

Public Document Pack

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

Bridgend County Borough Council

Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont, CF31 4WB / Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB



Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Rhowch wybod i ni os mai Cymraeg yw eich dewis iaith.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Please let us know if your language choice is Welsh.



Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate
Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513
Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Dyddiad/Date: Monday, 14 September 2026

Dear Councillor,

EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (FORMERLY SUBJECT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1)

A meeting of the Education and Youth Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Formerly Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1) will be held Hybrid in Committee Rooms 1/2/3, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB / remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Monday, 21 September 2026 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**

5 - 12

To receive for approval the minutes of the meetings of 01/06/26 and 02/07/26.

By receiving this Agenda Pack electronically, you will save the Authority approx. £01.00 in printing costs.

4 Review of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Support

13 - 30

Invitees:

Councillor Martyn Jones - Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services

Lindsay Harvey - Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People

Gayle Shenton - Head of Learning

Gail Biggs – Group Manager Inclusion

Kathryn Morgan – Principal Educational Psychologist

Headteachers:

Helen Ridout – Headteacher, Ysgol Bryn Castell

Jeremy Evans – Headteacher, Heronsbridge School

Donna Jones – Headteacher, Mynydd Cynffig Primary School

Kevin Stroud – Headteacher, Maes Yr Haul Primary School

Neil Pryce – Headteacher, Pil Primary School

Youth Council Representative

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

6 Forward Work Programme Update Report

31 - 50

7 Urgent Items

To consider any items of business that by reason of special circumstances the chairperson is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency in accordance with the Procedure Rules set out in the Constitution.

Note: This will be a Hybrid meeting and Members and Officers will be attending in Committee Rooms 1/2/3, Civic Offices, Angel Street Bridgend / Remotely via Microsoft Teams. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon as practicable after the meeting. If you would like to view this meeting live, please contact cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513 / 643159.

Yours faithfully

K Watson

Chief Officer Legal, Regulatory and Electoral Services

Councillors:

JPD Blundell

RJ Collins

HJ David

S Easterbrook

N Farr

H Griffiths

D M Hughes

J Llewellyn-Hopkins
R J Smith
T Thomas
JH Tildesley MBE
A Wathan
AJ Williams
E D Winstanley

Registered Representative:

Samantha Lambert-Worgan - Parent Governor - Special Schools

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (FORMERLY SUBJECT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1) HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON MONDAY, 1 JUNE 2026 AT 11:00

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Present

Councillor H Griffiths – Chairperson

JPD Blundell

S Easterbrook

JH Tildesley MBE

AJ Williams

Present Virtually

D M Hughes

J Llewellyn-Hopkins

T Thomas

A Wathan

Apologies for Absence

HJ David, R J Smith and E D Winstanley

Invitees:

Councillor Martyn Jones
Lindsay Harvey
Gayle Shenton
Tanya Smith
Gail Biggs
Darren Jones
Louise Blatchford
Natalie Gould
Richard George

Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services
Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People
Head of Learning
Head of Strategy, Early Years and Youth
Group Manager – Inclusion
Group Manager – School Improvement
Director Central South Consortium
Assistant Director Central South Consortium
Lead Advisor for Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment Central South Consortium

Headteacher:

Derek Meade

Bryntirion Comprehensive School

Officers:

Lucy Beard
Jessica Mclellan
Stephen Griffiths

Scrutiny Officer
Scrutiny Officer
Democratic Services Officer – Committees

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Amanda Williams – Personal – Item 4 – Community Governor and Chair of Governors at Coety Primary School
Councilor Jon-Paul Blundell – Personal – Item 4 – As a former Cabinet Member for Education

95. Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the minutes of the meeting of the Education and Youth Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 9 February 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	1 June 2026

96. School Improvement

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> Following consideration of the report, and detailed discussion with a Cabinet Member, Senior Officers and Invitees, the Committee made the following requests for additional information: Requests for Additional Information 1. The questions listed below received from the Youth Council (YC) were read out, brief answers provided and the Head of Learning advised that full written responses would be sent to the YC and the Committee requested a copy also be provided to Members of the Committee: a. In the new (3 year strategic) plan, will awareness be raised of Young Carers? b. Is there a plan to increase support for children with additional learning needs?
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	c. What is being done in regard to (managing) bullying in schools? d. What is being done to support those with poor attendance due to wellbeing issues? 2. The Committee discussed support for home schooled learners and their transition back into schools for the examination period and accessing future courses, and requested a written response from the Education Engagement Manager of the measures in place to support and ensure that home educated pupils receive adequate education. and requested an update on the scheduling of an All-Member briefing previously requested on this topic.
Date Decision Made	1 June 2026

97. Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That Councillor Elaine Winstanley be nominated to represent the Education and Youth Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee as an Invitee to meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.
Date Decision Made	1 June 2026

98. Information Report - Corporate Performance Quarter 3 2025-26

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> The Committee considered the content of the Corporate Performance Quarter 3 2025-26 report, the Corporate Performance Dashboard Quarter 3 2025-26 and the Regulatory Tracker updated for Quarter 3 2025-26 within the remit of the Committee, and had regard to the dashboard and the tracker when considering the Committee's Forward Work Programme report.
Date Decision Made	1 June 2026

Forward Work Programme Update

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> The Committee approved the Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appendix A subject to the following inclusions, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committees' Recommendations made at previous meetings in Appendix B and noted that the FWP approved by the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information. a. Given the potential future expansion of universal provision of free school meals to Secondary schools for learners whose parents are in receipt of Universal Credit, the Committee requested that the Healthy Eating in Schools report scheduled for their July meeting includes information regarding whether facilities in Secondary schools are in place to meet the need of this potential future policy, due to the capacity of existing dining halls/ buildings, facilities in kitchens, etc. similarly to some issues encountered in the rollout in Primary schools. b. That the draft Directorate Strategic Plan scheduled to be reported to a future meeting of the Committee includes a Section on Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) to include what the Authority was doing to prevent school leavers becoming NEET and any policy to support schools.
Date Decision Made	1 June 2026

100. Urgent Items

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	1 June 2026

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

The meeting closed at 12:15.

