	September 2024	Planned	£2.20

- 3.4 Therefore, 6,293 pupils are currently eligible for UPFSM. For those primary school-age pupils not currently eligible, there is currently a daily charge of £2.20 for a school meal.
- 3.5 The cost of a school meal in Bridgend for primary school pupils has been static since the last increase in 2017-2018.
- 3.6 It is also important to note that it is only those pupils currently identified as 'planned' in Table 2 above that are currently required to pay for school meals and also who are not otherwise eFSM.
- 3.7 As referenced above, there are a number of dependencies and constraints that are currently impacting the implementation strategy. These are as follows:
- Each school's ability to absorb the additional eligibility beyond the number of means-tested eFSM pupils.
  - Catering Service provision.
  - Capital investment requirements.
  - Roll-out strategy.
  - Funding, in particular, arrangements for Nursery pupils.
- 3.8 There are currently a number of risks associated with the further roll-out of UPFSM in line with Table 2 above as follows:

#### **UPFSM meal cost**

- 3.9 The current cost of producing a primary school unit (meal) by the Catering Service is £3.69 (based on summer term 2022-2023 information) excluding overheads for utilities (in particular, energy costs), as there is currently no way of separating these costs between school buildings and kitchens. The local authority charges £2.20 per day for pupils not yet eligible for UPFSM or eFSM as paying pupils. For UPFSM pupils, Welsh Government provides £2.90 per day. Therefore, the local authority is currently subsidising the cost of primary paid and UPFSM provision at £1.49 and £0.79 per meal respectively.
- 3.10 Welsh Government is currently reviewing the £2.90 per meal rate and therefore this may increase or decrease in the future.

#### **Capital grants**

- 3.11 Table 3 below details Welsh Government's provision of capital grants to support the roll-out and implementation of UPFSM. A grant of £59,211 was also provided as part of the Local Authority Education Grant 2021-2022 which the local authority used to support the initial surveys of kitchens to identify likely capital investment requirements.

**Table 3**

**UPFSM capital grants awarded to the local authority since 2021**

Capital grant 1 (school meal infrastructure)	£1,162,705
Capital grant 2 (school meal infrastructure)	£1,627,787
Capital grant 3 (business case – see para. 3.15)	£1,035,076
<b>Total grant</b>	<b>£3,825,568</b>

**Capital requirements**

3.12 At the launch of the UPFSM initiative, Welsh Government acknowledged the need to provide capital investment. Of the 60 schools (including The Bridge Alternative Provision) in Bridgend, 51 would require some level of investment to support UPFSM implementation (that is, 48 primary schools, 2 special schools and 1 pupil referral unit). The capital grant money (provided in stages) was provided to support the following:

- purchasing new equipment;
- upgrading existing equipment;
- upgrading existing kitchen/dining facilities; and
- works to increase the capacity of school meal infrastructure.

3.13 The majority of the additional kitchen equipment has been installed including new cookers, fridges, freezers, and dishwashers and so on. Significant works to increase electrical loading in kitchens has been progressed, as well as other works to ensure kitchens are able to deliver sufficient meals to meet likely take-up of the UPFSM offer. Notable improvements are as follows:

- 37 primary school kitchens have had major works to upgrade electrical supplies for new equipment.
- 20 primary school kitchens have had combination ovens installed.
- 20 primary school kitchens have had dishwashers installed.
- 2 primary schools have had large food planetary mixers installed.
- 39 primary school kitchens have had additional refrigeration installed.
- 8 primary school kitchens have had gas burner ovens or induction hobs installed.

3.14 However, two primary schools are yet to receive their upgraded kitchen equipment.

3.15 Given the unique situation in four schools in Bridgend with limited kitchen and dining facilities, an additional bid via a business case for additional grant (grant 3 in Table 3 above) was successful and an additional £1.035m was provided by Welsh government for:

- Cwmfelin Primary School;
- Newton Primary School;
- Bryntirion Infants School; and
- Trelales Primary School.

3.16 Of the four schools identified above, work has progressed to purchase three modular kitchen/dining pods for Cwmfelin Primary School, Newton Primary School,

and Bryntirion Infants School. There are planning requirements and other issues that will need to be overcome as part of the process. Nevertheless, it is hoped that these will be installed by summer 2024 in readiness for the start of the new school year in September 2024 and Welsh Government's expected implementation deadline.

