



SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

Date Written	16 th November 2017
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Service Area	Learning
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To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

Self-Evaluation of Key Question 3.1 Quality and Effectiveness of Leaders and Managers

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Local Authority (LA) has a planned work programme for the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) 2017 to 2018 in order to build up a profile of judgements, which will be used to highlight any areas for improvement as well as come to an overall view on standards and performance.
- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to provide the current judgement for Key Question 3.1 in the SER i.e. 'Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers' that was known previously as 'Impact of leadership.'
- 1.3 The judgement is that the Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers is good.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 The content of this report be discussed and noted.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Self-evaluation is the essential step in a cyclical process of bringing about change and improvement. The steps in the process are:
- Monitoring and evaluating improvement
 - Planning for improvement
 - Undertaking improvement work
- 3.2 The LA's SER for Local Authority Education Services for Children and Young People (LAESCYP) is being reviewed and updated to ensure that the judgements and

actions will lead to improved outcomes for all learners. At the heart of self-evaluation are three questions:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- How can we improve things further?

3.3 ESTYN are currently reviewing the framework for the inspection of local authorities which will be piloted in 2017/18 and implemented in 2018/19. The LA has a planned work programme in order to build up a profile of judgements, which will be used to highlight any areas for improvement as well as come to an overall view on standards and performance. The information collected will lead into the LA's service delivery plans for improving the quality of provision. Reports on all the areas of the SER will be presented to Learning and LAESCYP Scrutiny over the coming months. The new framework is called the inspection of Local Government Education Services (LGES). There continue to be three inspections areas – Outcomes, Quality of Education Services and Leadership and Management.

3.4 Whilst there will continue to be four judgements, the wording of the judgements has changed to reflect higher expectations and that adequate is not good enough.

- **Excellent** Very Strong, sustained performance and practice
- **Good** Strong Features, although minor aspects may require improvement
- **Adequate and needs improvement** Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important areas require improvement
- **Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement** Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

Members will be informed of LA progress against these areas throughout the year.

3.5 The review of the SER will build upon the judgements made in the previous SER for 2016-17. In the previous Estyn framework Key Question 3.1 was called Impact of leadership and addressed aspects of education services that are evaluated in the current key question 3.1. The aim of the 'Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers' is to ensure that a broad range of education services for children and young people improves outcomes for learners.

4.0 WHERE WE WERE

4.1 In 2016/17 'Impact of leadership' was judged good.

5.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW

5.1 The quality and effectiveness of managers is good because leadership in the local authority has been successful in making and sustaining improvements over the last four years with standards good or better in many areas. The clear vision and focus on key initiatives so that services to schools contribute to high quality provision in schools. Effective and efficient service delivery impacts well on standards and the quality of education and training for all children and young people. Partnership working within and beyond the council is well established and leads to effective services e.g. in ALN.

The quality and effectiveness of managers is not excellent because the five ways of working in the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act are not yet embedded in the work of the education services; not all staff understand and discharge their roles and

responsibilities and collaborate in driving forward strategic priorities and plans for education services - see *Appendix 1*.

6.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE

6.1 The LA's ambition is to be good or excellent in all areas by 2020 and also ranked in the top 10 performing local authorities. The LA is making good progress towards achieving this target. Effective support for school improvement can provide a clear, demonstrable and beneficial effect on learners.

7.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT

7.1 The key priorities for improvement are:-

- The principles set out in the Well-being of Future Generations underpin all decisions and priorities for improvement balancing immediate, short-term needs with the long-term needs of learners, the local community and Wales.
- Multi-agency collaboration through the Public Service Board is effective in identifying and unblocking barriers to improvement and in holding statutory partnerships to account
- Future school organisation plans are communicated clearly with all stakeholders
- Performance management ensures all staff are able to contribute to the forward strategic priorities and plans for education services.

8.0 CONTRIBUTION TO WELLBEING OBJECTIVES

8.1 Self-evaluation and improvement planning contributes substantially to the capacity to achieve the Best Start to Life Wellbeing Objectives, 'Children get the best start to life' and 'Children and young people are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals'.

SUE WALKER
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COUNCILLOR LISA MYTTON
CABINET MEMBER FOR LEARNING

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

Question 3: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

3.1 QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How do we evaluate the quality of the internal leadership provided by officers and elected members?

- strategy documents set out the authority's strategic vision, aims and priorities
- leadership is effective and purposeful in securing services and in sustaining high quality provision or in improving weak aspects of provision.
- officers and elected members lead on, and contribute to the leadership of, partnership arrangements

SUMMARY POSITION

The quality and effectiveness of managers is **good** because leadership in the local authority has been successful in making and sustaining improvements over the last four years with standards good or better in many areas. The clear vision and focus on key initiatives so that services to schools contribute to high quality provision in schools. Effective and efficient service delivery impacts well on standards and the quality of education and training for all children and young people. Partnership working within and beyond the council is well established and leads to effective services e.g. in ALN

The quality and effectiveness of managers is not excellent because the five ways of working in the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act are not yet embedded in the work of the education services; not all staff understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities and collaborate in driving forward strategic priorities and plans for education services.

