

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LEARNING AND SKILLS SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE HELD AT BY ZOOM ON WEDNESDAY, 2 MARCH 2022**

PRESENT: County Councillor P Roberts (Chairman)  
County Councillors S C Davies, E Roderick, G Thomas, J Berriman, D Meredith,  
M Williams  
Co-Opted Members: A Davies and S. Davies

Cabinet Portfolio Holders In Attendance: County Councillor A Davies (Portfolio Holder  
for Finance and Transport)

Officers: Lynette Lovell (Director of Education), Eurig Towns (Senior Challenge  
Advisor), Wyn Richards (Scrutiny Manager and Head of Democratic Services), Simon  
Anderson (ALN Manager), Emma Palmer (Head of Transformation and  
Communications), Hayley Smith (Service Manager for Inclusion and Youth Services),  
Debbie Lewis (Education Consultant) and Sally Llewellyn (Service Manager for  
Curriculum for Wales and Professional Learning)

<b>1. APOLOGIES</b>
---------------------

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors L Roberts, B  
Davies, T Van-Rees, K Roberts-Jones, A Jenner (other Council business) and  
Co-opted Member M Evitts. In addition, there was an apology for absence from  
County Councillor P Davies (Portfolio Holder for Education and Property).

<b>2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST</b>
-----------------------------------

There were no declarations of interest from Members relating to items for  
consideration on the agenda.

<b>3. DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP</b>
--------------------------------------

The Committee did not receive any disclosures of prohibited party whips which a  
Member has been given in relation to the meeting in accordance with Section  
78(3) of the Local Government Measure 2011.

<b>4. READINESS FOR THE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATION TRIBUNAL (WALES) ACT 2018 (ALNET) IN POWYS</b>
--

**Documents Considered:**

- Presentation by Hayley Smith, Service Manager for Inclusion and Youth  
Services and Simon Anderson, Inclusion Manager.

**Issues Discussed:**

- The new ALN Act came into force 2021 and is being implemented in  
phases to 2024. A new strategy has been developed focussing on  
provision and improved outcomes for ALN pupils.
- There is no under-estimation of the challenge for schools and the new  
roles of the ALNCo and responsibilities on schools places a great strain  
on school leaders especially in the smaller schools. This change is being

- introduced alongside other national changes such as the Curriculum for Wales.
- Powys been preparing for the act for the past 4 years and due to transformation is being delivered at pace and in a spirit of co-construction with schools. Training has been provided for schools, officers and key partners. From the self evaluation it is clear that implementation is occurring successfully.
  - The slides showed the delivery of the Act against the eleven core aims.
  - To meet the need for an unified plan a new inclusion system has been developed. The three elements of the system are Tyfu gateway, Tyfu Platform and PIP (Powys Inclusion Panel). This also allows for electronic IDPs (Individual Development Plans), and allows schools to track and monitor support for pupils.
  - The Tyfu Platform will in future make sure that all information is held centrally and accessible to those that need to access it.
  - There are two multi agency panels i.e. the Early Years PIP and older children PIP with multi agency representation. Also looking how to include the "children's voice" in the work of these panels. This assists decision making as all the decision makers are in the meeting.
  - Training has been delivered to all schools, governing bodies, Health, Children and Adults Services, and third sector partners.
  - Collaboration and communications with schools and others has greatly improved, guides have been produced about the new Act and it is hoped to build on this. Bilingual Tyfu updates are sent to schools.
  - Questions:

Question	Response
<p>Are there any lessons from developing and procuring Tyfu which could be shared with social care as they look to their developments which came to Cabinet in last few days.</p> <p>What has been achieved is working across education, health and children's services and systems integration. The Council needs to learn from this procurement based on what's been achieved.</p>	<p>The Service is working closely in training with children's services. The Service has learned from the procurement and installation such as making sure that the functionality is something that everyone can use. The scope for the development of Tyfu is huge and there is the ability to extend it in future. Schools are saying that the system is simple to use and they are able to share resources instantly as well as getting responses from the LEA instantly.</p> <p>EYPIP (Early Years Powys Inclusion Panel) – is an example of significant working across services.</p> <p><b>ACTION – Recommendation to Head of Transformation and Communications that any learning from this system is captured in respects of developments for Social Services.</b></p>