- 3.17 However, there may be a delay in progressing the proposed extension at Trelales Primary School. An ecological survey has identified the likely presence of bats at the school. Therefore, there is a requirement to undertake surveys during the period May to September 2024 and, if present, to introduce mitigation measures. This will result in construction commencing later than planned. Works could potentially start in January 2025 and finish in May 2025. Therefore, the local authority is currently working to identify and implement an interim solution to ensure that the UPFSM offer is available at the school from September 2024, in line with other schools in Bridgend, even though the capital work will at this time, likely be unfinished.

### **Catering Service - current situation/issues**

- 3.18 There are currently 490 core-funded posts within the Catering Service. The core expenditure budget is £1,541,720 (2023-2024). Additional income is generated from schools via service level agreements between individual schools and the Catering Service to provide school meals. Therefore, the total budget for the service (including the service level agreement income from schools) is £3,408,501 (2023-2024). However, there was a projected overspend of £390k at quarter 2 in 2023-2024. Therefore, there are significant financial pressures on the service, principally due to staffing costs.
- 3.19 It is important to note that as well as the provision of meals in Bridgend schools which is increasing in line with the phased implementation of UPFSM, there is a statutory requirement for school meal provision in all schools. However, schools can determine independently whether they wish to accept via a service level agreement (SLA), the local authority's offer to provide meals via the Catering Service, or to act independently. Of the 60 schools in Bridgend, all primary and special schools are part of the local authority SLA. Of the 9 secondary schools in Bridgend, 6 are part of the local authority SLA and 3 provide school meals independently. Those schools are Pencoed Comprehensive School, Maesteg School and Porthcawl Comprehensive School.
- 3.20 Although there is no statutory provision to provide meals, at home, for vulnerable older persons, the Catering Service, on behalf of the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate, provides the Meals-at-Home Service, which delivers meals to approximately 100 clients at home in the community, with approximately 50 to 60 meals a day. Similarly, the Catering Service provides meal provision for clients at Bridgend Resource Centre on behalf of the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate and provides free breakfast provision to primary and special schools.

### **Staffing**

- 3.21 The main issues related to staffing within the Catering Service are as follows:
- Significant pressure on limited staff resources within the Catering Service.

- Reliance on Catering Service staff working overtime daily to deliver the current required service.
- With the increase of eligible pupils in primary schools, the Catering Service is delivering meals, on average, to 6,900 pupils daily. Together with the requirements to also provide staffing to secondary schools, there is considerable fatigue within the staffing base. This is compounded by the significant number of vacancies within the service as follows:
  - 129 vacancies in primary schools.
  - 19 vacancies in secondary schools.
  - 19 vacancies in 'breakfast clubs. This excludes Coety Primary School, Trelales Primary School and Brackla Primary School as these schools have been unable to reopen their breakfast clubs for some time, due to insufficient staff being available, even though there have been numerous recruitment exercises.
  - There are 2 vacancies at Bridgend Resource Centre.
  - Currently, there are only 2 permanent Meals-at-Home Service drivers, even though 6 are required to run the service. Therefore, there is an ongoing reliance on relief staff, although their availability cannot be guaranteed.
  - There is also sickness across the service that cannot be absorbed and must be covered by relief staff, in particular, cooks and assistant cooks.
  - In general, there is an ageing workforce with a significant proportion of staff having reached the age of 60.
- With the implementation of UPFSM, there is a need to recruit additional staff into the Catering Service as the offer expands. For example, three additional cooks will be required when the new kitchen facilities are built for Newton Primary School, Trelales Primary School, and Bryntirion Infants School.
- Pencoed Comprehensive School has expressed an interest in returning to the local authority's Catering Service from April 2024. There will be additional staffing implications if this is progressed.
- The six area supervisors in the service are routinely covering daily absences in kitchens and for at least half of their contracted hours.
- Due to the working time directive and case law, Catering Service staff can accrue annual leave during sickness or maternity/paternity leave. For staff who are absent due to sickness or maternity/paternity leave during a school holiday, or part of a school holiday, annual leave and bank holidays will continue to accrue and will need to be taken prior to returning to work. Therefore, managing the impact of staff taking leave before they return to work, adds additional pressure on the service.

## **Food inflation**

3.22 In March 2021, food inflation in the UK was -1.4%. Since then, the impact of the pandemic and in particular the war in Ukraine has seen food inflation increase significantly. In March 2023, food inflation nationally stood at 19.1% (source: Office for National Statistics).