This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 2 JULY 2026 AT 11:00

Present

Councillor H Griffiths – Chairperson

HJ David

Present Virtually

JPD Blundell
R J Smith

S Easterbrook
AJ Williams

N Farr
E D Winstanley

D M Hughes

Apologies for Absence

RJ Collins, J Llewellyn-Hopkins and JH Tildesley MBE

Invitees:

Councillor Martyn Jones

Cabinet Member for Education and Young People

Lindsay Harvey
Tanya Smith
Matthew Evans
Stacey Forde
Lauren Saunders
Rachel Morgans

Corporate Director – Education, Early Years and Young People
Head of Strategy, Early Years and Youth
Team Manager – Catering Services
Head of Performance and Workforce Cultural Change
Sustainable Food Co-Ordinator
Sustainable Food Project Support Officer

Headteachers:

Ryan Davies
Neil Pryce

Headteacher, Brynteg Comprehensive
Headteacher, Pil Primary

Officers:

Lucy Beard
Stephen Griffiths

Scrutiny Officer
Democratic Services Officer – Committees

Declarations of Interest

None.

1. Healthy Eating in Schools Regulations and Expansion of Access to Free School Meals in Secondary Schools

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> Following consideration of the report, presentations by the Headteachers of the Bridge and Litchard Primary School, and the Headteacher and staff from Pencoed Comprehensive School, and detailed discussion with a Cabinet Member, Senior Officers and Invitees, the Committee made the following recommendations and request for additional information: Recommendations 1. The Committee discussed the requirement within the Regulations to reduce the amount of processed food, action being taken to reduce the use of ingredients from non-sustainable sources and increase the amount of sustainable locally sourced food, and Officers advised they could link with the main suppliers to get more information on sustainability. The Committee welcomed the provision of this information and recommended that consideration be given to exploring the potential of becoming deforestation free champions and reviewing menus accordingly. 2. The Committee acknowledged that catering staff within schools know the children well and support them accordingly and discussed the importance that the new Regulations did not hamper their discretion, and issues including children not eating at home, children who have higher metabolisms and therefore may need more food, and also childhood obesity. The Committee recommended that the Authority explore with Welsh Local Government Association and Welsh Government a methodology for monitoring what children are eating and are not eating to understand if any changes to menus are required in order to balance nutrition and hunger. 3. The Committee were advised by the Sustainable Food Co-Ordinator and Sustainable Food Project Support Officer of engagement undertaken with 11 schools on the new menu, working with schools to also deliver cooking and growing sessions, with the aim to increase the uptake of meals and recommended that consideration be given to how current food waste in schools could be reduced and the potential for redistributing food waste be explored. Request for Additional Information 4. The Committee requested a copy of new menus and if possible, some of the recipes be circulated to them.
Date Decision Made	2 July 2026

102. Forward Work Programme Update

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the Committee approved the Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appendix A subject to the following inclusions, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in Appendix B and noted that the FWP as approved by the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information. The Committee requested: a) A report on Attendance in Schools be scheduled to include: i) The Authority's position on prosecuting for non-attendance; ii) Incentives to keep children in school; iii) Variances in attendance between schools. b) That the scheduled Review of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Support report include in its scope, the rising costs for delivering the ALN provision in schools. c) A Member Briefing regarding School Modernisation be arranged in the interim, as the report is scheduled for March 2027.
Date Decision Made	2 July 2026

103. Urgent Items

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	2 July 2026

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

The meeting closed at 12:03.

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Meeting of:	EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	21 SEPTEMBER 2026
Report Title:	REVIEW OF ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) SUPPORT
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE
Responsible Officer:	GROUP MANAGER (INCLUSION)
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.
Executive Summary:	This report provides an overview of the effectiveness of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) support across Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC). It highlights the successful implementation of ALN Reform, positive findings from the March 2026 Estyn inspection of BCBC's education services, which identified ALN provision as a substantial strength, and progress in delivering the ALN Provision Plan 2025-2030 to address increasing demand for specialist support and provision. The report also outlines the contribution of school modernisation to ALN sufficiency planning and the challenges associated with rising levels and complexity of need, workforce capacity and financial pressures. Despite these challenges, BCBC remains committed to delivering high-quality, inclusive and sustainable ALN provision that enables children and young people to achieve positive outcomes within their local communities wherever possible.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Education and Youth Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the effectiveness of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) support across Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC), including the quality of provision, progress in implementing ALN Reform, findings from the March 2026 Estyn inspection of BCBC's local government education

services, progress against Well-being Objective Commitment WBO4.4.2 to develop a five-year plan to meet increasing demand on support services, specialist provision and schools, the contribution of school modernisation activity to ALN sufficiency planning, performance against Indicator DEFS170, and the financial pressures associated with delivering ALN provision.

