



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Education & Skills Policy Development Committee

At: Remotely via Microsoft Teams

On: Wednesday, 12 May 2021

Time: 4.00 pm

Chair: Councillor Robert Smith

Membership:

Councillors: J P Curtice, F M Gordon, B Hopkins, O G James, L R Jones, M A Langstone, M B Lewis, S Pritchard and D W W Thomas

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

Agenda

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1 Apologies for Absence.	
2 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests. www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosureofinterests	
3 Minutes. To approve and sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.	1 - 2
4 Supporting Education Recovery.	3 - 9

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

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Wednesday, 5 May 2021

Contact: Democratic Services - 636824

Agenda Item 3



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Education & Skills Policy Development Committee

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday, 10 March 2021 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor R V Smith (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

J P Curtice
M A Langstone
D W W Thomas

Councillor(s)

B Hopkins
M B Lewis

Councillor(s)

L R Jones
S Pritchard

Also Present:

Councillor J A Raynor - Cabinet Member for Education, Learning & Skills

Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden
Helen Morgan-Rees
Stephen Holland

Democratic Services Officer
Director of Education
Senior Solicitor

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): O G James

16 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

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

17 Minutes.

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2021 be approved and signed as correct record.

18 Discussion and Review of Evidence/Information Submitted.

Helen Morgan-Rees gave a powerpoint presentation covering the issues and topics raised and discussed by the Committee during its deliberations on the impact of Covid, including and discussed were the following area:

- 5 main emerging issues both locally and nationally - insecure foundations for learning, learners lack of progression could disadvantage them for life, demands on profession, certain learners are more challenged and system pressure;
- Insecure foundations for learning – issues around mental health and resilience of young people, effect of home learning and not being in school, lack of

confidence, motivation and self-efficacy, relationships, physical health & enabling skills;

- Learners lack of progression could disadvantage them for life - barriers to development, key enabling skills and knowledge, gaps in learning, quality of learning, progression, breadth/reduction in curriculum for home learning, preparation for exams & loss of opportunities;
- Demands on profession – huge adaptation for teachers and teaching assistants, re-planning and prioritising learning, morale and well-being, Covid related expectations, sum of duties expectations guidance and support, operational pressures around return to school, increased administrative pressures, education reform & recruitment and finances;
- Certain learners are more challenged & system pressure - vulnerable learners, early years, examination year groups, impact on learners in Welsh medium education especially those from English speaking families, learners from families where English is an additional language, Y6/Y7 transition & localised disadvantages;
- System pressure - ability to adapt, digital technology, relationships, professional capacity, scale of change & nature of education;
- Risks – future well-being crisis, inequality issues, prolonged economic impact of pandemic going forward;
- Addressing issues – recovery plan in place, national issues to be taken into account & focus on well-being.

Members of the committee discussed the issues and matters raised above and both made comments relating to them and asked a series questions of the Officer who responded accordingly.

Councillor J A Raynor, Cabinet Member for Education, Learning & Skills indicated that recent communications from the WLGA indicated that recovery from the pandemic is affecting pupils across Wales, and could take several years to recover and catch up.

The Chair indicated that the recovery plan in place along with the issues highlighted and discussed at the meeting could form the basis of a report to cabinet from the committee.

He asked that the Director draft a report and circulate it for comments prior to it being presented to a future meeting of the committee.

19 Workplan 2020/2021.

The Chair indicated that in order to give the Director an opportunity to draft and circulate the report referred to above, he proposed that the April meeting be cancelled and a special meeting be arranged on Wednesday 12 May.

The committee agreed and supported the proposal.

The meeting ended at 4.58 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 4



Education and Skills Policy Development Committee

12 May 2021

Draft Report of the Education and Skills Policy Development Committee

Cabinet – 17 June 2021

Supporting Education Recovery

Purpose:	To seek Cabinet approval of the recommendations of the Education and Skills Policy Development Committee.
Policy Framework:	Digital Competence Framework Guidance 2018 (Welsh Government). Developing a Whole-school Approach to Emotional and Mental Well-being Framework 2020 (Welsh Government).
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance and Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. All schools are supported and monitored to maintain and improve blended learning approaches developed during the last year.2. To develop a whole school approach to emotional health and wellbeing.3. The systematic dissemination of good practice in blended learning and supporting emotional health and wellbeing is accelerated.
Report Author:	Helen Morgan-Rees
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Stephanie Williams
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the policy development committee's review of evidence during the academic year 2020-2021, it is clear that the Covid-19 pandemic has

presented both challenges and opportunities for education improvement, continuity of learning and skills development.

- 1.2 This report addresses the key experiences and emerging issues presented to the Education and Skills Policy Development Committee during 2020-2021 municipal year. An extraordinary year of crisis management and significant disruption in education was examined thoroughly.

