



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Education & Skills Service Transformation Committee

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

On: Wednesday, 27 September 2023

Time: 4.00 pm

Chair: Councillor Mike Durke

Membership:

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

Watch Online: <https://bit.ly/3RbYADM>

Agenda

	Page No.
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 Supporting Sufficient Specialist Places.	4 - 11
5 Work Plan 2023-2024.	12

Next Meeting: Wednesday, 8 November 2023 at 4.00 pm

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

Huw Evans

Head of Democratic Services

Wednesday, 20 September 2023

Contact: Democratic Services - (01792) 636923

Agenda Item 3



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Education & Skills Service Transformation Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Wednesday, 26 July 2023 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor M Durke (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

F M Gordon
L R Jones

Councillor(s)

B Hopkins
S Joy

Councillor(s)

Y V Jardine
S Pritchard

Officer(s)

Stephen Holland
Sarah Hughes
Helen Morgan-Rees
Kelly Small
Samantha Woon

Principal Solicitor
Team Manager for Education Strategy
Director of Education
Head of Education Planning & Resources Service
Democratic Services Officer

Also present

Councillor R V Smith, Cabinet Member for Education and Learning

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): T M White

9 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests.

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

10 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Education & Skills Service Transformation Committee held on 26 July 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

11 Right Schools in the Right Places.

The Chair referred to his attendance at Cabinet on 21 July, 2023 and expressed his thanks to the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning for inviting him to the meeting to introduce the former Education and Skills CDC report on Leadership, Inclusion and Governance: Building Excellence in Swansea Schools. The report was approved by Cabinet and included the new Headteacher and Senior Leader Handbook, the new Swansea Attendance Policy (part of the Inclusion Strategy) and

the Governing Body Support Strategy, and School Governance Development Action Plan.

The Chair also referred to progress towards the recommendations of the report from the Education and Skills PDC in 20/21 - Supporting the Challenges for Learners in Recovering from the Pandemic which would be part of the Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee in September.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills introduced the report and stated that the report provided an insight into the different demographic, financial pressures and other issues that would need to be considered over the next ten years. He expressed his thanks to the Officers for the report.

The Director of Education, stated that the Head of Education Planning & Resources would detail some of the drivers, the enablers and some of the constraints faced in setting out a course of action in terms of what the school estate will look like in the next 10 years. She stated the importance of the Committee considering how our methods are transparent and fair to all schools, and indeed the public.

The Head of Education Planning & Resources presented a 'for information' report which detailed the contextual information regarding the school stock in Swansea at July 2023 and suggested the production of a school organisation plan to cover a ten-year period.

The report, the first of three programmed for the municipal year 2023-2024, set the context for the school estate in Swansea and outlined the Council's demographic details relevant to the supply of school places.

The Head of Education Planning & Resources detailed the current estate, the need for change and links to the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.

Members noted through the Education and Skills STC, it was proposed that a ten-year school organisation plan should be produced for consideration by Cabinet. The plan should dovetail with the Strategic Outline Programme under SCfL, as well as other relevant plans, but should also include the following information:

- Demographic details relevant to the supply of school places, including:
 - Pupil rolls – actual and projected (English medium, Welsh medium and faith)
 - Surplus/shortage of capacity - primary and secondary
 - ALN provision and places (including at non-maintained schools)
 - 6th form provision
 - Vocational provision
 - WESP and Welsh-medium school place requirements
 - Ages of school buildings
 - DEC ratings
 - Condition ratings
 - Pupil Turnover Percentage

- A statement of assumptions in respect of provision for pupils, for example appropriate/maximum size of schools
- Details on historical school reorganisation in Swansea
- Policies and principles linked to school organisation, including Home to School Transport
- Diversity of provision
- Accessibility of provision
- Parental preference and popular schools
- Energy efficiency

The draft plan could be shared with stakeholders and workshops could be held with the Committee to consider aspects of the plan if appropriate.

