



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Education & Skills Corporate Delivery Committee

At: Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams

On: Wednesday, 22 March 2023

Time: 4.00 pm

Chair: Councillor Mike Durke

Membership:

Councillors: J P Curtice, F M Gordon, B Hopkins, Y V Jardine, L R Jones, S Joy, S Pritchard and T M White

Watch Online: <http://bit.ly/3EZerij>

Agenda

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1 Apologies for Absence.	
2 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests. www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests	
3 Minutes. To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.	1 - 3
4 Review of School Governance Spring 2023.	4 - 9
5 Work Plan.	10

Next Meeting: Wednesday, 26 April 2023 at 4.00 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Huw Evans'.

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Thursday, 16 March 2023

Contact: Democratic Services - (01792) 636923

Agenda Item 3



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Education & Skills Corporate Delivery Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Wednesday, 15 February 2023 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor M Durke (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

F M Gordon
S Pritchard

Councillor(s)

L R Jones
T M White

Councillor(s)

S Joy

Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden
Sarah Hughes
Helen Morgan-Rees
Jeff Fish
Melissa Perry

Democratic Services Officer
Team Manager for Education Strategy
Director of Education
Team Manager Stakeholder and School Support
Solicitor

Also present

Councillor R V Smith – Cabinet Member for Education & Learning

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): J P Curtice and B Hopkins

35 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City & County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

36 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Education & Skills Corporate Delivery Committee held on 25 January 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

37 Review of School Governance Spring 2023.

Helen Morgan-Rees referred to the importance of successful school leadership in schools, with a leading role played by school governors. She indicated that there is already a good system in place in Swansea, and the aim would be to build on and develop this going forward. The impact of leadership on our learners is something we still need to maintain our focus on, and how this affects the development, skills and progress of learners.

The scrutiny report referenced in the report outlines this focus and many of the recommendations remain live and relevant now despite the huge changes both locally and nationally to Education since its publication.

Jeff Fish then presented a report which updated members of the Committee on progress made against the 2016 School Governance Scrutiny Inquiry Panel report and sought consideration of how to best support school governance in the future, and to realise the Council's priorities to ensure leadership supports the learner progress.

The background to the original scrutiny review was outlined, as were the Cabinet Members responses to the recommendations contained within the report. The majority of the recommendations and core ideas from the report remain still valid and relevant today and have in turn become embedded in the Education Departments working practices.

The updated current position was outlined with regard to the changing national Educational background, in particular around the introduction of the Curriculum for Wales, the commencement of the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act and the removal of school categorisation, along with the local issues around the regional education partnership ERW which has now ceased and has been replaced by Partneriaeth.

The significant progress made in the developing of additional and varied and more accessible training for school governors, as well as the implementing of the effective recruitment & skills matrix were outlined.

The attendance at governor training has increased and improved as a result, but going forward a more blended online/ in person approach may be needed to better support some governors.

He outlined and detailed his personal background in Local Government and beyond relating to Education and governance and referred to the background to the creation of his post which he took up last October. One of his main focus was the development a new vision for school governance, in line with the Council's priority in ensuring that leadership supports learner progress.

He acknowledged that the role of a school governor has developed and expanded over the years and is one that is both extremely demanding and rewarding. The availability of help and assistance from experienced governors and relevant professional that is available to new starters was detailed and is one that we have established over the years, and is there to utilised when required, this is an area we need to grow, develop and expand, and almost build into a 'self help' and mentoring programme.

He referred to the potential conclusions outlined in the report that Members may wish to consider.

Members of the committee asked numerous questions and made comments regarding the information highlighted in the report and presentation, particularly around the following areas:

- support, training and help that is already available to governors,
- recognising the need to increase and support further governors in their roles which are purely voluntary,
- acknowledging the huge amount of time, work and commitment that governors have to put into the role,
- the need to potentially better advertise and promote via social media the vacancies available currently on governing bodies,
- the revised LA governor appointment process has helped and improved the overall picture,

The Officer, Director and Cabinet Member responded accordingly to the issues and points raised above and indicated a further report would be brought back to the next committee building on the discussions and matters raised today, with a view to updating and refining the existing procedures going forward.

38 Work Plan.

The Chair spoke further to the circulated draft work plan and the report discussed in the previous item and outlined that the February meeting would again focus on Strengthened and Effective School Governance.

The meeting ended at 5.02 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 4



Report of the Director of Education

Education and Skills Corporate Delivery Committee - 22 March 2023

Review of School Governance Spring 2023

Purpose:	To update members of the Education and Skills Corporate Delivery Committee on the formulation of an action plan to best support school governance in the future to realise the Council's priorities to ensure leadership supports learner progress.
Report Author:	Jeff Fish
Finance Officer:	Aimee Dyer
Legal Officer:	Stephen Holland
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For Information	

1. Background

- 1.1 In 2015, a Scrutiny Inquiry Panel was convened in recognition that the role of school governors had changed significantly, with governors playing an increasingly important part in the management of schools and school improvement. The panel sought to consider if existing measures and support was fit for purpose to enable governors to not only meet their statutory responsibilities but also ensure that support and challenge was as effective as it could be.
- 1.2 The Education and Skills Corporate Delivery Committee received a report on the 15 February 2023 outlining the current position of school governance in Swansea and to determine how they could ensure that leadership supports learner progress in line with the Council's priority for education.
- 1.3 The Committee recognised that there had been an unprecedented amount of significant change across the education landscape in Wales since the publication of the Inquiry Panel report. They acknowledged

that a number of the recommendations had been fully implemented and were having a positive impact on effective school governance.

