

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**(Committee Rooms 1/2 - Port Talbot Civic Centre)**

**Members Present:**

**3 November 2016**

**Chairperson:** Councillor A.R.Lockyer

**Vice Chairperson:** Councillor H.N.James

**Councillors:** R.Thomas, R.G.Jones, J.D.Morgan, A.Llewelyn,  
D.Whitelock, Mrs.L.G.Williams, Mrs.L.H.James  
and Cllr.A.R.Woolcock.

**Co-opted Voting  
Members:** Mrs.M.Caddick and Ms.D.Vaughan

**Co-opted Non Voting  
Members:** R.De Benedictis and A.Hughes

**Officers In  
Attendance** A.Jarrett, C.Millis, J.Hodges, Ms.N.Aleksanyan,  
M.Daley, Ms.K.Warren, Ms.C.Dyer, K.Mort  
Ms.J.Thomas, Ms.K.Thomas and Mrs.J.  
Woodman-Ralph

**Cabinet Invitees:** Councillors P.D.Richards and M.L.James

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1. **MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND  
EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 OCTOBER  
AND 17 OCTOBER 2016 (SPECIAL)**

The minutes of the meetings held on the 6 October and the 17 October 2016 (Special) were noted with the following amendment to the minutes of the 17 October 2016.

Members highlighted that clarification had not been received from Officers on whether the increase in Education Support Service was correct or whether it had been amalgamated into a different budget line. Democratic Services Officer to contact the relevant Head of

Service for a response. Members also asked that the figure of 27% be included in the narrative of the minutes.

2. **SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17**

Members noted and agreed that due to the number of reports being presented at the next meeting, the Skills and Training and Adult Community Learning Report Cards be deferred until the January 2017 meeting:

3. **Education Development - Gypsy Travellers Service Report Card**

The Committee received an overview of the Service Report Card for the Traveller Education Service as detailed within the circulated report.

It was highlighted that due to the transient nature of the service gathering data can be very difficult and to assist with the varied support the team gives to traveller families and partner agencies an additional 1.5 posts have been created.

Members asked whether this additional support would strengthen the resilience of the team in providing support to schools when there are absences within the team and the support in schools is affected.. Officers explained the additional staff would enable the team to cover absences and school support will continue.

Members asked if there were any additional funding available to support this work. Officers also explained that the service is funded by Grants and that there is no additional funding available. The focus is currently on supporting children to attend secondary school which requires one to one support from the team which has shown a level of improvement in this area. Children who are primary school age do not need the same level of support as secondary school children.

Members appreciated all the work that the Traveller Education Service provides and asked that their Thanks be cascaded to all the staff in the team.

Following Scrutiny, the report was noted.

#### 4. **Education Development - 14 -19 Service Report Card**

Members received an overview of the Education Development 14 – 19 Service Report Card as detailed within the circulated report.

It was highlighted that the Seren Hub which is a collaboration between Neath Port Talbot, Powys and Bridgend to support and guide children who are applying for Oxbridge and other top universities has been very effective and the numbers of children from Neath Port Talbot has risen in number to 40, work is taking place to increase this number further.

Members asked if all Universities were accessible by students through the Seren Hub. Officers said that the top universities are available and that it depended on what courses they offered and what the students options were, there is flexibility, and students are supported in their choices.

Also, highlighted were the number of changes the authority has had to implement on behalf of the Welsh Government to education policies, G.C.S.E's and the introduction of the new Welsh Baccaalaureate qualification. Officers explained that Welsh Baccaalaureate qualification data will be available in the Summer of 2017. Also, Welsh Government has introduced a new computer system to schools as part of the Welsh Baccaalaureate which has been difficult to follow as a result a training programme has been introduced by the authority to support this.

Members asked if the Welsh Baccaalaureate was recognised by universities as part of the students qualifications to undertake degree courses. Officer explained that not all universities recognise it as one of the 'A' Level options but this was improving.

Following Scrutiny, the report was noted.

## 5. PRE-SCRUTINY

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:-

### Cabinet Board Proposals

#### 5.1 Report from the Children and Young People Services Improvement Member Panel on the Social Work Teams 2015/16

Cllr.L.H.James, Cllr.A.R.Woolcock, and Cllr.J.D.Morgan (Committee Member) attended today's meeting to give an overview of the visits they undertook with the Social Work Teams within 2015/16 as detailed in the circulated report.

