



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
MERTHYR TUDFUL  
MERTHYR TYDFIL  
County Borough Council

## MINUTES OF MEETING

# SCRUTINY : LEARNING AND LAESCYP MEETING

**MONDAY, 17TH DECEMBER, 2018**

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

Councillors B Carter, D Chaplin and S Jago

**Cooptees:**

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

**Other Councillors in Attendance:**

L Mytton (Cabinet Member)

**Officers:**

S Walker (Chief Education Officer), S Jones (Head of Finance), A Lewis (Head of School Planning Performance and Resource) and A McCafferty (Performance and Scrutiny Officer)

K Reddy (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
620	Apologies for absence	Apologies for absence received from Councillor Chris Davies, Anne Roberts (Co-optee), Michelle Symonds (Co-optee) and Euan Wilkins-Campbell (Youth Forum Representative).
621	Declarations of Interest (including whipping declarations)	Rosemary Lazell (Co-optee) declared an interest in relation to Item 3 (ISB Funding Reductions 2019-2020) as she sits on Afon Taf's Budget Forum.

622	ISB Funding Reductions 2019-20	<p>Anthony Lewis led the Committee in detail through the ISB Funding Reduction Report for 2019-20, in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council's approval of the School Forums' recommendations subject to consultation with Schools, consideration by the Scrutiny Committee and a further report to Cabinet/Council.</li> <li>• Additional information regarding the School funding reductions.</li> <li>• Learning Department's additional demands.</li> <li>• Removal of the remaining funding from the Schools' formula allocation for 'addressing underachievement'.</li> <li>• School forum Proposals.</li> <li>• Risk Assessments for Schools' draft proposals for 2019/20.</li> <li>• Increase of School meal prices.</li> </ul> <p>The following questions were then raised by the Committee and were responded to in detail by the officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could 'Red' Schools be taken out of these reduction proposals?</li> <li>• Would Education work with each school individually on the proposed reductions?</li> <li>• Process of liaising with the Schools' forums.</li> <li>• What options were given for consideration to the Schools' forums?</li> <li>• Risk Assessments in relation to these reductions.</li> <li>• How have the School forums considered savings in the past?</li> <li>• Could these savings affect the long term performance of the Schools throughout the County Borough?</li> <li>• Clarification on the Learning Department's budgets and required growth.</li> <li>• Clarification on the individual School Budget for Teachers' Pension and the possible outcome of funding.</li> <li>• Why were there no School meal increases for 2016/17 and 2017/18.</li> <li>• Funding of free School meals.</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current number of free School meals.</li> <li>• Data on the increase of free School meals.</li> <li>• Total amount of debt in relation to School meals, how are Schools dealing with these outstanding amounts and are families being supported?</li> <li>• Percentage of children taking up free School meals.</li> <li>• Eligibility of free School meals.</li> <li>• The effect of in-work poverty throughout the County Borough in terms of the recommended increase of Schools meals.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair addressed the Committee in detail regarding the analysis that he had carried out in relation to the increase in free School meals. Following discussion it was <b>RESOLVED that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contents of the report be noted.</li> <li>• Anthony Lewis provide members with data on the increase of free School meals as soon as possible.</li> <li>• This Scrutiny Committee offers no objection to School meal prices increasing in Primary and Secondary Schools by the proposed 15p in April 2019. However, this Scrutiny Committee strongly objects to yet a further proposed additional price increase of 15p in September 2019, which would represent a 3<sup>rd</sup> increase in 10 months.</li> <li>• Councillor Lisa Mytton, Cabinet Member for Learning and LAESCYP, takes these views to the Cabinet meeting when considering this item.</li> </ul>
623	Reflection and Evaluation of Meeting	The Chair and the Committee reflected in detail on the items that had been considered at the meeting.
624	Any other business deemed urgent by the Chair	The Chair advised that there was no business deemed urgent.