<p>Tyfu Gateway – is this the platform schools will use to apply for support for a pupil.</p> <p>Schools are currently having difficulties when there are errors in applications which delays the process which is frustrating for governors and schools. Will this new system get rid of this blockage.</p>	<p>Yes that is correct. They can access advice and support through the gateway and then can make applications through the system itself.</p> <p>This system is much quicker. A triage system has been introduced to look at referrals on a fortnightly basis by a specialist team. The panel will check referrals and will pick up any issues. Once the panel has discussed a referral then schools have access to this information. If there are any specific issues they can be picked up initially with the school case officer.</p>
<p>Are there any metrics to show how much quicker the system is by comparison to the previous process.</p>	<p>This is being collated at the moment and an annual report produced which will include statistics which can be made available to scrutiny and the Cabinet.</p> <p>The unified system is quicker for schools.</p> <p><b>ACTION – Committee to receive ALN statistical report in future.</b></p>
<p>If something is spotted it will be picked up which is fine. School are still saying there are issues with referrals. If there are issues applications are delayed.</p>	<p>A team was sent into Rhayader school to support. The Service Manager indicated that she would be happy to meet with the school. There is a helpline to support schools. If there are any individual issues these can be followed up.</p>
<p>Concern about the reference to up to 100 referrals needing to be checked if this happens on a regular basis.</p> <p>With regard to Team around the cluster – how does this work if one of the schools is Welsh Medium.</p>	<p>It is not usual to have a large number of referrals but post covid issues are emerging such as anxiety.</p> <p>This is about Team around the cluster meetings held with Children's Services and partners. Meetings are held jointly. One of the recent suggestion is to have a Welsh only Team around the cluster, and the Service is looking at providing this.</p> <p>Currently cluster meetings are held through the medium of English but having Welsh sessions has been raised. However, the facility across all partners to deliver a service in Welsh is not where it needs to be currently.</p>
<p>Who will deliver the training to health</p>	<p>Training being run jointly by the</p>

<p>visitors.</p>	<p>Service and has been delivered to health visitors. Training has also been run across PTHB, children's services and FE colleges.</p>
<p>The central location for pupils' ALN records. Do schools have copies as well because if something goes wrong records could be lost. Can schools dip into the information, and is there a backup of the system.</p>	<p>It is one central system which has a backup facility. This has been tested with other Councils before the system was purchased by Powys.</p> <p>All of the information is stored securely and is backed up. When a child moves school the profile follows the child and the new school has access to that information. Any historic information have been archived and stored electronically.</p>
<p>With ALN act now covering young people up to age 25 does the information follow this individual.</p>	<p>It depends where they go. If a young person moves to an area which does us the same system as Powys, a physical copy can be provided.</p>
<p>There are many different partners involved. Have all of them moved forward at the same speed as the Council, has there been any problems and do any remain. Do any of the partners want to retain paper based systems.</p>	<p>Organisations have worked hard to come on board with the Council as this is very new. The Service has been well supported by partners. This has improved partnership working which was recognised by Estyn.</p>
<p>Silver Cloud and CAMHS – are you logging how much additional support is coming from these sources. Are you seeing any impact on waiting times for CAMHS as a result of this service and are referrals increasing as people become aware of the service.</p>	<p>The Service is provided with updates about referrals coming in from Silver Cloud and CAMHS and waiting times. This is a quarterly report and one of the Service's measures.</p> <p>The Service is aiming for all schools in Powys to be trauma informed schools and Welsh Government grant is being used to assist this development.</p>
<p>Linked to numbers of agencies, what is the capacity of the education service to train schools and provide support services. How are you managing this workload and how confident are you that you have the support necessary to deliver what children need.</p>	<p>The team was strengthened and additionality was provided such as specialist teachers. We are trying to make sure we can respond to an ever changing need. The Service has been widened and strengthened by working in partnership with others. Recruitment is being undertaken in accordance with need as well as ensuring having bilingual staff.</p>
<p>In past there have been issues between the Health Board and Education about who should be paying for support services. Are financial responsibilities now clear.</p>	<p>There is a conference on Friday about resolving these challenges together. People now have a shared understanding of the needs of individuals, and although it is an</p>

	improving situation there are still challenges.
What is the DECLO / ALNCo relationship.	<p>ALNCo – schools need to have an ALNCo as a statutory role, but smaller schools can share the role as a cluster approach. The authority is supporting whatever model each cluster prefers and facilitating cluster working through grant funding.</p> <p>The DECLO (designated education clinical lead officer), supports three health boards. Their responsibility is to be the conduit between the authority and the Health Board and to make sure that additional learning and health provision is in place and that this is continually monitored for future provision requirements.</p>
Do we know what regular means, is it a fixed time period.	We meet with the DECLO monthly, but has been more often as the Act is implemented. We can meet as often as we need to.
Play leaders one employed north and south. Are they centrally funded and what did they do when first employed but not placed within a location.	Before the play therapists began their work they started preparing banks of resources, undertook cluster visits, as well as some training. Before there were live cases they were introduced to clusters and raising awareness across schools.
Page 27 refers to minimum time. Concerned that minimum becomes the maximum. Is there ample time that is needed rather than minimum time.	This will be reworded. The key is to make sure we are using all the resources we have to provide the right services. Pupils need to be ready for learning which is at the heart of what the Service is trying to provide.
What is the role of the Youth Service and who do they report to.	Youth Services sit alongside the ALN team. Will support the Panels and also provide an additional learning provision, as well as the proactive work they do directly with schools and other services.
Are Youth Services only working during the day and not doing evening work.	No they cover during school hours and also run youth clubs and undertake other community work in the evenings.
There are always children who are below the threshold for getting formal support but have challenging behaviour that might need some	This needs to be considered from the perspective of a continuum of support. When a young person is identified not to be developing as