2. Background

- 2.1 BCBC has fully implemented the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales. All statements of Special Educational Needs have transferred to Individual Development Plans (IDPs) within statutory timescales and all early years children requiring a local authority-maintained plan now have an IDP in place.
- 2.2 The Council's ALN Strategy 2024 is based upon the principles of:
- rights-based practice;
 - early identification and intervention;
 - inclusive education;
 - collaboration; and
 - a bilingual education system.
- 2.3 ALN support is delivered through extensive partnership working between schools, Health, early years providers, further education institutions, Careers Wales, social care services and third-sector organisations including SNAP Cymru. Specialist support is co-ordinated through the Inclusion Group, which comprises the local authority's Educational Psychology Service (EPS), ALN Statutory Team, Communication and Relationships Team (CART), Cognition and Learning Team, Complex Medical and Motor Impairment Team (CMMI), Post-16, Hearing and Vision Impairment Services and the Early Years ALN Team.
- 2.4 To support future demand, an ALN Provision Plan 2025-2030 under Commitment WBO4.4.2 has been developed to ensure that provision and services remain sufficient and sustainable over the coming five years.

3. Current situation/ proposal

Effectiveness of ALN Support, Estyn Evaluation

3.1 In March 2026, Estyn identified provision for children and young people with ALN as a substantial strength of BCBC. Inspectors reported that inclusion is central to the local authority's work and highlighted strong leadership, effective partnership working and high-quality specialist provision.

3.2 Estyn concluded that:

- children and young people can access specialist provision that effectively meets their needs;
- learners with complex needs generally make strong progress from their starting points;
- specialist provision is wide-ranging and of high quality;
- Welsh-medium ALN provision is a notable strength;
- early years identification and intervention arrangements are particularly effective;
- local authority officers provide valued support and challenge to schools; and
- collaborative working between schools and specialist teams supports positive outcomes for learners.

3.3 The inspection also recognised the work of the CART, the EPS and specialist teachers in supporting schools and improving learner engagement, attendance and behaviour.

Early identification and intervention

3.4 The Authority operates robust systems for the early identification of need through its Early Years Panel, which acts as a multi-agency single point of access for children with emerging or complex needs. The Panel facilitates assessment, intervention and transition planning and supports informed decisions regarding provision and IDPs.

- 3.5 Educational psychologists and specialist services work closely with families and providers from an early age. During recent years:
- between 43 and 48 children annually have held local authority maintained early years IDPs;
 - around 35 children each year receive enhanced specialist support packages; and
 - Early Years Panel numbers continue to increase, reflecting rising levels of need and complexity.
- 3.6 Estyn highlighted this preventative approach as a significant strength and recognised the quality of transition arrangements from non-maintained settings into school.

Quality assurance and ALN reform

- 3.7 The Inclusion Group has established robust quality assurance arrangements to support the effective implementation of ALN Reform and to ensure that learners receive high-quality, person-centred support. A weekly ALN Quality Assurance Sub-Group reviews local authority-maintained IDPs, scrutinising statutory compliance, the quality of outcomes, the appropriateness of Additional Learning Provision (ALP), and the integration of multi-agency advice. Specialist setting IDPs are also subject to peer review processes to promote consistency and continuous improvement across provision.
- 3.8 The local authority continues to demonstrate strong compliance with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the ALN Code. All former Statements of Special Educational Needs transferred to IDPs within statutory timescales and all early years children requiring local authority-maintained plans now have an IDP in place.
- 3.9 Professional learning remains a key priority in strengthening inclusive practice. Schools are supported through termly ALN Co-ordinator (ALNCo) forums, bespoke training on person-centred planning and IDP development, the ALN Reform Hwb, Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) training and supervision, and a range of wellbeing and attendance initiatives delivered through the EPS. These

approaches have strengthened school capacity to meet a wider range of learner needs within mainstream settings.

3.10 Between September 2025 and August 2026:

- 217 learners were considered by the ALN Panel;
- 56 learners were supported into appropriate specialist provision; and
- 187 cases were resolved through collaborative intervention without escalation.

3.11 During the same period:

- 605 local authority-maintained IDPs were in place; and
- 431 IDPs were quality assured through the authority's formal review processes.

3.12 Estyn recognised the effective support provided to schools in implementing ALN Reform and highlighted the positive impact of professional learning and collaborative working arrangements in improving outcomes for learners with ALN.

Special schools and the pupil referral unit (PRU)

3.13 The quality and impact of Bridgend's special school and alternative provision have also been recognised through Estyn. Heronsbridge School was inspected by Estyn in October 2023 and received no recommendations, reflecting the strength of provision and outcomes for learners. The school has subsequently been featured in Estyn Spotlight reports for its curriculum and professional learning arrangements.

3.14 The Bridge Alternative Provision Portfolio (PRU) was inspected in January 2025 and was commended through Estyn Spotlight features on Well-being, Care, Support and Guidance, Therapeutic Support, and Equity of Curriculum Offer, recognising its exceptional care, therapeutic approach, inclusive curriculum and effective support for vulnerable learners.

3.15 Ysgol Bryn Castell (YBC) was identified during Estyn's local authority inspection as an important contributor to the local authority's strong inclusive practice and has also been featured in Estyn Spotlight work on Developing a Committed Staff Team, highlighting the school's effective distributed leadership, staff well-being initiatives and strong capacity for continuous improvement.