Members discussed the report and asked questions of the Officers who responded accordingly. The key issues arising from discussions included:

- The importance of openness, transparency and sensitivity during the planning process.
- Catchment area reviews (last undertaken in September 2021) and the implications arising from parental preference and home to school transport.
- The complexities surrounding sixth-form provision funding and the impact on the environment in regard to young people travelling to alternate providers within the county.
- The benefits of a workshop on home to school transport.
- Determining the optimum figure in regard to surplus spaces in order to ensure a reasonable maintenance cost per pupil.
- Examining the configuration of schools in order to use the buildings more effectively.
- Timescales and descriptions of each of the key plans were discussed along with the need to ensure all plans are dovetailed (specific reference was made to projects such as Flying Start).
- Interpreting and reviewing LDP pupil projection data.

The Chair thanked the Head of Education Planning and Resources for her informative report.

Resolved that a work shop on Home to School Transport be scheduled.

12 Work Plan.

The Chair introduced the 'for information' Education & Skills STC Work Plan 2023-2024.

The topic for discussion at the following meeting were noted:-

- 27 September 2023 – Transforming Additional Learning Needs.

The meeting ended at 4.42 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 4



Report of the Director of Education

Education & Skills Service Transformation Committee –
27 September 2023

Supporting Sufficient Specialist Places

Purpose:	The report presents information regarding the Supporting Sufficient Specialist Places programme in relation to the current position and future plans.
Report Author:	Kate Phillips
Finance Officer:	Aimee Dyer
Legal Officer:	Stephanie Williams
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For Information	

1. Background

- 1.1 The purpose of Service Transformation Committees is to contribute to the ongoing development of the Council's agreed transformation activities (specifically in relation to the council's corporate plan, policy commitments, Corporate Transformation Plan, and Medium-Term Financial Plan) for consideration and adoption by Cabinet Members, Cabinet and/or Council as appropriate.
- 1.2 At the meeting held on 14 June 2023, it was agreed that Supporting Sufficient Specialist Places would be a key area for consideration by the Education and Skills Service Transformation Committee.
- 1.3 This report will set the context for the Supporting Sufficient Specialist Places programme and will outline how the council can enhance the provision for all children with additional learning needs to ensure those who need additional, specialist support can access it within a truly inclusive system that provides a local, quality assured, equitable offer to all. The aim is to achieve this goal within five years.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 All schools in Swansea are expected to provide learning environments where the needs of all children can be met, wherever possible. This includes children with additional learning needs and is in line with the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act 2018 (ALNET).
- 2.2 In addition to the school offer, there are also 34 specialist teaching facilities (STFs) within Swansea schools. These STFs are hosted by schools on behalf of the local authority and provide specialist educational provision for children and young people who need additional support to the mainstream offer. There are also two special schools.
- 2.3 The STF provision in Swansea has been added to over a period of years, as levels of need have increased or new areas of need have been identified. STFs have usually been established where there is space, or interest, in a school. This has been beneficial in terms of providing a quick response however, it has not been a strategic, whole system approach.
- 2.4 There is a variation in approach to inclusion across Swansea schools with many examples of excellent practice. Whilst there is a significant amount of training, support and guidance for schools, we do not currently have an adequate resource or structure to offer a comprehensive programme of regular quality assurance which would in turn lead to support for improvement where needed alongside the highlighting and sharing of best practice. This has resulted in some inconsistencies in relation to referrals to STFs.
- 2.5 STFs in Swansea are full and we do not currently have the appropriate number of places in all locations, meaning some children have to travel long distances to attend a provision that can meet their needs. We are committed to improving this position. We would like all children and young people to be able to access the provision they need within their local communities, wherever possible. Long journey times impact on learner wellbeing and we know that in some cases the cost of transport to is equal to, and sometimes more than, the cost of the provision itself.
- 2.6 We know that there are increasing needs across the spectrum of additional learning needs with increasing demands on mainstream schools, our special school and STF places. There is currently a waiting list and the impact of the pandemic, alongside a national increase in autism has further impacted on pressures.