3.23 In September 2023, food inflation stood at 12.2%. The current trend is that food inflation is reducing. However, the ongoing impact of significant high wholesale food prices is having a marked impact on cost to the service for the provision of school meals. Nevertheless, it is important to note that there are no plans to compromise on the quality of school meals because of increased food costs due to inflation and support is provided from the central price inflation budget. This is particularly important in respect of the local authority's statutory duty to ensure that school meals meet required nutritional standards as identified in the [Healthy Eating in Schools \(Wales\) Measure 2009](#) and [The Healthy Eating in Schools \(Nutritional Standards and Requirements\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2013](#).

## **Waste management**

3.24 Currently, the Catering Service only provides kitchen refuse collections in primary schools and special schools. In secondary schools, kitchen refuse is the responsibility of the school. There is no kitchen recycling available in primary schools. Food waste recycling across all schools has previously been considered but has been discounted due to high costs. The current budget for waste management for 2023-2024 is £49k. The current projected spend for 2023-2024, due primarily to the current and projected uptake of UPFSM, is approximately £60k. This does not consider the new refuse regulations that come into force in April 2024 that are discussed below.

## **New refuse regulations April 2024**

3.25 The legal requirements to separate waste will affect all workplaces (businesses, the public and third sector) from April 2024.

3.26 The following materials will need to be separated for collection, and then collected separately:

- food (this relates to premises that produce more than 5kg of food waste a week).
- paper and card;
- glass; and
- metal, plastic, and cartons and other fibre-plastic composite packaging of a similar composition.

3.27 Due to the impact of this legislation, there will be significant additional costs as well as operational practicalities within each school kitchen for sorting recyclable waste. Furthermore, there will likely be increased vehicular movements on school sites for the additional multiple collections for each of the above-mentioned categories of waste.

3.28 There will also be a ban on the following:

- sending food waste to sewers; and
- separately collected waste going to incineration plants and landfills and ban all wood waste going to landfill.

3.29 With the increased number of meals being produced because of the UPFSM offer, it is likely that refuse charges will increase significantly due to the requirement for the

sorting, segregation and recycling of waste and recycling of waste, in particular food waste. This will therefore place additional financial pressure on an already strained budget.

#### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty, and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services, and functions. This is an information report. Therefore, it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment in the production of this report. Furthermore, it is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

#### **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

- 5.1 The well-being goals and principles prescribed for within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 connect directly to the approach to supporting children, young people, vulnerable older people, and families. The approach is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle and more specifically as follows:

##### **Long term**

The Catering Service focuses on meeting the needs of children, young people, and vulnerable older persons and consequently, their families.

##### **Prevention**

While the Catering Service does not directly support prevention in the provision of school meals, it provides meals to vulnerable older persons in their own home via the Meals-at-Home Service, who would otherwise require alternative service provision, possibly outside of their own home.

##### **Integration**

The approach of the Catering Service services addresses the need for a coherent delivery of economic, social, environmental, and cultural outcomes in particular working closely with the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate to provide the Meals-at-Home Service.

##### **Collaboration**

A fundamental principal of the approach to the delivery of meals by Catering Services is to improve collaboration and creating a unified system.

## **Involvement**

A fundamental principal of the approach to the way the Catering Service involves pupils in decision making, in particular, is through the provision of the development of school meals menus, via dynamic engagement with school councils.

5.2 The work of the Catering Service aligns with corporate objectives 1-7, as identified in the council's Corporate Plan 'Delivering Together' 2023-2028, as follows:

1. Protecting our most vulnerable
2. Fair work, skilled, jobs and thriving towns
3. Creating thriving valleys communities
4. Helping people meet their potential
5. Responding to the climate and nature emergency
6. Making people feel valued, heard and part of their community
7. Supporting people to be healthy and happy

5.3 It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals or corporate wellbeing objectives as a result of this report.

## **6. Climate change implications**

6.1 There are no climate change implications resulting from this report. However, the Catering Service, as a significant provider of food to children, young people, and vulnerable older persons, is committed principally through the procurement of goods and ancillary support services, to supporting the implementation of the local authority's 'Bridgend 2030 – Net Zero Carbon Strategy' and Welsh Government's carbon reduction commitments.

## **7. Safeguarding and corporate parent implications**

7.1 There are no safeguarding or corporate parenting implications as the result of this report.

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 Significant capital investment has been required to bring school kitchens up to a required standard and of sufficient capacity to deliver UPFSM. Welsh Government has allocated grants of £3,825,568 since 2021 for this purpose.

8.2 There are financial pressures on the service, primarily due to staffing costs, with a projected overspend of £390k at quarter 2 in 2023-2024.