2. Challenges And Opportunities Heard By Committee

- 2.1 Access to learning opportunities were considered carefully by the committee. Although thousands of new devices were issued to schools and their pupils, this was largely through a pre-Covid initiative and gaps remain in equitable access as a result of varying approaches to remote and blended learning as well as availability of appropriate devices during disruption of education. Minimising disruption to learning remains a key priority alongside ensuring that the learning offer is strong whether at home or in school. Devices to schools are still being delivered to support digital learning as well as access to learning.
- 2.2 Authority wide planning for continuity of learning was outlined to the committee. The aims of the Continuity of Learning Plan remain live issues as schools still require whole year groups of pupils to self-isolate. Building on the initial plan has supported schools well and this will need to continue in future.
- 2.3 Support to develop the education profession has been provided during the last year. A few practitioners have experienced a steep learning curve in improving their own and pupils' digital competence and engagement in learning. Further flexible professional learning opportunities are essential to provide equitable quality learning opportunities across all schools.
- 2.4 Views of parents and learners were discussed with officers and it was clear that there were high levels of parental satisfaction during the initial lockdown period. However, the experiences of parents and pupils varied during the autumn term as schools were required to be highly adaptive in switching to remote learning, depending on how staff, individual pupils and whole year groups or classes were affected directly by the virus itself. Inevitably, pupils' experiences were varied. At a time of re-focussing and re-setting, it is vital that all schools learn from the best experiences.
- 2.5 Views of challenge advisers were considered by the committee. It became clear that schools were well supported during the crisis. There was an acknowledgement that all schools were trying to do their best in reacting to a crisis and that their main priority was to keep learning going in highly controlled Covid-19 safe environments. The committee heard that many schools had shared their experiences and had refined their remote learning offer by listening to learners. It was also clear that well-being of children and young people was a prime concern and that there

had been a downgrading of duties in relation to the current statutory curriculum during most of the autumn term.

- 2.6 Support for vulnerable learners became a clear focus for the committee in reviewing evidence. The committee heard how parents/ carers and school staff had been supported by officers, across the council, working together to protect the most vulnerable, identify new vulnerabilities and provide universal and targeted resources to support emotional health and mental well-being, in particular.
- 2.7 Emerging themes for, re-mobilising, re-focussing and re-shaping were considered in the context of national and local consideration. Officer advice to the committee was to develop the work on well-being as part of readiness to learn and emotional health.

3. Recommendations of the Education and Skills Policy Development Committee

- 3.1 A whole Council approach is developed towards focussing on the emotional health and well-being of all learners by supporting and monitoring schools in developing a whole school approach to emotional health and wellbeing. Key events and support packages will be made available to schools to develop high standards. This work will include developing a Swansea-wide policy on assessing the emotional, wellbeing, and learning impact of Covid-19 coupled with the dissemination of evidence-based good practice to support schools' work.
- 3.2 A whole Council approach is developed towards supporting digital competence and capacity, both in terms of access to devices and capacity for learning, with a particular focus on learner access. Professional learning opportunities and key events will be developed further.
- 3.3 A whole Council approach is developed towards the systematic dissemination of good practice in relation to readiness for learning and benefits of blended learning. Opportunities created during the Covid-19 pandemic in relation to well-being, engagement and participation will be shared systematically. In addition, innovative learning experiences will be widely shared across schools.
- 3.4 The learning from the pandemic should be used in implementing Curriculum for Wales especially in encouraging learners confident to take responsibility for their own learning.

4. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and the Socio-economic Duty (Wales) 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 Act.

- 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.
- Ensure that decisions do not impact negatively on people with fewer financial means.

Our Integrated Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

- 4.2 An IIA Screening Form has been completed and included as appendix A with the agreed outcome that a full IIA report was not required.
- 4.3 The IIA showed that these recommendations would have a positive impact on children and young people and very minimal impact on all other groups. All schools will be kept engaged throughout the implementation of the recommendations to ensure that the benefits are realised across all our schools. All the recommendations fit within the expectations and considerations of the WFG with no risk in their implementation. The cumulative impact is seen as very positive.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A - EIA Screening Form

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form.

Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Achievement and Partnerships

Directorate: Education

Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

Supporting Education Recovery

As part of the policy development committee's review of evidence during the academic year 2020-2021, it is clear that the Covid-19 pandemic has presented both challenges and opportunities for education improvement, continuity of learning and skills development.

This report addresses the key experiences and emerging issues presented to the Education and Skills Policy Development Committee during 2020-2021 municipal year. An extraordinary year of crisis management and significant disruption in education was examined thoroughly.

It is recommended that:

1. All schools are supported and monitored to maintain and improve blended learning approaches developed during the last year
2. To develop a whole school approach to emotional health and wellbeing
3. The systematic dissemination of good practice in blended learning and supporting emotional health and wellbeing is accelerated

Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?

Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement

We will continue to engage our schools to ensure that the recommendations are actioned and that they have a positive benefit on all Swansea schools.

Q4 Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan’s Well-being Objectives when considered together?
 Yes No

- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?
 Yes No

- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?
 Yes No

- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?
 Yes No

Q5 What is the potential risk of the initiative? (Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...)

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?

Yes No If yes, please provide details below

Q7 What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?

(You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups/ communities more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making. For example, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, e.g., disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc.)

The recommendations when actioned will have a positive impact on all pupils and schools in Swansea.

We will ensure that all schools are supported and monitored to maintain and improve blended learning approaches developed during the last year, develop a whole school approach to emotional health and wellbeing as well as the systematic dissemination of good practice in blended learning and supporting emotional health and wellbeing is accelerated across all schools for the benefit of all learners.

Outcome of Screening

Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:

- **Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)**
- **Summary of involvement (Q3)**
- **WFG considerations (Q4)**
- **Any risks identified (Q5)**
- **Cumulative impact (Q7)**

These recommendations will have a positive impact on children and young people and very minimal impact on all other groups. All schools will be kept engaged to ensure that the benefits are realised across all our schools. All the recommendations fit within the expectations and considerations of the WFG with no risk in their implementation. The cumulative impact is seen as very positive.

(NB: This summary paragraph should be used in the relevant section of corporate report)

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email.

Screening completed by:
Name: Rhodri Jones
Job title: Head of Performance Team
Date: 29/04/2021
Approval by Head of Service:
Name: Helen Morgan-Rees
Position: Director of Education
Date: 29/04/2021

Please return the completed form to accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk