

# **BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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

**8 JULY 2019**

### **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES**

#### **MEMBER AND SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL – PLASNEWYDD PRIMARY – RESPONSES**

##### **1. Purpose of Report.**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide responses to the comments and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Member and School Engagement Panel (MSEP) meeting with Plasnewydd Primary School.

##### **2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities**

- 2.1 This report relates to the following Corporate Priorities:

- Supporting a successful economy – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county.
- Helping people to be more self-reliant – taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.
- Smarter use of resources – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

##### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Council's Scrutiny function has an important role to play in enhancing the transparency and accountability of public services. The purpose of engaging Head Teachers together with Chairs of Governors with Members of Scrutiny is to explore school performance with a view to improving levels of understanding in support of the Committee's accountability function.
- 3.2 Plasnewydd Primary School had been highlighted as a school for the MSEP to consider with the rationale that the school currently has a Red status under the National Schools Categorisation System.
- 3.3 The MSEP met with the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors and Officers from the Education and Family Support Directorate on 11 March 2019.
- 3.4 The Panel received detailed information to assist them in their deliberations and development of questions including recent school data, Estyn reports, the School Post Inspection Action Plan and the Authority's Statement of Action.

#### **4. Current situation / proposal.**

- 4.1 On 29 April 2019 the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 considered a report detailing comments and recommendations from the MSEP meeting with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors from Plasnewydd Primary School.
- 4.2 The Committee accepted the comments and recommendations of the Panel and determined that they be forwarded to Cabinet, Officers and the Central South Consortium for a response. They were also forwarded to the Headteacher and Chair of Governors to incorporate any response they wished to make.
- 4.3 The findings, recommendations and their responses are attached at **Appendix 1**.

#### **5. Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules.**

- 5.1 The work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees undertakes 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.

#### **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 There are no equality implications directly attached to this report.

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

- 7.1 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 work of the Member and School Engagement Panel supports the improvement of standards and outcomes in schools.
- Prevention - Monitoring school performance allows the Authority to identify trends over time and to identify areas of good practice to be shared to help raise standards and to identify areas for school development. In making recommendations for change and further exploration by Scrutiny, the aim is to prevent standards from slipping across the County Borough.
- Integration - Providing effective Member and School Engagement Panel support, has a positive impact on well-being objectives through engagement with schools. This ultimately means that learners can learn and achieve and can play active roles in their communities, contributing positively to society as a whole.
- Collaboration - The Member and School Engagement Panel and Scrutiny Committees work specifically with Local Authority Officers, schools and with the Central South Consortium (CSC) to help towards the delivery of the well-being objectives related to school improvement. Receiving information from those listed

assists in the production of recommendations that are made to a combination of all those involved to support the delivery of school improvement.

- Involvement – The work of the Member and School Engagement Panel and the Scrutiny Committee involves Officers from within the Authority, CSC, schools including Headteachers and Chairs of Governors to identify areas for improvement, further support and future monitoring.

## **8. Financial Implications.**

8.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.

## **9. Recommendation.**

9.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Consider and note the responses to the findings and recommendations of the Member and School Engagement Panel in relation to Plasnewydd Primary School;
- b) Determine whether it wishes to make any further comments or recommendations based on these responses.

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## **Background documents**

None

## Recommendations

### Recommendations to the Authority

- a) In order to support the school further the Panel recommend that the Authority look at putting in 'Team Around the School' support (group of practitioners working with a particular child or young person and their family) for Plasnewydd Primary as soon as possible.

**Action:** Local authority officers in the Integrated Working and Family Support Team have agreed to make contact with the Headteacher in order to schedule a team around the school approach.

- b) The Panel recommend that a direct and urgent connection be made with a school when social services have been involved, such as over a weekend, with a particular pupil of that school. Members stressed the need for a prompt reaction from social services to ensure that a school is made aware so that they are ready and able to provide immediate support to that child in an appropriate way.

**Action:** This has been discussed and will be picked up as part of the joint screening arrangements through the Multi- Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

### Recommendations to School/Consortium

- c) The Panel recommend that the Governor Pack that Plasnewydd Primary has recently developed with their Challenge Advisor be considered for sharing across other schools in the County Borough with a view to assisting other School Governing Bodies.

**Action:** The Governor Pack will be shared with Central South Consortium (CSC) governor support and will be considered for the inclusion into a newly developed governor self evaluation document being worked upon with representatives from five local authorities and CSC.

- d) The Panel recommend that School Governors from Plasnewydd Primary School consider visiting and attending School Governor meetings in other schools in order to view best practice and possibly obtain ideas which could be adapted and used within their own school. Furthermore, the Panel recommend that the Consortium and the Authority promote this method for all School Governing Bodies so that they can optimise on the best practice that is available throughout the County Borough and ultimately improve school performance across schools.

**Action:-** CSC has been working with school governing bodies to develop "Governor Improvement Groups" as a way of sharing best practice from across the region. Within Bridgend there are emerging examples of this, for example, with the Coleg Cymunedol

Y Dderwen cluster where a mini governor improvement group has been established. Plasnewydd Primary School have also benefitted from a consultant governor (funded via CSC) to help develop more effective systems and processes to review the work of the school.

- e) Following confirmation of the two Local Authority School Governor Vacancies, the Panel recommend that a job description be provided for advertising these vacancies so that individuals understand what the position entails and furthermore that different ways of advertising be considered.

**Action:-** There is an approved process to recruit and appoint Local Authority Governors. Different ways of advertising have been explored and there is a commitment to continue to think creatively in order to appoint governors. There is job description, set criteria for applicants and an officer panel meets to consider the applications. This process has been agreed by Cabinet.