Officers said that the Improvement Member Panel was leading the way in Wales and has been very effective in engaging with staff. Also, it has been a very important part of the Improvement Plan and that the Care Social Services Inspectorate for Wales had highlighted the work that the Panel had undertaken as a very important part of the progress Children's Services has made.

Chairperson, thanked the Panel for all the work they had undertaken.

Members also noted that the Panel asked that their appreciation be forwarded to Ms.C.Gadd who had provided support to the Panel since it was established.

Following Scrutiny, the report was noted.

#### 5.2 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Permission to Consult)

The Committee received an overview of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017-2020 as detailed in the circulated report.

Members noted that the (WESP) 2017-2020 after the Consultation has been completed on the 30<sup>th</sup> December 2016 will return to Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Board on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017 with the results of the consultation.

Members were concerned that the authority needed to start preparing work if it is to achieve the targets set by the Welsh Government of a million Welsh Speakers by 2050 and that the WESP should contain more detail of how its going to achieve these targets.

Members asked whether consideration had been given to the contents of a survey undertaken in 2013 that identified an increased need for additional Welsh Medium School places and Nursery School places. Also, the schools location is important in encouraging pupils to attend Welsh Medium Schools.

Officers confirmed that they would consider the results of the survey and note the issues raised today. In addition, Officers are happy to meet with Members to discuss their concerns.

It was also confirmed that Members of the Public are part of the consultation and that paper copies are provided to schools to enable parents to be involved. In addition partners and groups as detailed in the circulated report are also consulted on the WESP.

Members asked whether there was additional funding available from the Welsh Government as part of the implementation of the WESP. Officer confirmed that this has been raised with the Welsh Government.

Officer gave a verbal clarification to the recommendations contained within the circulated report as follows:

*That approval be granted to go out for consultation on the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020 for eight weeks commencing the beginning of November until December 30<sup>th</sup> 2016.*

Following Scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals being considered by Cabinet Board.

### 5.3 Western Bay Youth Offending Board Quarter 1 Data Report

Members received an overview of the Western Bay Youth Offending Board Quarter 1 Data Report for the period April 2016 to June 2016 as detailed in the circulated report.

It was highlighted that since Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea Youth Offending Teams merged in 2014 performance has been overall good and there has been a reduction of children and young people entering the Youth Justice Service due to the work undertaken to reduce First Time Entrants.

In addition, a pilot has been developed between Hillside and South Wales Police NPT locality team to reduce the number of children and young people being arrested as a result of their challenging behaviour. After the pilot has been evaluated it will feed into a protocol for Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea.

It was highlighted that a variety of work streams are being developed to reduce re-offending within a small number of young offenders which should in future show an improvement in this area.

Members asked whether there had been any concerns to the service in the light of the vacant post in the Child, Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Service within the team. Officer explained that no one had been appointed by ABMU to the vacant post within the team but that ABMU was carrying out a scoping exercise and that information will be available after that identifying what the needs are and what mitigating measures are being put in place. A progress report on CAMHS will be brought to a future Scrutiny Committee for Members consideration.

It was also queried if the School Beat Policy is monitored by the Youth Offending Team (YOT). Officers said that the YOT is aware of the policy and the Youth Offending Team and schools work closely together which has been very effective.

Following Scrutiny, the report was noted.

#### 5.4 Workforce Profile – Children and Young People Service

The Committee received an overview of the Workforce Profile of Children and Young People Services as detailed in the circulated report.

It was highlighted that presently there are no concerns relating to the workforce within Childrens' Services and that the improvements have continued with only one vacancy within the service and three agency workers who are employed to cover maternity leave. Morale was very high within the service. A staff survey questionnaire has been circulated within the service and the results of the survey will be brought back to Committee in due course.

Members asked what was the circumstances that prevented exit interviews being undertaken with some staff. Officers explained that staff who leave on certain criteria for example ill health are not expected to complete the exit interview.

Officers also, confirmed for Members that there is a discount scheme already available for all staff to access.

Following Scrutiny, the report was noted.

#### 6. ACCESS TO MEETINGS

**RESOLVED:** that pursuant to Section 100A (4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

## 7. PRE-SCRUTINY

### 7.1 Family Support Services

Members received an overview of the Family Support Services – Review of the Family Action Support Team as detailed in the private circulated report.

Members were pleased with the proposal and felt there were a number of benefits that would result from the implementation of the proposal.

Following Scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposal being considered by Cabinet Board.

**CHAIRPERSON**