

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

INFORMATION REPORT TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

26 SEPTEMBER 2018

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

FESTIVAL OF LEARNING 2018

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report informs Overview and Scrutiny Committee members of the activities that took place in the Festival of Learning 2018 during the week commencing 25 June 2018.
- 1.2 This report provides detail on initial outcomes, responding to member requests to provide an evaluation of the Festival of Learning 2018 feedback forms received and to provide an update in relation to the benefits realisation plan previously submitted to Scrutiny members.

2. Connection to corporate improvement objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 The information in this report relates to the following strategic priority in the Corporate Plan:
 - Supporting a successful economy
- 2.2 The event related directly to the strategic priority in the Corporate Plan to 'support a successful economy' and the Directorate commitments to 'provide the learning and development opportunities for staff to meet future service needs' and to 'develop more effective practice in respect of ensuring children and young people are actively involved in policy development and the decision-making process through developing our participation strategy so that their views, thoughts, wishes and feelings are appropriately represented'.

3. Background

- 3.1 As outlined in the report to Scrutiny on 29 March 2018, the Festival of Learning 2018 event was planned to address the needs identified in the local authority related to effective sharing of good practice in response to Estyn recommendations. It involved all schools working together as part of the 'Team Bridgend' vision along with school councils in Bridgend, Bridgend College, related local authority service areas and external providers. The event was developed in line with the principles outlined in UNESCO's Global Network of Learning Cities.
- 3.2 The Festival of Learning 2018 included four key events:

Professional development workshops

The professional development workshops were designed to share good practice and were jointly planned, provided and attended by all schools and Bridgend College as well as by local authority officers and external providers (including the Children's Commissioner's Officer and Participation Team and University of South Wales).

The workshops were held in the respective organisations and school staff booked into those identified to address the strategic priorities of the school. The learning offer was

linked with school development plans, post-inspection action plans and Bridgend College's strategic objectives.

A programme of the workshops offered was provided to help schools determine which ones to attend and this will continue to serve as a directory for future reference for schools (see Appendix A). 96 workshops, attended by 628 delegates, were held during the week.

Symposium

The key focus of the Symposium event was to support the wellbeing of senior leaders. It is anticipated that if senior leaders' wellbeing is improved this will have a positive impact on everyone else in the school and, ultimately, on pupil outcomes. Naturally, this is something that will be observed over the long term.

179 delegates attended the Symposium event. Initial feedback has been extremely positive. 99% of respondents rated the Symposium as 'excellent' or 'good' overall.

Learners' Day - showcase event

This event provided schools with an opportunity to present examples of work related to their team strategies. This reflected examples of what 'makes children happy in their schools' – the theme for the Learners' Day – as well as examples from cross-phase transition work. In each case pupils were able to present their work to a wide audience including pupils from other schools.

Learners' Day - Learner Voice Forum

School councils considered 'What makes children happy in school?' in advance of the day and their cluster responses were recorded in a short film. As part of the focus on wellbeing at the event, the clusters of school councils were asked to consider what will 'make them happier in their school and community'. The views of the learners (and teachers) were captured via a number of highly interactive workshop sessions arranged by the Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) Youth Development Team. These views will help to inform decision making within the Education and Family Support Directorate.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The 96 workshops provided an opportunity to further develop partnership working and collaboration, as exemplified in the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership, introduced in September 2017 as part of Welsh Government's workforce development programme. Feedback from individual workshops suggests that the workshops were highly valued learning experiences for both those who delivered and those who attended. Evaluation of the professional learning development workshops have been collated by individual schools.
- 4.2 In addition to 23 external delegates, at least 1,050 staff from across Bridgend benefitted directly from the Festival of Learning 2018 activities. 628 delegates attended the workshops provided; 142 presenters were involved in delivering the workshops (along with many children); 179 attended the Symposium event and 101 attended the Learners' Day event. Feedback received indicate that the event has generated a great sense of enthusiasm and excitement. In the overall post-event survey, 94% respondents rated the event as 'excellent' or 'good' and 86% said they would like to see another Festival of Learning in 2019.