3. Progress To Date

- 3.1 Since 2020, we have undertaken an extensive period of review and redesign of the current provision.
- 3.2 There has been a high level of stakeholder engagement, collaboration and co-design. Stakeholders include the Swansea Parent Carer Forum, headteachers, Additional Learning Needs Coordinators (ALNCOs), Local Health Board colleagues, Child and Family Services colleagues and officers from across the Education Directorate.
- 3.3 A Change Team has been established with members of the Education Directorate Senior Leadership Team (EDSLT) Strategic Leads.
- 3.4 The collaboration period resulted in a set of principles which will underpin any new model of provision. These are detailed in Appendix A.
- 3.5 During the academic year 2022-2023, four development school clusters worked with officers from the ALN and Inclusion Team on transferring these aspirational principles into an operationally deliverable model. The outcome of this work was a proposed model of provision which could be applied across all school clusters in Swansea.
- 3.6 This proposed model of provision is currently being finalised and will be shared with the Change Team who will consider its viability in terms of deliverability.
- 3.7 The new model is likely to be more resource intensive than the current model, however, this reflects the increasing demand, emerging needs of learners, the shift in societal pressures and increased legal responsibilities of schools and the local authority.
- 3.8 The preferred, proposed model is likely to reduce transport costs and enhance local authority provision within the county thus reducing the need for costly, out of county options which necessitate learners being educated out of their local communities. It had been hoped that savings achieved in these areas could be redistributed to support the new model. Current budgetary constraints make this more challenging however, we are committed to finding solutions that will enable our proposed model to succeed.
- 3.9 The STC could provide helpful insight into prioritising elements of the proposed model to support decision making around how best to resource the plans within the available funding.

4. Pilot Projects – Dylan Thomas and Minibus

4.1 Given the scope and complexity of the work it has been helpful to explore emerging proposals with pilot projects in order to test the new thinking, identify strengths and challenges in the proposals. This in turn has supported planning for how best to take them forward. There are currently two pilot projects underway:

- Minibus pilot
- Dylan Thomas cluster enhanced cluster provision

4.2 The minibus pilot developed from the stakeholder workshops. An emerging theme from headteachers with larger STFs was the number of taxis transporting individual learners, the impact on both site safety and site management and the wellbeing implications for learners having an extended start / end to their school day due to journey times.

4.3 There were concerns around equity of opportunity with the usual opportunities afforded to families of daily informal contact with the school being prevented by the taxi journey.

4.4 Alongside this the increasing fuel prices, limited number of taxi tenders and short notice for placements is resulting in beyond inflation costs associated with ALN home to school transport.

4.5 Following a period of extensive work to ensure all safe, legal, efficient and appropriate planning was undertaken a minibus pilot began with two schools initially. The pilot involved schools using their own minibuses, staffed by school staff, to undertake home to school transport arrangements for STF pupils.

4.6 Following evaluation of the pilot the following benefits have been identified:

- Financial – the trial has been very small scale and we have not maximised the number of pupils accessing the transport, however, even at this small scale there are financial savings with indications that scaling up will yield even greater savings.
- Wellbeing – an important consideration in this pilot was the impact that long taxi journeys have on learner wellbeing and the lack of access to school staff that families have when children are transported by taxi. During the pilot questionnaires were issued to children and parents taking part in the trial. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive with children and families welcoming the contact with school staff and identifying a much more positive start and end to the school day. Schools reported less behaviour challenges and children arriving at school ready to learn.
- Site safety – the pilot project has reduced congestion and parking issues at the schools concerned and has meant less

vehicles needing to access the school site at the start and end of the school day.

- Environmental impact – whilst the pilot is currently very small scale there is potential in the future to reduce the number of vehicles providing home-to-school transport and also exploring options for electric vehicles.

