



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
MERTHYR TUDFUL  
MERTHYR TYDFIL  
County Borough Council

## MINUTES OF MEETING

# SCRUTINY : LEARNING AND LAESCYP MEETING

MONDAY, 14TH JANUARY, 2019

**PRESENT:** Councillors H R Jones (Chair)  
L Davies (Vice-Chair)

Councillors B Carter, D Chaplin and C Davies

**Cooptees:**

C Brown (Parent Governor-Primary), K Jones (Public), K Phelan (Diocesan Representative), A Rees (Public), A Roberts (Voluntary Sector) and K Sutton (Youth Forum Representative)

**Other Councillors in Attendance:**

L Mytton (Cabinet Member)

**Officers:**

S Walker (Chief Education Officer), A McCafferty (Performance and Scrutiny Officer), J Colsey (Head of School Improvement) and C Hole (Head of Community Wellbeing)

**Outside Bodies:**

J Edwards (ESTYN Link Inspector)  
A Williams (Central South Consortium)

M Morgan (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
699	Apologies for absence	Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Jago and R Lazell and M Symonds Co-opted Members.

## Welcome

The Chair welcomed Karl Jones and Kaitlin Sutton Co-opted Members to their first Committee Meeting.

700	Declarations of Interest (including whipping declarations)	No Declarations of Interest were made.
701	Performance Report - Executive Summary	<p>The Chair referred the Committee to the 'Performance Report – Executive Summary – Corporate Plan: Standards of Attainment 2018' report.</p> <p>Sue Walker then gave an overview and an update on progress and advised of the following amendments to the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragraph 4.7 – Should read 'In 2017 attendance is unsatisfactory'.</li> <li>• Appendix G - Paragraph 6.4 – Should read 'Council' not 'Party'.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee then raised the following questions on the report and were responded to in detail by the Officers and Councillor L Mytton Cabinet Portfolio Member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragraph 6.6 – NEET's – Further information requested</li> <li>• Paragraph 6.7 – Youth Services – Further information requested</li> <li>• How can links between Flying Start Providers and Schools be strengthened</li> <li>• What is being done in relation to non Flying Start children</li> <li>• The focus on education attainment</li> <li>• Paragraph 6.2.7 – Key Stage 4 – Further information requested in relation to the ranking for the Authority</li> <li>• Could more money being put into Education help with improvements</li> <li>• Is there a visit scheduled from ESTYN</li> <li>• Paragraph 3.4 – Further information requested in relation to CAPITA</li> <li>• Is there sufficient staff to ensure CAPITA is fully utilised</li> <li>• When was the last Secondary School Inspection undertaken by ESTYN</li> <li>• Paragraph 6.1.5 – How does the Authority intend to improve outcomes – Will there be focus on the schools that need the help – Role of Governing Bodies</li> <li>• Concerns expressed in relation to reduction in the schools budget</li> <li>• Youth Services – Are there good links with all high schools and the College</li> <li>• Vulnerable Learner Groups</li> <li>• Paragraph 6.3 - Definition requested of the EAL</li> </ul>

Category – (Sue Walker advised that the Committee would be circulated with a definition sheet for their information)

- Explanation requested in relation to – ‘All other EAL pupils perform better than non EAL pupils’
- Paragraph 6.4 – Explanation requested in relation to – ‘Pupils from ethnic groups other than white British make up 8.8% of the cohort, 3.2% of which are Polish. On the whole pupils from an ethnic minority achieve the same outcomes as pupils from a white British background; however the performance of Polish pupils is slightly better with 88.9% of Polish pupils achieving the CSI compared with 88.1% of white British pupils’ – Why is the performance better - CAPITA Data
- Appendix 1 - Paragraph 6.4.7 – Children Looked After – Explanation requested in relation to – ‘The performance of Children Looked After is variable due to the small number of pupils within the cohort’ – What are Schools and the Consortium doing to provide for pupils so that pupils can achieve the best
- Is the focus right – are monies being used to the best effect
- What more is the Department going to be doing for Children Looked After
- Appendix B - Paragraph 5.1 – Explanation requested – What is being done to look at the methods of assessment
- Flying Start Children with Additional Learning Needs – Where are the areas of added value
- Increase in Exclusions – What is being done about this – What was the reasons for the Exclusions

The Chair then referred the Committee to Appendix 2, the Task and Finish Scrutiny Report on ‘Review of Attendance and Attainment in Primary and Secondary Schools’ report and emphasised the importance of Attendance.

The Chair also referred to information that had been displayed for the Committee and referred in detail to the Table on ‘Attendance for Primary and Secondary School Attendance for the periods 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18’.

The Chair then suggested that he meet with the Officers to further consider the information in the Table and that this matter be agendered for the next Committee Meeting.

The Committee then agreed that the Chair meet with the Officers in relation to Attendance and that Attendance be on the agenda of the next Committee Meeting.

**Resolved that:**

The judgements and evaluations be noted.

Kaitlin Sutton and Alan Rees left the Meeting at 5.25 pm.

702	Scrutiny Referrals, Feedback and Follow up Actions	The Chair advised that there was no update on this item.
703	Reflection and Evaluation of Meeting	The Chair and the Committee reflected in detail on the matters that had been discussed at the Meeting.
704	Work Programme	<p>The Chair referred the Committee to the 'Work Programme 2018/19' report.</p> <p>The Committee considered the items for the next Committee Meeting and in relation to the 'Headteacher Presentation', debate ensued on the topic to be discussed at the Meeting by the Headteacher and it was agreed that suggested topics be forwarded to the Scrutiny Officer and that the suggestions then be shared with the Committee.</p> <p>A Committee Member also referred to the dates that were to be confirmed in relation to invites /visits to Heads and Chairs of Governance and enquired if it would be possible to arrange a visit.</p> <p>It had also been agreed earlier in the Meeting that Attendance be agendered for the next Committee Meeting</p> <p>Clare Brown left the Meeting at 5.55 pm.</p> <p>Councillor D Chaplin left the Meeting at 5.59 pm.</p>
705	Any other business deemed urgent by the Chair	The Chair advised that there was no business deemed urgent.