

Minutes of the Education, Skills and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

23 November 2023

Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Port Talbot & Microsoft Teams

Vice Chairperson:	Councillor D.Thomas
Councillors:	W.Carpenter, N.Goldup-John, J.Henton, R.Mizen, P.A.Rees, S.Renkes, P.Rogers and R.W.Wood
Co-opted Voting Members:	L.Newman
Officers In Attendance	I.Guy, H.Lewis, C.Millis, R.Crowhurst, J.Burge, C.Saunders, C.Morris, A.Spooner-Cleverly, K.Windsor-Brown, K.Jones, S.Griffiths, D.Evans, S.Griffiths, S. McCluskie and P.Chivers
Cabinet Invitees:	Councillors J.Hurley, N.Jenkins and C.Phillips

1. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

It was confirmed that the committee would be scrutinising items 10 and 13 from the Cabinet Board Agenda.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 10 (Cabinet Agenda)

Cllr. Phil Rogers – Personal - family member attends Abbey Primary

Cllr. Peter Rees – Personal - family member attends Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Dur

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**

WESP

Members questioned whether the provisional rent free dispensation for Welsh medium childcare facilities operating in Council buildings was continuing.

The Early Years Coordinator confirmed that the situation was currently being assessed and evaluated to ensure the arrangement is equitable. A report will be brought back to the Cabinet Board in the New Year. It was noted that the current arrangement has been beneficial in terms of the WESP.

Members referred to page 182 of the report and the reported decrease in the number of pupils studying in Welsh, post 16, and asked whether consideration had been given to offering post 16 Welsh medium education at the Bro Dur campus.

The Head of Support Services and Transformation confirmed that consideration has been given to a post 16 provision at the Bro Dur campus at some point in the future but no details can be provided at present. There are a wide range of vocational and academic post 16 opportunities in Ystalyfera and staff at the Bro Dur campus work with pupils to help them to transition.

Following scrutiny, members noted the item for information.

Quarter 2 Performance Indicators 23/24 – Environment Directorate

Members referred to page 263 of the report and questioned what was being done to manage any risks in relation to private water supplies until the new laboratory has taken over the contract.

The Head of Planning and Public Protection confirmed that there are a limited number of private water supplies across Neath Port Talbot that require regular risk assessments on an annual basis. The testing issue with regard to the laboratory has now been resolved and it is anticipated that the target will be delivered by the end of quarter three/beginning of quarter four.

Members referred to page 264, item 5 of the report, and questioned why the quarter two target of 55% was not reached and for more information in relation to the lost staff member.

The Head of Planning and Public Protection confirmed that the lost member of staff has recently been replaced. The KPI relates to the food and feed standard work that is undertaken by the Trading Standards Team; Animal Health Officers, have responsibility for inspecting the feed hygiene systems on farms and Trading Standards Officers inspect, feed manufacturers and retailers.

The Food Risk Assessment Pilot mentioned in the report is being progressed by the Food Standards Agency with the aim of rolling the new scheme out across Wales. The Food Standards Agency recognise that capacity and resources within local authorities across Wales, are limited and the new scheme aims for a more efficient and effective use of resources with a targeted approach to high risk businesses. It is anticipated that once the pilot scheme has been embedded there will be longer term efficiencies of service that all local authorities will benefit from, involvement in the pilot at this stage is a good opportunity to influence how it is set up and rolled out in future. It was noted that in the short term the pilot may have an impact on performance.

Following scrutiny, the item was noted.

5. **COMMITTEE ACTION LOG**

This item was noted.

6. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24**

This item was noted.

7. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

**Cllr. D Thomas
Chairperson**