

EDUCATION SKILLS AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Council Chamber - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

4 July 2019

Chairperson: Councillor S.H.Reynolds

Vice Chairperson: Councillor R.Mizen

Councillors: M.Crowley, S. ap Dafydd, S.Harris, S.K.Hunt, H.Jones, D.Keogh, J.D.Morgan, M.Protheroe, S.Renkes, A.J.Richards and D.Whitelock

Co-opted Voting Members: A.Amor

Officers In Attendance C.Millis, A.Thomas, R. Crowhurst, P.Cunard, W.John, S.Curran and J.Woodman-Ralph

Invitees: Councillors
P.A.Rees, E.V.Latham (Cabinet Members)

A.L.Thomas and C.Galsworthy

1. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting 6 June 2019 were not attached to the circulated papers for today's meeting. These would be included in the papers for the September meeting.

2. **PROMOTING HEALTHY LIVING AMONG PUPILS AT NEATH PORT TALBOT SCHOOLS TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

The Committee received an overview of the outcomes of the Promoting Healthy Living among Pupils at Neath Port Talbot Schools Task and Finish Group as detailed in the circulated report.

Discussion took place on the positive practices that already exist in Neath Port Talbot schools in regard to promoting healthy eating and

the need to work with partners to build on these and develop further by the Council bringing all the agencies together rather than tackling the issue on an individual basis.

Members were pleased with the report of the Task and Finish Group and the recommendations contained within the report but were concerned at the additional financial pressure on schools.

Members felt it was essential that the development and promotion of health and wellbeing training was undertaken with school governors and should include the Healthy Schools Scheme and Healthy Eating in Schools Regulations. In addition, the message needed to be promoted with parents to ensure a consistent approach.

Discussion took place on the initiative looking at providing healthy meals and physical activities during school summer holidays to support deprived areas. Chair of Education, Skills and Culture Scrutiny Committee to write to Kirsty Williams, Minister of Education, Welsh Government identifying the Committees views on the scheme.

Members thanked the Task and Finish Group and the Democratic Services Officers who had supported the Task and Finish Group in their work.

The Committee was supportive of the report and recommendations and asked that the Education, Skills and Leisure Cabinet Board considers the report and recommendations at a future meeting.

3. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee chose to scrutinise the following Cabinet Board items:

Strategic School Improvement Programme (SSIP) – Proposal to amend the Council's 21st Century Schools Capital Funding Programme Band B Projects to include a Scheme for a New Special School.

Members received an overview of the Strategic School Improvement Programme (SSIP) – Proposal to amend the Council's 21st Century Schools Capital Funding Programme Band B Projects to include a Scheme for a New Special School as detailed in the circulated report.

It was explained that the proposal was at the initial stage of writing to the Welsh Government asking for the inclusion of a new 7 – 16 special school for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties into Band B of the SSIP. Details of the proposal would be developed after a decision had been received from Welsh Government.

Discussion took place on the need to develop a bespoke provision for children with social, emotional and behavioural needs. Currently, support has been developed across the authority in both primary and secondary schools but additional places had been identified by professionals across the area.

In addition, the development of a new build special school would address some of the aspects of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.

Members asked why the proposal did not include children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Officers explained that Neath Port Talbot has a number of support specialist provisions available for ADHD. In addition, under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 schools are required to provide the necessary support to enable children with learning needs to attend mainstream education.

Confirmation was given that the numbers of places in the new build special provision would be finalised after the outcome of proposal to add the school to Band B had been received from Welsh Government. A report would be brought to a future meeting of Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board containing the detail of the new build.

Discussion took place on the number of children who receive their specialist educational needs out of county. It was explained that Officers would circulate the exact figures to the Committee. The figures were very low as the authority's policy was to educate all children in mainstream schools which was also a requirement of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.

Attention was drawn to the Integrated Impact Assessment and why the language designation of the new school had not been designed. It was explained that as previously discussed the detail of the new build would be developed after the proposal had been agreed by

Welsh Government and a detailed report would be brought for members' consideration.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by Cabinet Board.

Quarterly Performance Management Data 2018 – 19 Full Year Performance (1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019)

Members received the full year performance management data 2018 – 2019 (1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019) as detailed in the circulated report.

Concern was expressed that the Flying Start provision funding was allocated by Welsh Government on postcodes of areas of deprivation. Discussion took place on the anomalies of this formula as some families who were not living in the identified area were economically disadvantaged and needed to be able to access Flying Start.

It was queried whether younger children could access services provided by the Youth Service. It was explained that only young people 11+ can access the provision.

Clarification was given that 21 of final statements of special educational needs were issued within 26 weeks which was not 100%. This was due to parents/carers not agreeing with the draft statement.

In addition, Members asked for the numbers of children waiting for statements of special educational needs. Officers explained that the data only included national indicators that are a requirement of the Welsh Government but that the information would be circulated to Members separately.

Members were pleased with the improvement in the numbers of children participating in sporting activities.

In addition, Members asked what the reason was for the number of full day childcare places not being reached. Officers explained that work was progressing to achieve the target but was dependant on the number of childcare places available with private providers.

Discussion took place on the Communities for Work programme and the difficulty that some participants living in Valley Communities experience when accessing their mentor as part of the Employability

Programme due to lack of transport available. Officer explained that liaison does take place with the voluntary sector to access any available transport provision but it was an issue in these areas.

Following Scrutiny, the report was noted.

4. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20**

It was explained that Members had met to discuss items they would like to consider in future. These would be added to the Forward Work Programme and brought to the next meeting for Members' consideration.

CHAIRPERSON