

EDUCATION SKILLS AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Room 1/2 - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

18 October 2018

Chairperson: Councillor A.L.Thomas

Councillors: S. ap Dafydd, H.N.James, S.Miller, R.Mizen, J.D.Morgan, M.Protheroe, R.L.Taylor, A.J.Richards and D.Whitelock

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

Officers In Attendance A.Thomas, C.Millis, J.Dennis, I.Guy, J.Haeney, K.Jones, H.Lervy, P.Watkins, D.Evans, A.Spooner-Cleverly and C.Davies

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors A.R.Lockyer, P.A.Rees and P.D.Richards

Observers: A.N.Woolcock and C.Gallsworthy

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

Cllr R Taylor: Report of the Head of Transformation re: Additional Learning Needs Statutory Process as she has a family member who falls under that category.

Adam Amore: Report of the Head of Participation re: Annual Report on NEETs 2018 as he is a director of a company that the youth service is a client.

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee noted the minutes.

3. **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 & 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

4. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:-

Cabinet Board Proposals

4.1 Margam Catering and Twyn Yr Hydd

Members received information on the management proposals for catering arrangements at the Orangery and Charlottes Pantry, and considered the lease arrangements for Twyn Yr Hydd, as detailed in the private report.

Officers highlighted the success with the development of the park and highlighted that there was a presentation available which would be presented to Members of the Committee. Members requested that the presentation be presented to all Members of the Education, Skills and Culture Scrutiny Committee and requested that the Margam Business plan be deferred to the next meeting of Education, Skills and Culture Scrutiny Committee.

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

4.2 Primary Schools catering Review

Members were provided with an update on ensuring that the duties of Primary School Cooks and the hours of work of primary school catering service employees mirrored the current demands of the service.

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

Committee resolved into Open Session

5. ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS STATUTORY PROCESSES

Members were provided with information regarding statutory processes for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and in relation to current data in relation to pupils with ALN.

Members raised a query in relation to Special Educational Needs and Additional Learning Needs assessments, and questioned whether there were enough practitioners at all schools who were aware of the various issues facing children to help identify the need for additional support in young people's education. Officers explained that all staff within the whole school were aware of identifying those needs and there was an ongoing rolling programme of training in order to continue to raise awareness and build capacity across all schools.

Members questioned whether all schools were responsive to parental concerns in helping to identify those additional learning needs. Officers explained that it varied.

Members queried that there was an 'other reasons' category included in the exceptions on appendix 1 and asked what would be included in the 'other reasons' category. Officers highlighted that the statements were monitored within the 26 weeks, however, there were other timescales within the 26 week period which could delay the process. Officers highlighted that they always tried to work with the parents to make sure that targets were met. Officers confirmed that they would circulate the percentage breakdown of the individual exception categories.

Members asked whether the statement figures include all referral figures. Officers confirmed that they didn't, but highlighted that last year 31 requests were declined. Members asked officers to circulate the number of referrals made and how many from those referrals were statemented.

Members highlighted that if statements were being issued and then amended did that allow a child to have support earlier. Officers confirmed that the child would have support earlier.

Member's highlighted that with the rise of requests for statutory assessments, would this cause pressure on the staff. Officers highlighted that the pressure would increase.

Members highlighted the significant rise in movers to Neath Port Talbot and asked why had there been an increase. Officers explained that there were numerous reasons why there was an increase of people moving to Schools within Neath Port Talbot. It was noted that Neath Port Talbot was a reasonably affordable area to live, which attracted people to move to the area. It was noted that there could be a potential rise due to people moving closer to family.

Following discussion members requested information on the number of Statemented Children that are Home Schooled.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted and summarised that the following information be circulated to the Members of the Committee:

- Information on the number of Statemented Children that are Home Schooled.
- The number of statutory statements issued following applications
- Percentage breakdowns on the exceptions.

6. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:-

Cabinet Board Proposals

4.1 Annual Report on NEETs

Members were informed of the outcomes and progress made with young people who were not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or those young people who were at risk of becoming NEET. Members were also informed on how the new developments may affect this area of work.

Members asked for information on the replacement of Communities First. Officers highlighted that the Communities First legacy grant was providing support for additional work for

NEETs. It was noted that there was flexibility to fund the NEET work and that the Legacy Fund had been used to fund the Youth Workers. It was noted that a 12 month breakdown of the funding by ward would be circulated to Members.

Member's questioned how long the Legacy Fund would last. Officers highlighted that Welsh Government had guaranteed two years.

Members queried whether Youth Workers were trained to identify whether children needed extra support. Officers confirmed that all Youth Workers were qualified and received training to identify issues that young people may have which reflect in their behaviour.

Members asked how many NEETs had statements. Officers clarified that it was currently not a figure that was collected.

Members requested information on the apprenticeships that were offered to the young people. Officers highlighted that Mrs Thomas ran the apprenticeships and provided a general background on them. Officers explained that they were hopeful that the young people would benefit from the opportunities.

The Cabinet Member commended the young people and the Officers.

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

7. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

Members noted the Forward Work programme, subject to the following additional items to be included:

- Report on the Audit of Teaching Religious Education in Primary Schools.
- Report on Childcare Facilities
- Report on Junior Apprenticeships

CHAIRPERSON

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