- 1.4 The Team Manager for Stakeholder and School Support outlined the current strengths and opportunities to enable Members to support the realisation of the aforementioned priority.
- 1.5 Members agreed that all of the original recommendations in the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel largely remain appropriate and fit for purpose.
- 1.6 Members agreed that the challenge and support role for governors must remain a focus for governing bodies but this needs a fresh alignment to the Council's priority to ensure that leadership delivers learner progress.
- 1.7 Members agreed the need to promote the new accountability responsibility on governors in the new school improvement model.
- 1.8 Members agreed that governing body resilience should be improved and mechanisms by which to share best practice should be identified.

2. Development Plan

- 2.1 A plan to deliver against all of the above priorities is in development and a copy of the draft action plan is detailed in Appendix A. All actions aim to be delivered by December 2023 or before.
- 2.2 The Team Manager for Stakeholder and School Support will ensure that resources continue to be developed and safeguarded as efficiently and effectively as possible to support governance and leadership and deliver against the development plan.

3. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 3.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
 - Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
 - Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

3.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

3.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

3.1.3 This report is for information only. Any initiatives developed following this review will be subject to the IIA process as required.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications.

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix A: School Governance Development Action Plan

School Governance – Draft Development Action Plan

Date	Action	By Whom	Outcomes	Progress to date	Completed By
9/03/23	<p>Recruitment and retention of governors will be a key priority and the use of skills matrixes for appointments will be further embedded.</p> <p>Representation from under represented communities will be a focus.</p>	JF	<p>Vacancy rates will reduce and governor skills are more accurately matched to 'need'.</p> <p>There is an increased number of governors from under represented communities.</p>		31/12/2023
9/03/23	<p>New mechanisms will be constructed to share best practice by the promotion and use of Hwb as a platform for governor resources.</p>	JF	<p>GSU will share best practice on Hwb platform.</p> <p>Governors will use the platform to access resources.</p>		31/12/2023
9/03/23	<p>Hwbmail will become the default method of communication in order to meet Welsh Government security standards.</p>	JF/ School Digital Champions	<p>Governors will use Hwbmail as the primary method of communication for GB business.</p> <p>Adherence will be regularly evaluated.</p>	<p>Chair of Governors were advised at the Spring term meeting with the Director of Education.</p>	30/09/2023
9/03/23	<p>An 'excellence pool' of experienced and skilled governors will be created to support, coach and mentor new and existing governors</p>	JF	<p>Governing Bodies will be able to access brokered support from experienced governors.</p>		31/12/2023

9/03/23	Increased opportunities will be developed for governor networking to occur by delivering events face to face in the community as well as continuing to develop and offer on-line solutions.	JF	Governors will report increased opportunities to network and these will be evaluated to identify impact. On-line opportunities will increase and more opportunities to work collaboratively will be demonstrated.		31/12/2023
9/03/23	More frequent and bespoke communications will be developed to ensure governors receive information in a timely manner.	JF	Governors will demonstrate increased knowledge and skills to support their schools		31/12/2023
9/03/23	Arweinwyr, the new Governor Support Database, will be enhanced to allow Governing Bodies to maintain their own records more effectively.	JF	Governing Bodies will be able to self-serve their needs and the volume of enquiries to the Governor Support Unit (GSU) will reduce. Rollout of the self-serve function to be concluded by the end of this academic year	Version 3 developments are well progressed and on track for roll-out	31/10/2023 31/07/2023
9/03/23	Enhancement of Arweinwyr will lead to increased proactive work streams opportunities for the Governor Support Unit in supporting and developing governance.	JF	The GSU will be able to deliver proactive initiatives to support governance.		31/12/2023
9/03/23	Working with key stakeholders, such as Partneriaeth, the Swansea Association of	JF	Collaborative working will be embedded.		31/12/2023

	Governing Bodies will have a renewed focus.		Governing Bodies are effectively represented and can have an effective and positive relationship with Swansea Council.		
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Education & Skills CDC - Work Plan 2023-2023

Meeting Date	Agenda Items
2 June 2022	Workplan Discussion
27 July 2022	Education Department Update Workplan Report & Discussion
28 September 2022	Education Information Update and Corporate Delivery Committee Work Programme 2022-23 Strengthening School Leaders
26 October 2022	Strengthening School Leaders
23 November 2022	Strengthening School Leaders
14 December 2022	Attendance & Inclusion
25 January 2023	Attendance & Inclusion
15 February 2023	Strengthened and Effective School Governance
22 March 2023	Strengthened and Effective School Governance
26 April 2023	

Note: Progress Update on PDC report to Cabinet 21st July - Supporting the Challenges for Learners in Recovering from the Pandemic – referred to Education Scrutiny.