STRENGTHS

- The Learning Strategy, the strategies for Early Years, Youth Services and Children Looked After, work with internal and external partners, and the projects to deliver the corporate wellbeing objectives are all focused firmly on meeting all learners' needs. The priorities are shared with, and understood by, LA officers and schools and underpinned by the five ways of working
- The vision of securing improved outcomes through a self-improving school system is clear and well-articulated. As a result school leaders have taken ownership of a number of initiatives and strategies including leading the Foundation Phase Alliance across the authority; undertaking the role of School Improvement Group convenors, leading Pathfinder pairings and developing curriculum (literacy, numeracy and leadership) Hubs across the borough
- The Council, supported by elected members from all parties, gives high priority to education and sets out well-defined priorities for improving education outcomes that are integrated through the wellbeing objectives and across the corporate plans. The chair of scrutiny and the portfolio lead for education work together to ensure a strong focus on raising standards for all learners and in providing effective services.
- Through reports to cabinet, council and scrutiny committees, elected members have a good overview of all services across the local authority in order to compare and challenge services

more effectively and make well-informed decisions. In addition, elected members hold managers to account for the services and outcomes that they are responsible for.

- The different directorates and services within the authority collaborate well in order to contribute to achieving this priority through well-established structures including SLT and future strategy meetings and the cross-directorate tackling poverty strategic group.
- Professionals and portfolio members are part of the LAESCYP Monitoring Group where the local authority's senior officers provide good quality assurance of the self-evaluation, both with regard to adhering to process and in ensuring the accuracy of the information produced. This group sets high expectations for officers, schools, other providers and partners which are communicated through the regular forums and evident in key actions such as the robust monitoring of schools on various aspects of leadership and management including and beyond standards and in the setting of ambitious targets
- Corporate management, committee structures and business systems set high expectations for officers and support high standards of business delivery across the whole of the authority's work. Leaders and managers model and promote professional values and behaviours that contribute positively to school improvement and effective collaboration between staff and with other providers.
- Corporate process for the establishment and review of risks is well established and the monthly risk management meetings with the Chief Executive and senior officers from legal and HR. complement this. As a result issues and risks in schools are addressed swiftly
- A strong partnership between the authority and its regional consortium for school improvement, Central South Consortium, helps to provide a clear model of support and challenge for schools, which is proportionate to their level of need.
- Improved partnership working in youth support services enables the authority to take a strategic approach when planning future services. A key driver of the new partnership arrangements is the establishment of the youth support services steering group. The authority works well in partnership with the voluntary sector through its partnership with the Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil and the providers' network. This has enabled an improved understanding of provision in this area and is giving lead workers better opportunities to meet the needs of young people. The authority has also worked very well in partnership with young people to develop programmes and to refine support processes that respond to current needs and issues.
- The local authority has worked with a neighbouring authority to develop its systems and approaches to data management. As a result, the authority now has a system that holds key data across a range of education service functions including additional learning needs, attendance, exclusions and school admissions. Consequently, the sharing of data between departments within education has improved. The authority is in a stronger position to monitor performance, identify trends and determine suitable priorities for improvement.
- The local authority commissions a wide range of services for pupils with ALN from RCT which has led to a more rigorous and consistent approach to the provision of support and use of resources
- Greenfield Special School, on behalf of the authority, is providing a highly effective outreach service for schools and is leading on the implementation of the person-centred planning model.

This helps mainstream schools in preparing for the statutory reform of additional learning needs and to improve provision for pupils with ALN.

- Strong partnerships with schools, other local authorities and community groups underpins the development of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
- The Learning and LAESCYP Scrutiny Committee members challenge officers effectively. The informative and timely reports provided to the scrutiny committee contribute effectively to the committee's work. Meetings of the committee are accompanied by regular pre-meeting and post-meeting briefing sessions that enhance its effectiveness.
- The scrutiny committee has an appropriate and well-planned programme of work that includes robust monitoring of action plans arising from the education service's self-evaluation arrangements. It has also established an appropriate annual programme of reporting which includes end of key stage performance, NEET figures, inspection outcomes and categorisation of schools. The committee is effective in holding the local authority to account and challenges the nature of some support services where there are concerns, e.g. task and finish group on attendance, service level agreements with schools

ASPECTS REQUIRING IMPROVEMENT

- Leaders and managers consistently apply the principles set out in the Well-being of Future Generations so that decisions and priorities for improvement balance immediate, short-term needs with the long-term needs of learners, the local community and Wales.
- All staff understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities and collaborate in driving forward strategic priorities and plans for education services.

PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- The principles set out in the Well-being of Future Generations underpin all decisions and priorities for improvement balancing immediate, short-term needs with the long-term needs of learners, the local community and Wales.
- Multi-agency collaboration through the Public Service Board is effective in identifying and unblocking barriers to improvement and in holding statutory partnerships to account
- Future school organisation plans are communicated clearly with all stakeholders
- Performance management ensures all staff are able to contribute to the forward strategic priorities and plans for education services.

FUTURE ACTIONS TO IMPROVE QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF LEADERS AND MANAGERS

- Plan how to deliver services regionally
- Provide information and proposals to the Public Service Board on key priorities and actions
- Plan training sessions for all staff on the principles set out in the Well-being of Future Generations
- Support staff to ensure the five ways of working are evident in service delivery plans and evaluations
- Plan engagement and listening sessions with all stakeholders on future school organisation proposals
- Review performance management systems and processes and impact
- Link with corporate workforce development plans on staff skills, knowledge and understanding