- 4.3 Certificates have been issued to all teachers/staff who attended workshops and to all staff/pupils who delivered workshops. These will provide evidence to support Professional Learning Passports as part of the statutory induction year for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and for other teachers/staff to use for their portfolios.
- 4.4 152 pupils attended and participated directly in the Learners' Day, showcasing aspects of their learning and participating in the Learner Voice Forum event. An additional 59 pupils were given a platform to demonstrate their talents in compering and in providing musical items for the Symposium and Learners' Day events. Furthermore, members of all the school councils (involving approximately 750 children); were involved in the pre-Festival of Learning 2018 activities; 248 pupils submitted entries to the logo competition; and 6 pupils judged the competition).
- 4.5 It is expected that all pupils will benefit indirectly as a consequence of the continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities offered to teachers and leaders in schools. This collaboration has provided an opportunity for teachers to reflect upon and celebrate existing good practice, encouraging others to reflect and refine their teaching accordingly. Through collaboration, it is anticipated that good teaching can be improved further, and, in the longer term, this cultural shift is likely to impact positively on standards across the county borough although in the workshop evaluations there are reports of immediate changes where teachers have taken back new ideas and resources to apply to their lessons.
- 4.6 Several external agencies were involved in relevant aspects of the event, including:
- the Children's Commissioner for Wales;
 - delegates from Public Health Wales;
 - Schools Health Research Network (SHRN);
 - higher education institutions;
 - representatives from Estyn; and
 - Welsh Government officials.
- 4.7 All Council members and the Youth Mayor were invited to the event, and some members were able to attend. A business engagement exercise was conducted and this resulted in a number of local businesses attending/sponsoring the event. A number of local businesses have expressed an interest in contributing to the workshops offered by schools and this may be an area to develop in the future.
- 4.8 Dr Andy Cope from the 'Art of Brilliance' was employed to make the keynote speech to headteachers and senior leaders at the Symposium event and to speak to the children at the Learners' Day. His contribution has received overwhelmingly positive comments from staff and pupils alike (36% of the Symposium attendees said his presentation was what worked best) and that it has made them review their attitudes and think in a different way. The long-term impact of this will not be known in the short term.
- 4.9 Overall evaluation data collected by the Consultation Engagement Team has been very positive with 94% respondents rated the event as 'excellent' or 'good' and 86% indicating that they would like to hold another Festival of Learning again next year. There are a number of suggestions about how the event could be improved including scheduling at a different time of year and spreading component parts over a longer time-frame. This is something that will be considered further with schools in September to determine the best way forward. Appendix B provides further information.

- 4.10 Evaluation data from the learners involved in the Learner Voice Forum were collected separately by the Youth Development Team in the 'Learner Voice Forum Thematic Report' and this shows a very positive response to the activities arranged as well as clear messages about what makes children happy in their learning and in their communities for the directorate to consider and disseminate further. Appendix C provides further information.
- 4.11 Comments from the evaluation feedback have been analysed in order to draw out key successes and areas for development so that lessons can be learnt for next year (refer to Appendix D). From this analysis, officers will consider with headteachers the changes that may be needed for the next event; most prominently the timing of each component of the Festival of Learning, whereby the event may be spread across the academic year in future.
- 4.12 Following on from the event, a local authority 'Wellbeing Focus Group' will be established in September to further develop a policy approach to wellbeing in schools to impact positively on outcomes for children. This will help to place greater emphasis on the importance of wellbeing alongside pupil attainment.
- 4.13 The Festival of Learning 2018 focussed on the following priorities, aligned with the new Estyn framework:
- Standards
 - Wellbeing and attitudes to learning
 - Teaching and learning experiences
 - Care, support and guidance
 - Leadership and management
- 4.14 The specific focus on wellbeing and attitudes to learning was well received by delegates to each of the events. Clearly, improving the wellbeing culture of schools/learning organisations, making them 'fit for purpose in the 21st century' is a long-term goal but the feedback received suggests that a number of headteachers and senior leaders have been led to thinking in different ways and this may mark an initial shift in attitude as a precursor to greater changes. In the wider context of curriculum reform in Wales this may help to bring about more wide-ranging changes in how teachers teach, how learners learn, how schools serve their communities and how services can collaborate in the multi-agency arena (a priority in the Education and Family Support Directorate's business plan). Many of the workshops offered by schools were attended not only by teachers and school support staff but also by local authority officers and by elected members – thus helping to facilitate greater understanding and collaboration across agencies.
- 4.15 While a number of the anticipated outcomes (outlined previously in a benefits realisation plan and a benefits realisation map) have been realised already (especially with regard to increasing continuing professional development opportunities for staff, increased collaboration between schools and other agencies, involvement of local businesses, increasing social and professional networks) - many will take longer to be realised and be fully developed. Attitudinal shifts and cultural changes take longer to embed and reap benefits. Officers will continue to work with schools to follow up on the event and to realise these outcomes and changes. An initial analysis of the anticipated and actual costs and benefits has been conducted. Appendix E provides further information.
- 4.16 Schools completed a Central South Consortium pre-event survey in February 2018 in relation to their readiness for curriculum changes and have been asked to complete the first of many post-event surveys by the end of September 2018. This will help to measure progress over a long period of time - twice a year from 2018-2026 (see Appendix B). It is

