



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

MINUTES OF MEETING

SCRUTINY : LEARNING AND LAESCYP MEETING

MONDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 2018

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

Councillors D Chaplin, L Davies, S Jago, D Sammon and
S Thomas

Cooptees:

C Brown (Parent Governor - Primary), R Lazell (Parent
Governor - Secondary / Special) and A Rees (Public)

Officers:

S Walker (Chief Education Officer) and J Colsey (Head of
School Improvement)

H Jones (Scrutiny Officer) and M Phillips (Democratic Services
Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
741	Apologies for absence	Apologies for absence were received from Mary-Lynne Lewis (Co-optee), Ryan Crowley (Youth Forum Representative) and Mike Glavin (Managing Director Central South Consortium).
742	Declarations of Interest (including whipping declarations)	No declarations of interest were made.
743	Merthyr Secondary School Key Stage 4 Performance	Due to Mike Glavin's absence the Chair requested the item be deferred.

		<p>Resolved that:</p> <p>This item be deferred and be brought back to the next meeting on 16th April 2018.</p>
744	Governor Training and Development	<p>Sue Walker introduced the item and provided the committee with a background into GIGs (Governor Improvement Groups) and highlighted some excellent examples of work being carried out by the Southern Cluster Group.</p> <p>The following questions were raised by the committee and responded to in detail by the appropriate officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is currently being done by both the governing body and the LEA (Local Education Authority) to fill the number of vacancies highlighted in the report • 21 governing bodies have yet to complete the self-evaluation tool, what is being done to encourage these governing bodies to complete the self-evaluation and is it a requirement • 7.1 of the report mentions - Identifying any good practice in noted areas of improvement. Can you explain how you would go about measuring any success and improvements • The report states that the local authority will support the GIGs with any training and development, does the authority have a designated officer to supply the training and would there be budgetary implications • In relation to governor training evaluation are there figures available to show how many governors required the mandatory training and how many actually undertook the training • What work is being done to support the GIGs in the Pen-y-Dre and Cyfarthfa clusters <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>The content of the report be noted.</p>
745	School Review Group Meetings	<p>Joe Colsey introduced the item to the committee and highlighted the salient points in relation to the school review group meetings.</p> <p>The following questions were raised by the committee and responded to in detail by the appropriate officers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What evidence is there that the actions recorded at the review meetings are carried out and are successful • The report states that the School Review Group meets every month. In respect of outcomes at KS4 in 2016-17 where performance was unsatisfactory

		<p>in nearly all key indicators, at what point did the Group become aware that results at KS4 would not be as good as the previous couple of years, and what did they do about it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In relation to pupil tracking software, is it correct that different software is used throughout the schools in the county Borough • Is it worth aligning all schools to use the same software which would allow pupils to be tracked from Primary through to Secondary education and even onto College/University or into Community Groups • The report mentions “the self-improving and self-regulating school led system” can you explain what this is about and how you will measure the success or lack of <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>The content of the report be noted.</p>
746	Estyn Thematic Reviews	<p>Joe Colsey introduced the item and provided the committee with a brief overview of the processes involved in the Estyn Thematic Reviews.</p> <p>The following questions were raised by the committee and answered in detail by the appropriate officers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report states that schools are signposted to the relevant reports and training materials when they are published. Do you ever follow up on this to ensure the schools are implementing the recommendations where required <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>The content of the report be noted.</p>
747	Local Government Education Services - Estyn Inspection Areas: 2.3 (Other Education Services) and 3.4 (Use Of Resources)	<p>Sue Walker introduced the item to the committee and briefly outlined the findings held within the report in relation to 2.3 (Other Education Services) and 3.4 (Use Of Resources).</p> <p>The following questions were raised by the committee and responded to in detail by the appropriate officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously Welsh Government have protected Educational Services and funding but with the Welsh Government Association having applied pressure for the budgets not to be ring fenced. Can you confirm if there will be cuts to next year’s budget • Can you provide a timescale on when a review will be carried out and when will the proposed changes to how the authority will configure services for children with additional learning needs across all

sectors. This should then reduce the pressure on Greenfield School as our only specialist SEN provision

- By the time you bring the review findings back to this Committee in May would some of the provisions already be in place

Councillor Chris Davies welcomed the Chief Education Officer's comments in relation to the review into services for Children with additional learning needs and looks forward to receiving the report at a future committee to support the officers in what they want to achieve.

- The report states that the welsh medium provision is sufficient until 2024 in two Welsh Medium Primary Schools, however what are the figures for other schools and welsh medium child care provisions within the County Borough
- With the increase in demand for children to be taught in the Welsh Medium is there scope for our English schools to provide Bilingual education so that pupils are not lost to other schools outside of the electoral ward, namely Bedlinog.
- In relation to early years it states the current position on the take up of child care provision has increased across the county borough from 31% to 34% with the take up of a flying start placement increasing to 97%. Is Merthyr Tydfil looking to expand flying start in other areas
- The report states that based on current information the local authority has 17 out of 28 school buildings (61%) in conditions A and B (Good/Satisfactory). It also states these figures are based on current information, how old is this information
- What about the 39% of school buildings that aren't good to satisfactory
- The Afon Taf Band A Refurbishment project was completed in August 2017 - can you confirm if this was complete on time and within budget
- Can you provide the committee with an update in relation to the amalgamation of Gurnos Nursery with Goetre Primary

RESOLVED that:

The content of the report be noted.

748	Scrutiny Referrals, Feedback and Follow up Actions	Councillor Chris Davies raised an issue in relation to setting up a Joint Scrutiny Committee to consider the outcomes for looked after children. He explained that he had spoken to the Chair of Social Services Scrutiny and it was agreed that the subject would be raised at the next Social Services Scrutiny meeting so that preparations for the Joint Committee can be made at the next Learning and LAESCYP meeting in April.
749	Reflection and Evaluation of Meeting	The Chair and the Committee reflected on the items discussed at the meeting.
750	Work Programme	<p>The Scrutiny Officer updated the committee in relation to the development of the work programme for the coming year and also highlighted what will be brought to the next meeting.</p> <p>Councillor Chris Davies asked for the vulnerable learner's review to be brought to the committee before it is shared with Head Teachers, Governors and Schools.</p> <p>The Chair also advised the committee that the attendance review will be coming to a future meeting for consideration shortly after the task and finish group's final meeting on 6th March.</p>
751	Any other business deemed urgent by the Chair	The Chair advised that there was no business deemed urgent.