8.3 In addition, the local authority is currently subsidising the cost of primary paid and UPFSM provision at £1.49 and £0.79 per meal respectively reflecting the shortfall in the price per meal/income from Welsh Government compared with the actual cost of provision per meal.

8.4 Food inflation rates have increased from -1.4% in March 2021 to a high of 19.1% in March 2023. While they have decreased to 12.2% in September 2023, there has still

been pressure placed on the central price inflation budget to support these increased costs.

8.5 New legal requirements being introduced in April 2024 to separate waste will further impact on the catering services budget.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 It is recommended that the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1:

- considers the contents of the report; and
- makes any comments on the implementation of UPFSM, or the wider Catering Service, as it sees fit.

## **Background documents**

None

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# Agenda Item 6

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>4 DECEMBER 2023</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL &amp; REGULATORY SERVICES, HR &amp; CORPORATE POLICY</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>MERYL LAWRENCE SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER – SCRUTINY</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>The work of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committees relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Council’s Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend. Any changes to the structure of the Scrutiny Committees and the procedures relating to them would require the Bridgend County Borough Council Constitution to be updated.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p><b>The Council’s Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.</b></p> <p><b>The Council’s Constitution also provides for each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard for the Council’s Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework, for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to have oversight and refer any cross-cutting topics to a Committee or Research and Evaluation Panel.</b></p> <p><b>The Committee is asked to consider and agree its Forward Work Programme, identify any specific information it wishes to be included in and any invitees they wish to attend for the reports for the next two Committee meetings, identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the criteria set out in the report, consider the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet and note that the Forward Work Programme and the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be reported to the next meeting of COSC.</b></p>

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Present the Committee with the Forward Work Programme (**Appendix A**) for consideration and approval;
- b) Request any specific information the Committee identifies to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Request the Committee to identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 3.5 of this report;
- d) Present the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet (**Appendix B**) to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meeting;
- e) Advise that the Committee's updated Forward Work Programme, any feedback from the Committee and the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet will be reported to the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC).

## 2. Background

2.1 The Council's Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.

2.2 The Council's Constitution also provides for each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard for the Council's Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework, for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to have oversight and refer any cross-cutting topics to a Committee or Research and Evaluation Panel.

### Best Practice / Guidance

2.3 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's (CfGS) Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the Forward Work Programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be coordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.

2.4 Forward Work Programmes need to be manageable to maximize the effective use of the limited time and resources of Scrutiny Committees. It is not possible to include every topic proposed. Successful Scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members need to be selective, while also being able to demonstrate clear arguments for including or excluding topics.

- 2.5 The CfGS's guide to effective work programming 'A Cunning Plan?' makes the following reference to the importance of good work programming:

*'Effective work programming is the bedrock of an effective scrutiny function. Done well it can help lay the foundations for targeted, incisive and timely work on issues of local importance, where scrutiny can add value. Done badly, scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal.'*

### **3. Current situation / proposal**

#### Forward Work Programme

- 3.1 Following the approval of the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meeting dates at the Annual Meeting of Council on 17 May 2023, the standing statutory reports to this Scrutiny Committee of: the Corporate Plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Budget, Performance and Budget Monitoring, etc. have been mapped to the appropriate timely meeting dates into a draft Forward Work Programme.
- 3.2 The draft outline Forward Work Programme for each Scrutiny Committee have been prepared using a number of difference sources, including:
- Corporate Risk Assessment;
  - Directorate Business Plans;
  - Previous Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme report topics / minutes;
  - Committee / Member proposed topics;
  - Policy Framework;
  - Cabinet Work Programme;
  - Discussions with Corporate Directors;
  - Performance Team regarding the timing of performance information.
- 3.3 There are items where there is a statutory duty for Policy Framework documents to be considered by Scrutiny, e.g., the MTFS including draft budget proposals scheduled for consideration in January 2024, following which COSC will coordinate the conclusions and recommendations from each of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees in a report on the overall strategic overview of Cabinet's draft Budget proposals to the meeting of Cabinet in February 2024.
- 3.4 An effective Forward Work Programme will identify the issues that the Committee wishes to focus on during the year and provide a clear plan. However, at each meeting the Committee will have an opportunity to review this as the Forward Work Programme Update will be a standing item on the Agenda, detailing which items are scheduled for future meetings and be requested to clarify any information to be included in reports and the list of invitees. The Forward Work Programme will remain flexible and will be revisited at each COSC meeting with input from each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee reported and any updated information gathered from Forward Work Programme meetings with Corporate Directors.