- 3.16 Learners attending special schools and the PRU continue to achieve positive outcomes in relation to engagement, attendance, personal development and progression. Heronsbridge School has maintained consistently strong attendance over recent years, increasing from 87.1% in 2023-24 to 88.5% in 2024-25 and 89.6% in 2025-26. Pupils continue to achieve a wide range of accredited outcomes and enrichment opportunities, including the school's first ever Silver Duke of Edinburgh Awards, alongside national recognition for its commitment to wellbeing through achieving the Carnegie Centre of Excellence Gold School Mental Health Award.
- 3.17 YBC continues to support learners with complex social, emotional, behavioural and autistic spectrum needs to make progress against their individual targets and prepare successfully for adulthood. Attendance improved across a number of pupil groups during 2024-25, including a significant increase for looked after children from 66.0% to 75.7%. Comparative data for school year 2025-26 was not available at the time of writing the report. The school reports consistently high rates of progress against individual learning targets, with approximately 80% of targets achieved during each review cycle and very small numbers requiring significant amendment. The majority of learners continue into further education, training, employment or Post-16 provision, with very low levels of young people becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- 3.18 The Bridge Alternative Provision Portfolio PRU also demonstrates positive outcomes for vulnerable learners who are at risk of disengagement from education. During the inspection The Bridge reported 33% of primary school-aged learners and 62% of secondary school-aged learners supported through The Bridge successfully reintegrated into mainstream education, with others progressing into specialist provision that more appropriately met their needs. Estyn recognised the quality of therapeutic support, inclusive practice and reintegration pathways available through the provision.
- 3.19 Feedback from learners, families, schools and partner agencies indicates a high level of confidence in the local authority's approach to supporting children and young people with ALN. Learners are actively involved in decision-making through person-centred planning processes, while parents and carers continue to value the

collaborative approach adopted by the authority and its partners. Schools report that specialist services, including the EPS, CART, Cognition and Learning, CMMI and Sensory Services, provide valuable support to inclusive practice. Health services and Careers Wales similarly recognise the strength of partnership working, particularly in relation to early identification, transition planning and preparation for adulthood.

Performance against DEFS170

- 3.20 Performance Indicator DEFS170 measures the percentage of new local authority IDPs delivered through the online IDP system.
- 3.21 The local authority has embedded digital IDP processes as part of ALN Reform implementation. The online system supports:
- improved statutory compliance;
 - stronger quality assurance;
 - greater consistency of documentation; and
 - more effective monitoring and reporting.
- 3.22 Performance against DEFS170 continues to improve and the majority of new local authority maintained IDPs are now produced through the online system. This has strengthened consistency and efficiency in managing statutory processes. While full use of the online IDP system has been delayed by system issues, it does not impact on decision-making or provision for any pupils. Inclusion Group officers continue to work with the system operator to overcome issues encountered in accessing the system by some school staff. Previous difficulties downloading completed IDPs has now been addressed.

Sufficiency of ALN provision and progress against WBO4.4.2

- 3.23 The ALN Provision Plan 2025-2030 provides the framework for responding to increasing demand for support services, specialist placements and school-based provision.

- 3.24 Progress includes successful growth bids approved by Council for the following additional specialist provision, with a proposed stakeholder consultation period taking place in October 2026, subject to approval by Cabinet at its meeting on the 22 September 2026:
- development of additional Foundation Phase Communication, Autism Resource Education (CARE) provision.
 - expansion of Key Stage 2 CARE provision.
 - progression of a secondary CARE base at Porthcawl Comprehensive School.
 - expansion opportunities at Litchard Primary School and Llangewydd Junior School.
 - development of a Welsh-medium Observation and Assessment Class included in the new build for Ysgol Bro Ogwr.
- 3.25 The Authority is also undertaking a review of emotional, social and behavioural difficulties (ESBD) provision alongside YBC and The Bridge Alternative Provision Portfolio to increase capacity, reduce waiting times and improve pathways for learners.
- 3.26 Estyn recognised the strength of current specialist provision but acknowledged that demand continues to increase and that current capacity does not yet fully meet projected future need.

Impact of school modernisation (WBO3.4)

- 3.27 School modernisation activity is supporting the local authority's ALN sufficiency strategy through the creation of specialist learning environments and identification of accommodation suitable for expanded provision.
- 3.28 This work is supporting:
- additional specialist classes;
 - expansion of CARE provision;
 - development of Welsh-medium specialist provision;
 - future ESBD accommodation solutions; and
 - increased capacity to educate learners closer to home.

- 3.29 Estyn highlighted the local authority's strong approach to linking capital investment with improved educational provision and inclusive practice.

Areas for further development

- 3.30 The local authority has identified the following priorities:
- expanding specialist provision capacity to meet increasing demand;
 - continuing delivery of the ALN Provision Plan 2025-2030;
 - improving consistency of school-maintained IDPs;
 - strengthening nurture and emotional wellbeing provision.;
 - extending trauma-informed practice across schools
 - implementing a single point of access approach through the Wellbeing, Care, Support and Guidance Panel.
 - finalising revised specialist placement criteria.
 - finalising arrangements with Health for specialist speech and language services.
 - ensuring long-term sustainability of specialist support services including CART.
 - strengthening neuroinclusive practice in schools through implementation of the National Autistic Society's Neuroinclusive Education Programme.

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 work undertaken to support children and young people with ALN contributes directly to the Well-being Goals set out within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and supports Corporate Well-being Objectives, particularly the

commitment to ensure that all children and young people have the best possible start in life and are able to achieve their full potential. The approach to ALN support reflects the five ways of working as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Long term | The Council's ALN Provision Plan 2025-2030 and wider inclusion strategy seek to ensure that sufficient, sustainable and high-quality provision is available to meet increasing levels of need over the longer term. Investment in local specialist provision, workforce development and inclusive practice aims to improve outcomes for children and young people while reducing reliance on more costly out-of-county placements. |
| Prevention | Early identification and intervention are central principles of the Council's ALN approach. Through arrangements such as the Early Years Panel, EPS and specialist inclusion teams, support is provided at the earliest opportunity to prevent needs escalating and to maximise children and young people's educational, social and emotional development. |
| Integration | The delivery of ALN support contributes to a more equal, healthier and cohesive county borough by promoting inclusive education and enabling learners to access appropriate support within their local communities wherever possible. The approach supports wider educational, social care, health and wellbeing objectives across the Council and partner organisations. |
| Collaboration | Effective ALN provision relies upon strong partnership working between schools, families, health services, social care, early years providers, further education institutions and third-sector organisations. Collaborative working supports a coordinated and person-centred approach to meeting the needs of children and young people with ALN. |
| Involvement | The principles underpinning the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 place children, young people and their families at the centre of decision-making. The Council's approach promotes participation and co-production, ensuring that the views, wishes and feelings of learners and their |

families inform assessment, planning and review processes through IDPs.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 6.1 The Council's approach to developing ALN provision has the potential to deliver positive climate change benefits through its commitment to increasing local specialist capacity and enabling more children and young people to access appropriate education within their own communities.
- 6.2 The expansion of specialist provision, including CARE classes, Welsh-medium specialist provision and other local placements identified within the ALN Provision Plan 2025-2030, is intended to reduce the need for learners to travel longer distances to access suitable educational provision. This may contribute to a reduction in transport-related carbon emissions associated with home-to-school travel and specialist transport arrangements.
- 6.3 The Council's school modernisation programme also provides opportunities to improve the sustainability and accessibility of educational environments through investment in modern facilities that are better equipped to meet the needs of learners with ALN within their local communities.
- 6.4 There are no direct adverse climate change or nature implications arising from this report. However, ongoing development of local specialist provision supports the Council's wider objectives of reducing unnecessary travel whilst promoting inclusive, community-based education.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 The directorate has a robust approach to safeguarding, and this is detailed within the directorate's strategic plan. The Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023-2026 is aligned with Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC's) Corporate Parenting Strategy.

8. Financial Implications

Financial pressures and rising costs of ALN Provision

- 8.1 While Estyn identified ALN provision in Bridgend as a substantial strength, the local authority continues to face significant financial pressures associated with increasing demand, greater complexity of need and the expectation that provision remains inclusive, high quality and delivered as close to home as possible. Estyn recognised that increasing demand, workforce capacity pressures and financial challenges present risks to the sustainability of specialist inclusion services.
- 8.2 The number of children and young people presenting with complex additional learning needs continues to increase across all phases of education. Rising demand is evident through increasing referrals to specialist services, growing numbers discussed through Early Years and ALN Panels, increased requests for specialist placements and the expansion of specialist provision across the county borough.

Growth in ALN Expenditure and Demand Pressures

- 8.3 Over the last four financial years, expenditure on ALN services has increased significantly, reflecting rising demand for specialist support, increasing complexity of learner needs and the continued expansion of local provision. Net ALN expenditure, after accounting for recoupment income, increased from £6.47 million in 2022-23 to £9.44 million in 2025-26, representing an overall increase of around 46%.
- 8.4 The largest area of expenditure relates to Schools ALN Provision, which increased from £3.56 million in 2022-23 to £5.00 million in 2025-26. This reflects growth in specialist staffing, ancillary staff support, sensory and communication services, autism provision and specialist support delivered within mainstream schools.
- 8.5 Expenditure on Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) provision and alternative provision increased from £1.48 million to £1.79 million over the same period. Recoupment expenditure also increased significantly from £1.14 million to £2.15 million, reflecting increased costs associated with specialist placements and

provision commissioned from outside the local authority. Whilst recoupment income partially offsets these costs, expenditure growth has exceeded income generation throughout the period.

8.6 The table below summarises expenditure across key ALN service areas.

Service Area	2022-23 (£)	2023-24 (£)	2024-25 (£)	2025-26 (£)
ALN Central Services	520,669	686,890	485,997	753,216
Schools ALN Provision	3,556,967	4,060,200	3,521,033	5,001,885
Educational Psychology Service	369,069	397,490	372,827	364,814
ALN Statutory Team	149,737	175,051	178,128	142,570
EOTAS / Alternative Provision	1,480,021	1,589,337	1,528,915	1,788,713
Recoupment Expenditure	1,135,998	1,693,539	2,022,748	2,147,697
Less Recoupment Income	(746,356)	(707,958)	(992,907)	(755,223)
Net Total ALN Expenditure	6,466,105	7,894,549	7,116,740	9,443,671

8.7 Welsh Government grant funding continues to make a significant contribution towards the development of ALN provision within Bridgend County Borough. The local authority's ALN Delivery Plan outlines how grant funding will be used to increase specialist provision capacity, strengthen inclusive practice, enhance workforce capability and improve outcomes for learners with ALN. Welsh Government also provides demand-led funding to support the local authority statutory responsibilities in relation to specialist post-16 ALN placements.

8.8 In addition to revenue grant funding, Welsh Government-supported ALN sufficiency projects are forecast to receive investment of approximately £907,803 during 2026-27. This includes the expansion of provision at Ysgol Bryn Castell (£600,000), development of a secondary CARE base (£100,000), establishment of a Foundation Phase CARE Learning Resource Centre (£100,000), additional observation and assessment provision at Tondy Primary School (£45,000) and expansion works associated with Heronsbridge School (£62,803). While some schemes experienced delays due to consultation, governance and planning processes, the programme

demonstrates the scale of investment required to respond to rising demand for specialist ALN provision across the county borough. These schemes are intended to increase local capacity, improve access to specialist provision and reduce reliance on higher-cost external placements.

- 8.9 Welsh Government requires the local authority to submit an annual ALN Delivery Plan and provide regular monitoring information demonstrating both expenditure and impact. Performance measures include increases in local provision capacity, improved quality of Individual Development Plans, strengthened mainstream inclusion, reductions in demand for specialist and out-of-county placements, and improved learner attendance, engagement, wellbeing and educational outcomes.

Specialist staffing costs

- 8.10 A significant proportion of ALN expenditure relates to specialist staffing. The local authority maintains a range of specialist services including:
- EPS;
 - CART)
 - Cognition and Learning Team;
 - Complex Medical and Motor Impairment Team (CMMI);
 - Hearing Impairment and Vision Impairment Services;
 - Early Years ALN Team;
 - Post-16 and Additional Learning Provision; and
 - ALN Statutory Team.
- 8.11 Demand for these services continues to grow as increasing numbers of children require specialist assessment, advice, intervention and support. This places pressure on staffing capacity and increases workforce costs associated with recruitment, retention, training and service delivery. Estyn specifically identified workforce and capacity pressures as a risk to the sustainability of inclusion services, particularly CART.

Increasing costs within schools

8.12 Schools are experiencing increased expenditure in supporting learners with ALN within mainstream settings. Costs include:

- additional learning support assistants;
- specialist teaching support;
- nurture and wellbeing interventions;
- trauma-informed approaches;
- specialist equipment and assistive technology;
- adaptations to learning environments;
- training and professional development for staff; and
- increased pastoral and emotional wellbeing support.

8.13 The local authority's strategic priority remains to support learners within inclusive local settings wherever possible. While this approach improves outcomes and reduces reliance on external placements, it requires continued investment in school-based support and workforce development.

Specialist provision expansion

8.14 As part of the ALN Provision Plan 2025-2030, the Authority is progressing additional specialist provision including new CARE classes, Observation and Assessment provision, Welsh-medium specialist provision and future ESBD developments. These initiatives are in progress following successful pressure bids and investment in accommodation, staffing, equipment and ongoing operational costs.

8.15 Although these developments represent an initial financial commitment, they are intended to increase local capacity, improve access to provision and reduce longer-term dependency upon more expensive specialist placements outside the county borough.

Transport costs

8.16 The local authority continues to provide specialist transport arrangements for pupils whose needs require access to specialist provision. Costs include:

- specialist transport contracts;
- passenger assistants and escorts;
- wheelchair accessible vehicles;
- individual risk-assessed transport arrangements; and
- transport to specialist placements both within and outside the county borough.

8.17 These costs have increased as the number and complexity of learners requiring specialist support has grown.

Out-of-county placements

8.18 Where a learner's needs cannot be met through local provision, specialist placements outside the authority may be required. Such placements typically attract significantly higher education, care and transport costs.

8.19 The local authority has therefore prioritised increasing local specialist capacity. Estyn recognised this approach as a significant strength and noted that strong governance and oversight arrangements have enabled most learners with ALN to be educated appropriately within Bridgend, reducing reliance on costly out-of-county provision.

Investment in prevention and early intervention

8.20 BCBC continues to invest in preventative approaches designed to reduce future pressures on specialist services. Examples include:

- early Years Panel arrangements;
- educational Psychology support;
- CART intervention;
- ELSA training;
- trauma-informed practice;
- the "Join the Dots"/Wellbeing, Care, Support and Guidance initiative; and
- additional inclusion earmarked reserve funding of £1 million to support schools and reduce exclusions.

- 8.21 While these initiatives require upfront investment, their purpose is to strengthen mainstream inclusion, reduce escalation of need and limit demand for higher-cost specialist placements over time.

Medium-term financial position

- 8.22 The ALN Provision Plan 2025-2030 has been developed to provide a sustainable response to increasing demand. However, continued growth in complexity and volume of need will require careful monitoring of:

- specialist staffing capacity;
- sufficiency of specialist provision;
- mainstream school support requirements;
- transport costs;
- placement expenditure; and
- capital investment requirements linked to school modernisation and specialist accommodation.

- 8.23 The challenge for the local authority over the next five years will be to maintain the high-quality ALN provision recognised by Estyn while ensuring that services remain financially sustainable and capable of responding to increasing demand.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 Education and Youth Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- consider the contents of the report; and
- consider the effectiveness, sufficiency and future sustainability of ALN support across Bridgend County Borough.

Background Documents

None

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Meeting of:	EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	21 SEPTEMBER 2026
Report Title:	FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL, REGULATORY AND ELECTORAL SERVICES
Responsible Officer:	MERYL LAWRENCE SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER – SCRUTINY
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	The work of the Overview & 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.
Executive Summary:	The Council's Constitution requires each Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee. 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, and consider the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet for this Committee.

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Present the Committee with the Draft Forward Work Programme attached as **(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 for information the Corporate Performance Quarter 4/Year End 2025-26 reported to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) on 27 July 2026, within the remit of this Committee.
- e) Present the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet (**Appendix B**) to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings;
- f) Advise that the Committee's Forward Work Programme as approved will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) for information, together with those from the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, following their consideration in this cycle of Committee meetings.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's Constitution requires each Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.
- 2.2 It also provides for the Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard for the Council's Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework. Where a matter for consideration by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee also falls within the remit of one or more other Committees, the decision as to which Committee will consider it will be resolved by the respective Chairs or, if they fail to agree, the Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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

- 3.1 Following the approval of the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meeting dates at the Annual Meeting of Council on 13 May 2026, the standing statutory reports to Scrutiny Committees 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 Forward Work Programme.
- 3.2 The Forward Work Programmes 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 2027, following which COSC will make conclusions and recommendations in a report on the overall strategic overview of Cabinet's draft Budget proposals to the meeting of Cabinet in February 2027.
- 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 reported to each COSC meeting for information.

Identification of Further Items

- 3.5 The Committee are reminded that the Scrutiny selection criteria used by Scrutiny Committee Members to consider, select and prioritise items emphasises the need to consider issues such as impact, risk, performance, budget and community perception when identifying topics for investigation to maximise the impact scrutiny can have on a topic and the outcomes for people. The 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 Committee is asked to note the content of the [Corporate Performance Quarter 4/Year End 2025-26 report](#), [the Corporate Performance Dashboard Quarter 4 2025-26](#) and the [Regulatory Tracker updated for Quarter 4 2025-26](#) within the remit of this Committee and have regard to the dashboard and the tracker when considering the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

3.11 The Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings 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 4

Wellbeing Objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** as follows:

1. A prosperous place with thriving communities
2. Creating modern, seamless public services
3. Enabling people to meet their potential
4. Supporting our most vulnerable

6. Climate Change and Nature 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 or Nature 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. Recommendations

- 9.1 The Committee is recommended to:
- a) Consider and approve the Draft Forward Work Programme for the Committee in **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 content of the Corporate Performance Quarter 4/Year End 2025-26 report, the Corporate Performance Dashboard Quarter 4 2025-26 and the Regulatory Tracker updated for Quarter 4 2025-26 within the remit of this Committee and have regard to the dashboard and the tracker when considering the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

- e) Note the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in **Appendix B** to track outstanding responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings;
- f) Note that the Committee's Forward Work Programme as approved will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information, together with those from the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, following their consideration in this cycle of Committee meetings.

Background documents

None.

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Education and Youth Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
2026-27 Draft Forward Work Programme

Monday, 1 June 2026 at 11am		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
School Improvement	Arrangements into the Local Authority and future school improvement arrangements	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Cabinet Member for Education and Young People <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Education, Early Years and Young People; Head of Learning; Group Manager – School Improvement <u>Youth Council Representative</u> <u>Headteacher Nominees</u> Invitees to be confirmed <u>External</u> Representatives from Central South Consortium

Thursday, 2 July 2026 at 11am		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Healthy Eating in Schools Regulations and Expansion of Access to Free School Meals in Secondary Schools	To include an information on Healthy Eating in Schools Regulations and an update on the Universal Primary Free School Meals Implementation. <u>Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements),</u> <u>Maintained Primary Schools (Wales) Regulations 2025</u> and <u>Healthy Eating Regulations 2025</u> Challenges of potential roll out UPFSM to secondary schools	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Cabinet Member for Education and Young People; <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Education, Early Years and Young People; Head of Strategy, Early Years and Youth; <u>External</u> <u>Headteacher Nominees</u> Invitees to be confirmed <u>Youth Council Representative</u>

Monday, 21 September 2026 at 11am		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Review of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Support	To include an update on Commitment WBO4.4.2 <i>to develop a five-year plan to meet increasing demand on support services, specialist provision and schools</i> and any impact from progress against Commitments in WBO 3.4 <i>Modernise School Buildings</i>. To include an update on the progress against performance Indicator DEFS170 regarding the percentage of new local authority individual development plans (IDPs) delivered using the online IDP system.	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Cabinet Member for Education and Young People; <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Education, Early Years and Young People; Head of Learning; Group Manager – School Improvement; <u>Youth Council Representative</u> <u>Headteacher Nominees</u> Invitees to be confirmed

Monday, 23 November 2026 at 11am		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Home to School Transport		<u>Cabinet Member</u> Cabinet Member for Education and Young People; <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Education, Early Years and Young People; Head of Learning; Head of Strategy, Early Years and Youth <u>Youth Council Representative</u> <u>Headteacher Nominees</u> Invitees to be confirmed

Monday, 1 February 2026 at 11am		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Close Current 3 year Strategic Plan and Open New 3 Year Strategic Plan	To include review of Post Inspection Plan	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Cabinet Member for Education and Young People <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Education, Early Years and Young People;

		Head of Learning; Head of Strategy, Early Years and Youth; <u>Youth Council Representative</u> <u>Headteacher Nominees</u> Invitees to be confirmed
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Monday, 1 March 2026 at 11am		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
School Modernisation	An audit of the condition of all schools in Bridgend County. An analysis of the lessons learned from the school modernisation projects that have happened or in the process of being planned and built, including the impact of wider political and economic forces. The report would need to consider such issues as the role and value of price caps; risk management and mitigation, including the impact of ecological ones on project timing and costs; procurement; land acquisition; the impact of design changes to projects; and project management and oversight, especially in terms of the contribution made by Cabinet and the Corporate Management Board. The future demography of the County Borough, and the impact of new and proposed housing developments, and the potential knock-on impact on school catchment areas and pupil numbers. The future of school modernisation and project finance in Wales. To include an on the progress of increasing specialist provision. To include an update on progress against Commitments	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Cabinet Member for Education and Young People; Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment; <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Education, Early Years and Young People; Corporate Director - Communities; Head of Learning; Deputy Head of Finance; Accountant – Capital and Grants; Head of Operations; Manager (Sustainable Communities for Learning); Group Manager – Corporate Landlord; Senior Portfolio Surveyor, Education and Wellbeing; <u>Youth Council Representative</u> <u>Headteacher Nominees</u> Invitees to be confirmed

School Maintenance (Communities – Corporate Landlord)	in WBO 3.4 <i>Modernise School Buildings</i> and their impact on Commitment WBO4.4.2 <i>to develop a five-year plan to meet increasing demand on support services, specialist provision and schools.</i>	
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Items to be Scheduled to the Committee's 2027-2028 Forward Work Programme

- Attendance in Schools (TBC)
 - i) The Authority's position on prosecuting for non-attendance;
 - ii) Incentives to keep children in school;
 - iii) Variances in attendance between schools.
- Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) – June 2027 (TBC)
- School Modernisation (New Builds) – to include a site visit – 2027 (TBC)
- Draft Directorate Strategic Plan (TBC)
 - i) To include a section on Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
 - ii) What the Authority was doing to prevent school leavers becoming NEET
 - iii) Any policy to support schools.