designed for preparing for Curriculum Wales by 2020 focussing on six key areas, all of which were addressed in the workshops delivered in the Festival of Learning 2018:

- Pedagogy
- Innovating learning experiences
- Leading and collaborating professional learning
- Language and culture
- Assessment and progress
- Relationships and wellbeing

4.17 One of the anticipated benefits of the event was greater promotion of Bridgend as a 'centre of learning' and this is something that has happened in the short term with local and national media coverage of the event; notably two interviews on BBC Radio Wales which focussed on the continuing professional development workshops. There has also been interest from the Welsh Government Curriculum for Wales Team who will be including a blog about the Bridgend Festival of Learning 2018 on their website in the autumn term.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules.

5.1 There is no impact on the Council's policy framework or procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no direct equality impact issues arising from this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment

7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment provides a comprehensive summary of the outcomes expected from the implementation of the service.

Long-term	Supports the improvement of wellbeing in schools for staff and pupils.
Prevention	Development work to improve the culture and ethos of schools should help to secure wellbeing of staff and pupils and thereby prevent wellbeing issues from impacting negatively on school standards.
Integration	Monitoring and acting upon wellbeing matters is key to ensuring that outcomes for schools are achieved thus helping to support a successful economy.
Collaboration	The local authority works closely with schools, Estyn and with the Central South Consortium (CSC) to deliver the well-being objectives related to school improvement. The local authority receives the school inspection reports from Estyn and this informs the work conducted by the local authority and CSC to deliver the support for school improvement services.
Involvement	This area of work involves all stakeholders in school improvement. Schools work closely with one another to identify professional learning opportunities from one another, the local authority, CSC and

elsewhere (as required) reflecting the diversity of stakeholders involved in aspects of school improvement.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 An early analysis of the predicted and actual costs and benefits of the event has been conducted. Appendix E provides further information. While it is difficult to provide a precise figure for the event as not all invoices and expense claims have been received as yet, the total cost of the event (to date) is £29k. It is important to note that over 50% of this will be reimbursed to schools.
- 8.2 Due to the fact that this figure will be offset by Central South Consortium funding and sponsorship from local businesses, the total cost to BCBC is expected to be in the region of £8,375. This will be funded from the additional £65k which was approved by Council for the Festival of Learning 2018 on 28 February 2018 as a one-off pressure as part of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2018-2019 to 2021-2022. Any underspend (which we expect to be in the region of £56k) against this allocation will be returned to the Corporate Budget.
- 8.3 A number of the costs associated with the Festival of Learning 2018 will have been one-off costs as some of the materials and resources are not time bound and can therefore be re-used for future events (eg promotional banners and equipment supplied by local businesses).

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 It is recommended that Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the early reported outcomes and the benefits associated with the Festival of Learning 2018 event.

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Background documents

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report 'Festival of Learning' 29 March 2018

Appendices

- Appendix A Festival of Learning 2018 - Workshop Programme
- Appendix B Festival of Learning 2018 Evaluation
- Appendix C Festival of Learning 2018 Learner Voice Forum Thematic Report

- Appendix D Festival of Learning 2018 - Lessons Learnt Summary
- Appendix E Festival of Learning 2018 - Costs and Benefits Summary