

EDUCATION SKILLS AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Council Chamber - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

15 March 2018

Chairperson: Councillor A.L.Thomas

Vice Chairperson: Councillor M.Crowley

Councillors: S. ap Dafydd, S.Harris, H.N.James, R.Mizen, J.D.Morgan, S.Renkes, R.L.Taylor and D.Whitelock

Co-opted Voting Members: M.Caddick and A. Amor

Officers In Attendance C.Millis, M.Daley, J.Khaghanian, A.Spooner-Cleverly, N.Jones and Miss.C.Davies

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors P.A.Rees

1. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

It was with deep regret that the Chair advised the Committee of the death of the Co-opted Member Anthony Hughes. As a mark of respect Members stood for a minute's silence.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

The following Members made a declaration of interest at the commencement of the meeting:

Cllr. P.A.Rees Re: Report of the Head of Transformation on the Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020 as he is has grandchildren who attend schools within the County Borough and has dispensation to speak and vote.

- Cllr. H.N.James Re: Report of the Head of Transformation on the Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020 as he is a Governor at Llansawel Primary School, a Shadow Governor at Ysgol Newydd Carreg Hir and a Shadow Governor at Ysgol Cymraeg Bro Dur and has dispensation to speak and vote.
- Re: Report of the Head of Participation on the School Improvement Performance, Priorities and Capacity as he is a Governor at Llansawel Primary School, a Shadow Governor at Ysgol Newydd Carreg Hir and a Shadow Governor at Ysgol Cymraeg Bro Dur and has dispensation to speak and vote.
- Cllr. R.L.Taylor Re: Report of the Head of Transformation on the Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020 as she is a governor at Eastern and groes Primary School but has dispensation to speak and vote. Cllr.R.L.Taylor also has a Relative working in Baglan Primary School and has children that attend School's within the County Borough.
- Cllr.J.D.Morgan Re: Reports of the Head of Transformation on the Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020 as he is the Chair of Governors at Ysgol Gynradd Cymraeg Cwm-Nedd but has dispensation to speak and vote.
- Cllr. R.Mizen Re: Reports of the Head of Transformation on the Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020 as he is a Governor at Cwmafan Primary, Ysgol Cwm Brombil, YGG Brodyr. Cllr. R.Mizen also has grandchildren who attend schools in the County Borough.

- Re: Reports of the Head of Participation on the School Improvement Performance, Priorities and Capacity as he is a Governor at Cwmafan Primary, Ysgol Cwm Brombil and YGG Brodyr. Cllr. R.Mizen also has grandchildren who attend schools in the County Borough.
- M.Caddick Re: Reports of the Head of Transformation on the Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020 as she has a Grandchild who attends schools in the County Borough
- A.Amor Re: Reports of the Head of Transformation on the Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020 as he is a Governor of YGG Rhosafan and Ysol Gymraeg Bro Dur however, has dispensation to speak and vote and also has a child in YGG Rhosofan.
- Cllr. S.Renkes Re: Reports of the Head of Transformation on the Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020 as she is a School Governor but has dispensation to speak and vote
- Cllr. D.Whitelock Re: Reports of the Head of Transformation on the Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020 as he has grandchildren that attend schools within the County Borough.
- Re: Reports of the Head of Participation on the School Improvement Performance, Priorities and Capacity as he has grandchildren that attend schools within the County Borough.
- Cllr. A.L.Thomas Re: Reports of the Head of Transformation on the Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020 as he is a Governor at Rhos Primary School and has dispensation to speak and vote.

Cllr. S.Harris Re: Reports of the Head of Transformation on the Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020 as she is a Governor and has dispensation to speak and vote.

3. **MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION, SKILLS AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 15TH FEBRUARY, 2018.**

The committee noted the minutes.

4. **SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18.**

Members noted the Forward Work Programme.

Members highlighted that they would like to invite the Managing Director from ERW to attend a future meeting of the Education, Skills and Culture Scrutiny Committee.

5. **UPDATE ON EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS AND FURTHER EDUCATION**

Members were provided with an updated from the Cabinet Member for Education Skills and Culture.

It was noted that Key Stage 4 performance levels nationally have decreased, particularly in areas of higher levels of deprivation. In addition the number of looked after children with statements have increased by 7% and with the changes to indicator calculations Neath Port Talbot is now below the Welsh average particularly in Maths which has affected pupils who receive free school meals as well as pupils who do not.

Members were informed on the number of Looked after children that are attending schools in Neath Port Talbot. It was noted that Corporate PARENTING Panel would be monitoring the achievements of Looked After Children on a regular basis.

Members were updated on the Looked After Children Education Support Team that provides additional support to Looked After Children.

Members were updated on the sporting options that were available to Looked After Children and were told that Foster Parents are encouraged to support Looked After Children to take part in all school/sporting activities.

Members were informed that Corporate Parenting Panel will be tracking the cohort of year 3 pupils who have received outcome 5 in maths.

The verbal updated was noted.

6. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The committee chose to scrutinise the following Cabinet Board items:

Cabinet Board Proposals

6.1 School term dates 2020/2021

Members received information on the proposed school term dates in respect of the 2020/2021 academic year.

Members asked whether common school holiday periods can be co-ordinated across Wales, Officers highlighted that they are trying to co-ordinate locally, however not co-ordinating for the whole of wales currently.

Members raised concern that the School term dates are agreed by the ERW consortium and that the council has no input. Officers informed members that they meet with the ERW consortium to discuss the school term dates, which are then given to the Governing Body to discuss and then brought back.

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

6.2 Admission to Community Schools 2019/2020

(Cllr.R.L.Taylor re-affirmed her interest at this point and withdrew for this item only)

(M.Caddick re-affirmed her interest at this point and withdrew for this item only)

(A.Amor re-affirmed his interest at this point and withdrew for this item only)

Members received information on the admission arrangements for community schools in relation to the 2019/2020 academic year.

Members asked whether there had been any changes from it previously being reported. Officer confirmed that there were no changes. Members therefore requested that officers put a headline in the report making it clear if there are any changes.

Members asked what the admission figures were in appendix 6. Officers highlighted that the admission number is the capacity.

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

6.3 Adult Community Learning Service in Neath Port Talbot

Members were informed on the progress of the Adult Community Learning Service in Neath Port Talbot.

Members requested the link for the Adult Community Learning service website to be sent to the committee members.

Members commended the officers on the work they are achieving.

Members asked the officers how it is decided which courses are put on offer for the public. Officers highlighted that they offer courses that are in demand and what the public have requested.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

6.4 School Improvement Performance, Priorities and Capacity

Members were provided with an update on school improvement performance, challenge adviser capacity within the school improvement service and progress against the business plan.

Members asked why schools are now entitled to a minimum of three core support visits rather than two. Officers highlighted

that it was re-branded to provide more support, however it has caused capacity issues. It was noted from members that these sound compulsory even though they are optional.

Members had queries around training. Officers highlighted that Head teachers are responsible for training and the council would provide support.

Members highlighted that the Council had a good inspection from Estyn and commended the officers for their support.

Officers highlighted that if a school went in to special measures, then the council would provide a lot of support for that school including support for the teachers. It was noted that if a school was in special measures it doesn't necessarily mean a school isn't doing well it is what Estyn recommends.

Members asked how do offices measure the risks of schools potentially going in to special measures. Officers highlighted that there is a system to identify if schools are slipping in to a red zone and then it is monitored.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

CHAIRPERSON

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