- 4.7 Given the success of this pilot we are keen to scale it up. The biggest challenge is the resource in central teams to undertake the work needed to achieve this so we are currently exploring options and can update the committee further.
- 4.8 The second pilot project emerged from the development phase which took place in the academic year 2022-2023. During this work it was identified that some learners could benefit from shorter term placements in specialist provision. This would not be appropriate for all learners who may require specialist input. However, it was identified as an option to explore for some to provide an additional step in the graduated response to meeting need.
- 4.9 In addition, it was identified that there was potential for specialist staff to operate in more of an outreach model to support some learners in their current settings and, perhaps more significantly, upskill staff across schools to support learners with different needs on the basis that ALN is everybody's business.
- 4.10 The combination of the approach of shorter-term placements in a specialist setting and enabling specialist staff to take their skills, experience and expertise out of the specialist settings led to a proposal for inreach/outreach provision which would be offered on a locality basis. This is being trialled at a cluster enhance provision within the Dylan Thomas cluster.
- 4.11 The proposal has been planned with all primary headteachers and ALNCOs in the cluster along with the ALNCO from the secondary school. Very clear parameters are in place and parental agreement is a critical element to any potential placement. The plans are still at early stages. Grant money has been identified to support the pilot and guidance documentation is being developed. It is anticipated the provision will be available in the new calendar year.
- 4.12 The provision will be carefully reviewed and effectiveness assessed to help inform future developments. There has been a high level of commitment from the cluster and updates can be provided to the STC to ensure the committee is apprised of progress and can support the shaping of future plans.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Draw together all predictive data and finalise projections of future provision requirements. Ensure that the proposed model sufficiently aligns to predictions while also allowing flexibility and ensuring a responsive model which is less restrictive than current arrangements
- 5.2 Once the Change Team have agreed the proposed model, it will be necessary to share with all relevant stakeholders and seek Cabinet approval to proceed. It would be helpful to have the views, comments and observations from the STC prior to submission of a final report to cabinet.
- 5.3 It will also be necessary to identify funding to secure the long-term future of the model. This is challenging in the current financial situation as many of the potential funding sources are needed to be offered as wider savings. It may be necessary to identify the elements of the model which will need to be prioritised to match available funds.

6. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 6.1 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.
- 6.1.1 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'.
- 6.1.2 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.

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

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Background papers:

None

Appendices:

Appendix A – Agreed Principles

Agreed Principles:

- There should be a consistent offer where schools in all communities are able to adapt and give a flexible approach to meet needs wherever possible. Children and Young People should be able to access consistent, localised community offers which allow for continuity in learning.
- Expertise is essential, specialisms are crucial. A highly developed collaborative, outreach/in reach approach is advocated to upskill across all sectors and allow the work of specialists to focus on capacity building and professional learning. A highly skilled workforce (not only teachers) should be in place.
- The model will be one which reflects a continuum according to need. STF provision is important and valued in the model which includes (where appropriate) shorter term placement as part of a continuum. The expectation of the role of STFs needs to be clearly defined and understood by all parties as does the provision offer to pupils.
- An inclusive ethos should be the norm. Provision in mainstream needs to be working to secure high quality, universal provision in line with ALNET principles.
- Quality assurance needs to be in place across the continuum and include peer to peer support and guidance.
- We must maintain, protect and build on existing good practice.
- Resources will need targeted towards early intervention.
- A whole local authority shared view, vision and language is needed. Key principles will aid consistency, parental understanding and communications to parents / stakeholders.
- This is an approach to support all children across Swansea achieve aspirations best on a whole local authority approach.

Education & Skills STC - Work Plan 2023-2024

Meeting Date	Agenda Items
14 June 2023	Workplan Discussion
26 July 2023	Right Schools in Right Place
27 September 2023	Supporting Sufficient Specialist Places
8 November 2023	Right Schools in Right Places
13 December 2023	Transforming Additional Learning Needs
24 January 2024	Right Schools in Right Places
6 March 2024	Transforming Additional Learning Needs
17 April 2024	End of Year Report