## Identification of Further Items

- 3.5 The Committee is reminded of the Criteria Form which Members can use to propose further items for the FWP which the Committee can then consider for prioritisation at a future meeting. The Criteria Form emphasises the need to consider issues such as impact, risk, performance, budget and community perception when identifying topics for investigation and to maximise the impact scrutiny can have on a topic and the outcomes for people. Criteria which can help the Committee come to a decision on whether to include a referred topic, are set out below:

### Recommended Criteria for Selecting Scrutiny Topics:

PUBLIC INTEREST:	The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny;
ABILITY TO CHANGE:	Priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence, and add value to;
PERFORMANCE:	Priority should be given to the areas in which the Council is not performing well;
EXTENT:	Priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or large parts of the County Borough, or a large number of the Authority's service users or its population;
REPLICATION:	Work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.

### Reasons to Reject Scrutiny Topics:

- The issue is already being addressed / being examined elsewhere and change is imminent.
- The topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and can be referred there).
- Scrutiny involvement would have limited / no impact upon outcomes.
- The topic may be sub-judice or prejudicial.
- The topic is too broad to make a review realistic and needs refining / scoping.
- New legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected within the next year.
- The topic area is currently subject to inspection or has recently undergone substantial change / reconfiguration.

### Corporate Parenting

- 3.6 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a local authority towards care experienced children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'Corporate Parent', therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for care experienced children and young people in Bridgend.

- 3.7 In this role, it is suggested that Members consider how each item they consider affects care experienced children and young people, and in what way can the Committee assist in these areas.
- 3.8 Scrutiny Champions can greatly support the Committee in this by advising them of the ongoing work of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.
- 3.9 The Forward Work Programme for the Committee is attached as **Appendix A** for the Committee's consideration.
- 3.10 The Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at the previous meeting is attached as **Appendix B**.

#### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

- 4.1 The Protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

#### **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

- 5.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 Ways of Working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 Ways of Working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long-term - The approval of this report will assist in the planning of Scrutiny business in both the short-term and in the long-term on its policies, budget and service delivery.
- Prevention - The early preparation of the Forward Work Programme allows for the advance planning of Scrutiny business where Members are provided an opportunity to influence and improve decisions before they are made by Cabinet.
- Integration - The report supports all the wellbeing objectives.
- Collaboration - Consultation on the content of the Forward Work Programme has taken place with the Corporate Management Board, Heads of Service and Elected Members.
- Involvement - Advanced publication of the Forward Work Programme ensures that stakeholders can view topics that will be discussed in Committee meetings and are provided with the opportunity to engage.

5.2 When setting its Forward Work Programme, the Committee should consider how each item they propose to scrutinise assists in the achievement of the Council's 7 Wellbeing Objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** as follows :-

1. A County Borough where we protect our most vulnerable
2. A County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns
3. A County Borough with thriving valleys communities
4. A County Borough where we help people meet their potential
5. A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency
6. A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community
7. A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives

## **6. Climate Change Implications**

6.1 The Committee should consider how each item they scrutinise affects climate change, the Council's Net Zero Carbon 2030 target and how it meets the Council's commitments to protect and sustain the environment over the long term. There are no Climate Change Implications arising from this report.

## **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 The Committee should consider how each item they scrutinise affects care experienced children and young people, and in what way the Committee can assist in these areas. Safeguarding is everyone's business and means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications arising from this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Consider and approve the Forward Work Programme for the Committee attached as **Appendix A**;
- b) Identify any specific information the Committee wishes to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 3.5 of this report.

- d) Note the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet for the Committee attached as **Appendix B** to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at the previous meeting;
- e) Note that the Forward Work Programme, any feedback from the Committee and the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet will be reported to the next meeting of COSC.

### **Background documents**

None.

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APPENDIX A

**Draft Outline Forward Work Programme**  
**Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1**

Friday 26 May 2023 at 11.00am		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
EFS Strategic Plan	Provide Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 (SOSC1) members with an opportunity to view and comment on the draft Education and Family Support Directorate (EFS) Strategic Plan 2023-2026.	<p><b><u>Cabinet Members</u></b> Cabinet Member for Education</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director – Education and Family Support Group Manager School Support Group Manager Inclusion and School Improvement School Programme Manager Group Manager Business Support Group Manager Family Support</p> <p><b><u>CSC</u></b> Managing Director Assistant Director for Curriculum and Professional Learning Principle Improvement Manager</p> <p><b><u>Headteacher Nominees</u></b> Headteacher, Nantyllyllon Primary School Headteacher, Pen-y-Fai Church in Wales Primary School Headteacher, Bryntirion Comprehensive School and Chair of BASH</p>

