

**JOINT CABINET AND EDUCATION, SKILLS AND CULTURE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

(Council Chamber - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

9 May 2018

Chairperson: **Councillor A.N.Woolcock**

Councillors: M.Crowley, S. ap Dafydd, S.Harris, M.Harvey,
S.K.Hunt, H.N.James, A.Llewelyn, S.Miller,
R.Mizen, J.D.Morgan, S.Paddison, R.Phillips,
L.M.Purcell, S.Rahaman and D.Whitelock

**Co-opted Voting
Members:** M.Caddick

**Officers In
Attendance** S.Phillips, K.Jones, A.Evans, A.Jarrett and
C.Davies

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors C.Clement-Williams, D.W.Davies,
D.Jones, R.G.Jones, E.V.Latham, A.R.Lockyer,
P.A.Rees, P.D.Richards, A.J.Taylor and
A.Wingrave

Invitees: F.Khan and J.McCarthy

1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON**

Agreed that Councillor A. N. Woolcock be appointed Chairperson for the meeting.

2. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee chose to scrutinise the following Cabinet items:

Cabinet Proposals

2.1 The Report of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Estyn) on Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Members received a brief overview of the Report of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Estyn) on Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, as detailed in the circulated report.

Members thanked the inspectors for the report as it reflects hard working. It was asked what the number of primary schools that have had to be placed in a statutory category. It was noted that the link inspectors would have discussed those aspects with the Director of Education and the team; there has been support that has been put in, however it has not been effective. The inspector referred the members to the report on the local consortium. It was noted that in an ideal world you would know the issues before Estyn comes in for an inspection and then there is no surprise if a school was to go into special measures.

Members asked why in the report it is detailed that Neath Port Talbot are not performing as well as other schools. It was highlighted in the report that one way of monitoring performance is through the report card system, it was highlighted although there are issues in Primary School, there is an improvement in Secondary Schools. It was highlighted that Members need to recognise the positives that were highlighted in the report such as leadership and management. In the report it is noted that the chief highlighted that the officers know their schools well. It was noted that the challenge process also involves members as they are on governor bodies.

Members asked where Neath Port Talbot Schools need additional support. It was noted that it was difficult to say as a whole, and members were directed to the individual inspector reports as they would include more information.

Members asked in relation to the Primary School Outcomes, the relationship between the role of ERW and the Estyn report. It was noted that Estyn are there to inspect and improve schools. It was noted that they could not comment for ERW, but referred members to the inspection report on ERW.

Members queried that the high deprivation was an area of challenge and asked for comments from the challenge advisors. It was noted that there was high deprivation and that it needed to be taken into account when looking at data. However, Members were referred to the judgement for Neath Port Talbot which was overall good.

Members asked whether Estyn had seen any trends or other techniques that other counties that the Authority could benefit from. It was noted that in previous cycles, some counties did well In Primary and not so well in Secondary. It was noted that in 2017 neets had decreased to 2.6%. The Director of Education highlighted that they are aiming for a 0% neets.

Members asked why the Authority is not doing as well in Primary as it is in Secondary School. It was noted that within the Primary inspection reports, no school is doing excellent. Members were referred to the inspection report on Secondary to look at why the primary Schools are not doing as well as Secondary Schools.

The Cabinet Member for Education highlighted that the Primary Schools are doing well under the circumstances as it was noted that the Meas Grant was recently pulled which may cause affect to this authority.

Members asked whether there was any flexibility taken into account for revenue and resources when these inspections are carried out. Estyn highlighted that there is a 'how best we can inspect' consultation put forward from Welsh Government that Members could comment on.

Members raised that there was issue around Regional and ERW consortium on Scrutiny. It was noted that Estyn has inspected Neath Port Talbot and ERW and that there was a need for understanding of them both. Estyn highlighted that they could not comment on ERW, However, highlighted that Members can request to have a presentation on any organisation that you are making payment to, for them to provide you with the value of what they are providing.

Members asked if other authorities have other knowledge that Neath Port Talbot could utilise. Estyn highlighted that that is a

very important part of their role, good practise is key and it is shared on their website for other authorities to use.

Estyn thanked members for the opportunity and highlighted that the judgement is good overall, it was noted that the committee has focused on the minor aspects of improvement however should celebrate the strong features.

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

CHAIRPERSON