<p>support. Is there any training for support from schools.</p>	<p>expected, then a graduated support is provided. Only when the school cannot meet the support provision does the school come to the LEA. The LEA will always provide some form of support and we have been looking at the range of support which can be provided.</p>
<p>Some challenges have been identified. What are the perceived level of risk to deliver the strategy by 2024. Are we on schedule.</p>	<p>We have quarterly reporting and risk register. With the implementation of the act we are currently on track and are confident and optimistic about the future.</p>
<p>IT procurement – how close were you to delivering on budget.</p>	<p>This came in under budget as we collaborated with other Councils and now we are expanding and developing the system further.</p>
<p>Page 35 – concern that all schools need to have an ALN governor but some do not have them.</p> <p>Welsh Medium schools unable to support transition for pupils as no provision for pupils with ALN to progress their learning through the medium of Welsh.</p>	<p>At the time of the visits there were a small numbers of schools who did not have ALN link governor. This has been rectified since.</p> <p>Welsh transition is a significant challenge to be worked on and is being addressed through the WESP.</p>

**Outcomes:**

- **Recommendation to Head of Transformation and Communications that any learning from this system (Tyfu) is captured in respects of developments for Social Services.**
- **The Committee to receive the ALN statistical report in future.**

<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>CURRICULUM FOR WALES AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING</b></p>
------------------	--

**Documents Considered:**

- Report by Sally Llewellyn, Service Manager for Curriculum for Wales and Professional Learning.

**Issues Discussed:**

- New curriculum needs to be ready for September 2022. Powys has a new team working with Education partners in Ceredigion.
- For Primary schools – roll out will commence from September 2022. Secondary schools and others settings can choose to roll out the curriculum to Year 7 and encouraged to do so by Welsh Government but it is not mandatory until 2023 when they would be expected to roll out to years 7 and 8 together.
- The Curriculum for Wales is a purpose led curriculum which is different from the content led curriculum of the past. This is no longer about what we teach but how we teach and why the contexts and concepts are selected for learning.

- The Curriculum framework is vast and still growing and being updated. There are 27 mandatory statements of what matters i.e. the statutory obligations of the Curriculum, across 6 areas of learning and experience (Languages, Literacy and Communication; Mathematics and Numeracy; Science and Technology; Expressive Arts; Health and Well-Being; Humanities). The learners will need to develop a growing and deepening understanding against those 27 statements of what matters.
- There are five principles of progression within the areas of learning and experience except for Mathematics and Numeracy which has interdependent proficiencies.
- In addition, there are three fundamental cross curricular skills which are also mandatory (Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competence). There are four integral skills and six cross cutting themes of the curriculum.
- There is a vast amount of information for schools to read through and digest to deliver what is a 3 to 16 continuum of learning. Schools have to design their own curriculum and assessments structure. Schools are grappling with what disciplinary progression looks like.
- The Curriculum and Professional Learning Team is assisting schools with professional learning and assisting teachers have a deeper understanding of the curriculum framework. This is an exciting as well as daunting time for schools with multiple changes occurring in the education system as part of achieving the national mission e.g. ALN, accountability measures, self evaluation processes.
- The pandemic over the last two years has prevented schools making the progress they would have liked with the curriculum due to other priorities.
- All schools are piloting, designing and trialling and trying to evaluate the impact of the changes being introduced in schools. Most schools are engaging positively with the Curriculum for Wales and grateful for the professional learning offer which is available from the authority.
- The Curriculum team will be visiting schools with improvement advisers in the Spring Term to ask questions about the Curriculum for Wales and to see how things are operating in practice and preparedness for the roll out.
- The Team is also ensuring that practitioners are accessing the learning resources and updating these resources. Time for professional learning for practitioners is a challenge for schools and funding has been provided by Welsh Government to support professional learning.
- Peer to peer collaboration and support for practitioners is being provided through nineteen pedagogy leads drawn from a variety schools to develop their knowledge of the curriculum focussing on one area of learning experience. The leads are supporting clusters at a peer level to develop the curriculum. Following feedback adjustments have been made to the pedagogy leads programme.
- The Education Minister at the headteacher conference recently said that September was the next leg of the journey, and no one is expecting schools to be ready by September and completely in place as some of the guidance is still being developed. As the piloting and trialling continues there will be continuous improvements and adjustments as the curriculum is implemented.