Thursday 13 July 2023 at 11.00am – CANCELLED		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Draft Outline Forward Work Programme		

Monday 11 September 2023 at 11.00am		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Youth Justice Service Update and Operational Plan	T12 within the Education Directorate Strategic Plan	<p><b><u>Cabinet Member</u></b> Cabinet Member for Education</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b></p>

		<p>Corporate Director of Education and Family Support Operational Managers, Youth Justice Service</p> <p><b><u>CSC</u></b> N/A</p> <p><b><u>Headteacher Nominees</u></b> N/A</p>
Draft Outline Forward Work Programme		

Thursday 12 October 2024 at 11.00am		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Whole School Approach to emotional health and wellbeing		<p><b><u>Cabinet Members</u></b> Cabinet Member for Education Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Wellbeing Deputy Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director – Education and Family Support; Group Manager Learner Support; Group Manager Inclusion and School Improvement; Early Intervention Locality Manager; Group Manager (School Support); Lead Officer, Strategic Development (Primary Sector); Principal Educational Psychologist (INC);</p> <p><b><u>CSC</u></b> NA</p> <p><b><u>Headteacher Nominees</u></b> Headteacher, Ysgol Maesteg Headteacher, Porthcawl Comprehensive School; Headteacher, Cefn Glas Infants School; Headteacher, St Robert's Primary School;</p> <p><b><u>External</u></b> Whole School Approach to Health and Well-being Coordinator; CAMHS Senior Nurse; and Head, The Bridge Alternative Provision</p>

Monday 4 December 2024 at 11.00am		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFSM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme delivery, provision of free school meals and funding</li> <li>• New equipment</li> <li>• Challenges of staffing/catering services</li> <li>• Club settings (youth, breakfast, after school)</li> <li>• Quality and cost of meals</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Cabinet Members</u></b> Cabinet Member for Education</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director – Education and Family Support Group Manager, Business Support; and Team Manager – Catering Services</p> <p><b><u>CSC</u></b> N/A</p> <p><b><u>Headteacher Nominees</u></b> Headteacher, Headteacher, Penybont Primary School Headteacher, Llangynwyd Primary School</p>

Thursday 18 January 2024 at 11.00am		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-25 to 2027-28 and Budget Proposals		<p><b><u>Cabinet Members</u></b> Leader of Council Deputy Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Early Help Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Legal Cabinet Member for Education</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Chief Executive Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change Corporate Director Education and Family Support</p> <p>Head of Education and Family Support Interim Deputy Head of Finance Interim Finance Manager Budget Management: Communities, Education and Family Support</p> <p><b><u>CSC</u></b> N/A</p> <p><b><u>Headteacher Nominees</u></b> Chair of Schools Budget Form Chair of BASH</p>

Monday 18 March 2024 at 11.00am		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Curriculum for Wales Update and Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	2 March 23 – Recommendation from COSC - The challenges of recruiting Welsh speaking teachers into the County Borough be included in the scope of the report on Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.	<p><b><u>Cabinet Members</u></b> Cabinet Member for Education</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director Education and Family Support</p> <p><b><u>CSC</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Headteacher Nominees</u></b></p> <p><b><u>External</u></b></p>

Members briefing sessions

- Session to be held to update Members on recommencing of reporting exam results.
- How leadership and safeguarding is being audited.

Information reports to be provided

- Adult Community Learning
- English Language School's catchment areas / capacity
- Early Help Service Pressures
- Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA) governors – Policy and rules - Criteria and procedure for the appointment and removal of local authority school governors'

Items to be scheduled 2024/25

- ALN implementation update – June / July 2024.
- Annual review of EFS Plan and direction of travel – June 2024
- ALN – Provision

Potential Items to be scheduled

- Upgrading of older school facilities that are not being replaced under school modernisation.
- Home to school transport / safe routes to schools

- Governing Bodies – Support and funding. Invitation to be extended to representatives and the Governors Association.
- Monitor the implications of any proposed reduction to school delegated budget – on school budgets, staffing structures, redundancies, and any resulting impact on pupils.
- Central South Consortium – How they have provided value for the schools in the County Borough
- School catchment areas, pupil admission numbers and new school builds

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**Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1**

**RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING ACTION SHEET 2023-2024**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Response</b>
26 May 23	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Members expressed concern regarding the retention of school staff and their wellbeing. They discussed the importance of the support pupils received for their wellbeing and felt that staff wellbeing should be of equal priority. Members recommended that the narrative regarding the support for staff in <b><i>T1 Pupil and staff wellbeing</i></b> be strengthened to reflect this.	Director of Education and Family Support	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided – Chased.	Officer Response Awaited
26 May 23	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	During discussions regarding pupil attendance and levels of absence, Members requested a breakdown of the reasons for and the numbers of absence and recommended that these be included in the Plan.	Director of Education and Family Support	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided – Chased.	Officer Response Awaited
26 May 23	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Members considered the success indicators relating to <b><i>T2 Support for pupil behaviour, attendance, and exclusions</i></b> and highlighted that assessing progress towards the achievement of the objective ‘a reduction in fixed term and permanent exclusions’ would only be meaningful if all schools were following the School Attendance	Director of Education and Family Support	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided – Chased.	Officer Response Awaited

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		Policy to ensure consistency. Members recommended there be a standardised Exclusion Policy referenced in the Plan to ensure assurance in the data provided and accurate measurement of the improvements.			
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Members recommended that there be more granular detail in the Plan on how the ambition for completion of the statutory training modules by School Governors could be measured annually and that a baseline be provided in the Plan to demonstrate the target to be achieved.	Director of Education and Family Support	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided – Chased.	Officer Response Awaited
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Members noted the plan to increase the support for parents with vulnerable children under <b><i>T3 Support for vulnerable children and young people</i></b> and recommended that there be more detail in the Plan to include how this was to be achieved, how the current support could be measured and how to ensure that the support increases in the future.	Director of Education and Family Support	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided – Chased.	Officer Response Awaited
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Members discussed how a video produced by Brynteg Comprehensive School in relation to <b><i>T5 Curriculum for Wales and assessment</i></b> gave a better understanding of the new curriculum and recommended that this be made available	Director of Education and Family Support	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided – Chased.	Officer Response Awaited

**APPENDIX B**

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		to other schools and to the Members themselves.			
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Members discussed the importance of the safeguarding training module for School Governors and made a recommendation to support the Directorate in advocating Welsh Government to consider making it a statutory requirement.	Director of Education and Family Support	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided – Chased.	Officer Response Awaited
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Members expressed concern regarding potential increased utility bills and impact on pupils, due to outdated facilities in existing older schools. Whilst Members noted that refurbishment and maintenance of older schools was within the remit of the Property Team and not the EFS Directorate, it was recommended that this should still be referenced in the Plan.	Director of Education and Family Support	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided – Chased.	Officer Response Awaited
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Members discussed <b><i>T14 Effective Welsh in Education Strategic Plan to promote the Welsh language and Welsh-medium education</i></b> and felt that the objective appeared to be tailored towards younger learners and improving Welsh speakers and recommended the objective be expanded to include what was being done to promote and improve the use of the Welsh language in secondary schools.	Director of Education and Family Support	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided – Chased.	Officer Response Awaited

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Members expressed concern that without definitions of the three numbered parts in each stage of the RAYG (Red (unsatisfactory), Amber (adequate), Yellow (good) and Green (excellent)) statuses, it was difficult to understand the criteria for the top, middle and bottom score in each RAYG status. Members recommended that the RAYG Self-evaluation guidelines be revisited and that a discussion take place with partners to ensure that the targets set were achievable, for example an ambition to achieve a rating of 8 by August 2026 from a current rating of 4 in <b>T2 Support for pupil behaviour, attendance, and exclusions</b> and 9 by August 2026 with the current rating of 6 in <b>T5 Curriculum for Wales and assessment</b> and other examples in the Plan.	Director of Education and Family Support	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided – Chased.	Officer Response Awaited
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	A detailed breakdown of the individual grants once all grants were consolidated and available which was offered by Officers, in response to Members questions regarding the financial implications of the report including what external grants and capital funding were expected for 2023-24.	Director of Education and Family Support / Central South Consortium	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided – Chased.	Officer Response Awaited

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	The anonymised data for the Food for Fun Programme collated from the previous year and the available data from this year, when available, for the Members of the Committee to compare, which Officers offered to provide to Members in response to Members' questions whether records had been kept of the participants of the Food and Fun programme within the 'Successes to date' and 'Improvement objectives' of <i>T1 Pupil and staff wellbeing</i> , and what the plans were going forward.	Director of Education and Family Support / Group Manager - Family Support	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 9 August 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf</a>
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Figures and data regarding the length of waiting times for school based counsellors, that Officers offered to provide in response to Members' concerns regarding the length of waiting list times for school based counsellors, although Officers were not aware of the lists being significant.	Director of Education and Family Support / Group Manager - Family Support	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 9 August 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf</a>
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Recent data from the annual monitoring undertaken by the Educational Psychology Service that Officers offered to provide in response to Members' referring to <i>T1 Pupil and staff wellbeing</i> in the report which outlined the well-established support from the Educational Psychology Service and highlighted the	Director of Education and Family Support / Group Manager Inclusion and School Improvement	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 9 August 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf</a>