Information Report to be provided:

- Spring 2026 – English Language School Catchment Areas / Capacity

Research and Evaluation Panel

- TBC in 2026 - School Improvement Research and Evaluation Panel (REP)

Briefings and Workshops

Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees and Date
School Modernisation	To be arranged in the interim, as the report is scheduled for March 2027.	
Support for Home-Educated Learners		All Member Briefing
New Estyn Inspection Framework / Local Government Education Services (LGES)		
Update on Effective School Governing Bodies – Appointment, Support and Funding	Invitation to be extended to Governors Association	
School Safeguarding Audits Summary		TBC in 2026

Pupil and Learner Attainment Outcomes	To include Validated Exam Results	TBC in 2026
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Education and Youth Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet for 2026-27

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
1 June 2026	School Improvement	The questions listed below received from the Youth Council (YC) were read out, brief answers provided and the Head of Learning advised that full written responses would be sent to the YC and the Committee requested a copy also be provided to Members of the Committee: a. In the new (3 year strategic) plan, will awareness be raised of Young Carers? b. Is there a plan to increase support for children with additional learning needs? c. What is being done in regard to (managing) bullying in schools? d. What is being done to support those with poor attendance due to wellbeing issues?	Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People / Head of Learning	Recommendation circulated requesting response. Chased.	
1 June 2026	School Improvement	The Committee discussed support for home schooled learners and their transition back into schools for the examination period and accessing future courses, and requested a written response from the Education	Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People /	Recommendation circulated requesting response. Chased.	

APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		Engagement Manager of the measures in place to support and ensure that home educated pupils receive adequate education. and requested an update on the scheduling of an All-Member briefing previously requested on this topic.	Education Engagement Manager		
1 June 2026	School Improvement	Given the potential future expansion of universal provision of free school meals to Secondary schools for learners whose parents are in receipt of Universal Credit, the Committee requested that the Healthy Eating in Schools report scheduled for their July meeting includes information regarding whether facilities in Secondary schools are in place to meet the need of this potential future policy, due to the capacity of existing dining halls/ buildings, facilities in kitchens, etc. similarly to some issues encountered in the rollout in Primary schools. (LH)	Scrutiny	ACTIONED: Request was added to scope in Report Request and included in report to Committee on 2 July 2026.	
1 June 2026	School Improvement	That the draft Directorate Strategic Plan scheduled to be reported to a future meeting of the Committee includes a Section on Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) to include what the Authority was doing to prevent school leavers becoming NEET and any policy to support schools.	Scrutiny	Request to be added to the scope of the Report Request. Detail added to the Appendix A FWP.	

APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
2 July 2026	Healthy Eating in School Regulations and Expansion of Access to Free School Meals in Secondary Schools	The Committee discussed the requirement within the Regulations to reduce the amount of processed food, action being taken to reduce the use of ingredients from non-sustainable sources and increase the amount of sustainable locally sourced food, and Officers advised they could link with the main suppliers to get more information on sustainability. The Committee welcomed the provision of this information and recommended that consideration be given to exploring the potential of becoming deforestation free champions and reviewing menus accordingly.	Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People / Team Manager Catering Service	ACTIONED – response and information circulated on 14 September 2026.	Follow link here .
2 July 2026	Healthy Eating in School Regulations and Expansion of Access to Free School Meals in Secondary Schools	The Committee acknowledged that catering staff within schools know the children well and support them accordingly and discussed the importance that the new Regulations did not hamper their discretion, and issues including children not eating at home, children who have higher metabolisms and therefore may need more food, and also childhood obesity. The Committee recommended that the Authority explore with Welsh Local Government Association and Welsh Government a methodology for monitoring what children are eating and are not eating to understand if any changes to menus are	Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People / Team Manager Catering Service	ACTIONED – response and information circulated on 14 September 2026.	Follow link here .

APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		required in order to balance nutrition and hunger.			
2 July 2026	Healthy Eating in School Regulations and Expansion of Access to Free School Meals in Secondary Schools	The Committee were advised by the Sustainable Food Co-Ordinator and Sustainable Food Project Support Officer of engagement undertaken with 11 schools on the new menu, working with schools to also deliver cooking and growing sessions, with the aim to increase the uptake of meals and recommended that consideration be given to how current food waste in schools could be reduced and the potential for redistributing food waste be explored.	Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People / Team Manager Catering Service	ACTIONED – response and information circulated on 14 September 2026.	Follow link here .
2 July 2026	Healthy Eating in School Regulations and Expansion of Access to Free School Meals in Secondary Schools	The Committee requested a copy of new menus and if possible, some of the recipes be circulated to them.	Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People / Team Manager Catering Service	ACTIONED – response and information circulated on 14 September 2026.	Follow link here .
2 July 2026	Healthy Eating in School Regulations and Expansion of Access to Free	a) A report on Attendance in Schools be scheduled to include: i) The Authority's position on prosecuting for non-attendance;	Scrutiny / EYS Chair	To be discussed in the next FWP planning meeting	

APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
	School Meals in Secondary Schools	ii) Incentives to keep children in school; iii) Variances in attendance between schools.			
2 July 2026	Healthy Eating in School Regulations and Expansion of Access to Free School Meals in Secondary Schools	That the scheduled Review of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Support report include in its scope, the rising costs for delivering the ALN provision in schools.	Scrutiny	ACTIONED: Added to the scope of the Report Request	
2 July 2026	Healthy Eating in School Regulations and Expansion of Access to Free School Meals in Secondary Schools	A Member Briefing regarding School Modernisation be arranged in the interim, as the report is scheduled for March 2027.	Scrutiny / EYS Chair	To be discussed in the next FWP planning meeting.	

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