3.24 p.m. Cllr Sandra Davies left the meeting.

- Questions:

Question	Response
<p>Various schools that the Committee has been involved with made claims as to where they are in developing the curriculum and that much work is ongoing at the cluster level. With regard to the development of the curriculum, is the work happening largely in individual schools or schools in a cluster working together.</p>	<p>It is a bit of both. Each individual practitioner has to take responsibility for their delivery of the curriculum. Each school has to have a clear vision for their school and how the areas of learning and experience are going to be delivered in that school. There also needs to be discussion with secondary schools as this is a progression over the three to sixteen continuum.</p> <p>Some projects are currently running at a cluster level, and the ethos is around cluster working, but it is not consistent currently.</p>
<p>In relation to the teaching of languages other than Welsh and English. Are we in a position to give further help to those schools who want to work together and use their resources to teach other world languages.</p>	<p>The Curriculum for Wales has moved away from modern foreign languages to a broader definition of international languages. Therefore, schools can harness the experience and knowledge in the local context for delivery within schools. There is funding coming from Welsh Government for international languages due to the concern about the drop off in international languages at GCSE and beyond.</p> <p>Powys is funding clusters to work together so that a secondary school with expertise in a particular language can work with cluster primary schools to look at what progress would look like if the language is delivered in a primary school, by comparison to being taught at secondary level only. Schools would work together to develop resources across the cluster so learners in primary schools are having experiences of international languages at an earlier stage in their education.</p>
<p>Considering how schools will be developing their own curriculum. Although schools will work with their cluster the delivery style will be individual to that school. How will this impact on children who move schools especially if they move mid key stage.</p>	<p>That is the case with the current curriculum. Although there is a national curriculum for content, how this is enacted in the context of learning is different in schools currently.</p> <p>The guiding principles in the</p>



<p>Is this going to add an extra challenge for them. The authority is making changes to clusters. Will pupils remain in the school where they start even if the cluster changes in future.</p>	<p>Curriculum for Wales are the four purposes and beneath those are thirty three characteristics, so this should lead to a commonality in the curriculum. Beneath the characteristics are the twenty seven statements which are statutory.</p> <p>It is a misrepresentation to think that the Curriculum is open to interpretation, as there are clear guiding mechanisms in the curriculum as to what, why and how things should be taught. There are twelve pedagogical principles that set out the styles for pedagogy so although there is freedom to look at local contexts, underpinning that are a number of non-negotiable elements set out in the curriculum, guidance and framework which will ensure consistency for those moving between schools.</p>
<p>Was going to ask if you are content that we are on track for September and what are the key challenges. However it would appear that teacher time is the current issue and once this is in place its not about more teachers, but teacher time at this point. Is it this issue where we are going to stumble.</p>	<p>Additional teachers would not help, but there is a need for meaningful engagement with professional learning for the existing teachers as they do not have time to engage, even though they want to engage. Teachers do feel pressured by the September 2022 implementation date, but have been reassured by the Minister's statement.</p> <p>Whilst the professional learning required is vast, the Team is trying to streamline and focus guidance as much as possible for the profession and provide bite sized opportunities for professional learning. The authority is also providing opportunities for practitioners to come together to discuss matters such as curriculum design and progression and assessment. It is accepted that this is a long term change which will need ongoing support and continuing professional learning. There is also a need for schools to build in professional learning time within the school week.</p>

The Chair commented that the Committee had received an assurance around the central support being provided. It will be the visits to schools over next few months which will be critical to see how the support is translating into practice in the classroom. The Committee will wish to see assurances regarding the implementation of the curriculum in the new Council term.

15.56 p.m. Cllr Jake Berriman left the meeting.

**Outcomes:**

- **Noted.**

<b>6.</b>	<b>WORK PROGRAMME</b>
-----------	-----------------------

The Committee noted that future meetings would be held as follows:

29-06-22 14.00 – 16.00	RE Curriculum for September  Possible Induction Briefing for Members
20-07-22 14.00 – 16.00	Q1 Performance and Risk  Secondary School Strategy
21-09-22 14.00 – 16.00	
26-10-22 14.00 – 16.00	Q2 Performance and Risk
14-12-22 14.00 – 16.00	

The Committee also noted that the report in respect of Ysgol Calon Cymru which had been referred to the Committee by the Governance and Audit Committee would need to be scheduled in the work programme.

**County Councillor P Roberts (Chairman)**