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		emotional and social wellbeing support role of Learning Support Assistants and their continued training, asking whether the roles were undertaken by dedicated staff and if every school had them			
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	Links from Central South Consortium regarding the staff wellbeing service funded by Welsh Government.	Director of Education and Family Support / Central South Consortium	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 9 August 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf</a>
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	More information on when Officers expected to meet the objective in <i>T4 Support for children and young people with additional learning needs</i> , that 60 Additional Learning Needs Co-Ordinators would receive bespoke training to meet the needs of pupils	Director of Education and Family Support / Group Manager Inclusion and School Improvement	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 9 August 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf</a>
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	In relation to <i>T11 Effective childcare and early years offer</i> , a timeline in relation to the Flying Start roll out and which childcare providers are included across the County Borough.	Director of Education and Family Support / Group Manager - Family Support	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 9 August 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf</a>
26 May 2023	EFS Strategic Plan 2023-2026	An update on recruitment of staff for school breakfast clubs and kitchens.	Director of Education and Family Support / Group Manager, Business Support	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 9 August 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31372/SOSC126May2023ResponsesToRecommendations.pdf</a>

**APPENDIX B**

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
11 September 2023	Bridgend Youth Justice Service Update	That narrative be included in future reports to Scrutiny explaining why the budget table with a breakdown of the financial and staffing information in the Youth Justice Service Plan did not show financial support from the Probation and / or Health Services.	Director of Education and Family Support / Youth Justice Service Manager	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 17 October 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf</a>
11 September 2023	Bridgend Youth Justice Service Update	That the Committee write a letter to the Probation Service highlighting the increased demand on the Youth Justice Service (YJS) and requesting greater support given the statutory duty on the YJS to have a minimum of representatives from Police, Education, Probation, Health, and Children’s Social Care.	Scrutiny	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 17 October 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf</a>
11 September 2023	Bridgend Youth Justice Service Update	That there be more engagement and liaising between schools and the Police and with a focus on prevention.	Director of Education and Family Support / Youth Justice Service Manager	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 17 October 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf</a>
11 September 2023	Bridgend Youth Justice Service Update	That a young person aged 18 plus but under 25 who has gone through the YJS be invited to sit on the Bridgend Youth Justice Service (BYJS) Management Board to provide their insight on their experience of the YJS and possible improvements.	Director of Education and Family Support / Youth Justice Service Manager	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 17 October 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf</a>

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Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
11 September 2023	Bridgend Youth Justice Service Update	Given that there were recruitment issues across the whole of the organisation but recognised that there was a need to have adequate specialist staffing to conduct some of the trauma screening and strongly recommended they look to establish if what they currently had was sufficient, so they were going to be able to reach their performance targets and ensure young people are safeguarded.	Director of Education and Family Support / Youth Justice Service Manager	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 17 October 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf</a>
11 September 2023	Bridgend Youth Justice Service Update	A link to the Joint Inspection responses made by Care Inspectorate Wales.	Scrutiny	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 5 October 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf</a>
11 September 2023	Bridgend Youth Justice Service Update	More information regarding the reasons why 45% of children were not attending school referenced as reported from the My Voice questionnaires.	Youth Justice Service Manager	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 17 October 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf</a>
11 September 2023	Bridgend Youth Justice Service Update	Data regarding the national Key Performance Indicators to be circulated to members to see the aspirations for each part of the service, and for measurement and performance monitoring of the Youth Justice Service.	Director of Education and Family Support / Youth Justice Service Manager	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 17 October 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponsestoRecommendations.pdf</a>

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Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
11 September 2023	Bridgend Youth Justice Service Update	More data on how many trauma screenings using the Trauma Recovery Model were outstanding, how often they would be reviewed and how the service would manage the staffing resource to achieve it.	Director of Education and Family Support / Youth Justice Service Manager	<b>ACTIONED</b> – response and information circulated 17 October 2023.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponseToRecommendations.pdf">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s31369/SOSC111September23ResponseToRecommendations.pdf</a>
12 October 2023	Whole-School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing	Pending			

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