



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Fiona Gordon
Convenor, Attainment & Wellbeing
Scrutiny Inquiry

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Councillor Christine Richards
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BY EMAIL

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Our Ref / Ein Cyf: CR/SH
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Cyf:
Date / Dyddiad: 13 July 2015

If you require this or any other information in another format e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me

Dear Councillor Gordon

Attainment & Wellbeing Scrutiny Inquiry Impact – 11 June 2015

Thank you for your convenors letter dated 29 June 2015.

Recommendation 3

Schools develop the curriculum for PSE taking careful account of their pupils needs. There are differences school to school. Schools do draw on the expertise of professionals from other organisations to deliver the PSE curriculum.

Recommendation 4

The online training module for new governors has been completed and is being finally considered by ERW colleagues in a meeting in August. It is hoped to refine the module for it to go live at the onset of the Autumn Term 2015.

Recommendation 6

The local authority has no jurisdiction over the appointment of parent, community, teacher and staff governors. Currently, there has been no formal centralised assessment of the make-up of individual governing bodies to assess the skills and experience on each governing body.

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- 2 -

Many governing bodies currently have very able, talented, knowledgeable governors with an overall appropriate skill mix. The School and Governor Unit encourages governing bodies to undertake a skills audit of their members.

It is planned to issue a skills matrix to all governing bodies in the Autumn Term 2015 in order to identify those governing bodies with effective skill mix and those in need of support to attract applicants with appropriate skills to join their governing body as and when vacancies arise.

Recommendation 7

The appointment of wellbeing link governors will be a focus in the next academic year. An example of the role of the wellbeing link governor will be drawn up and distributed to schools in the Autumn Term 2015. Wellbeing governors will be targeted to attend wellbeing governor training. Courses will be delivered by Jane Whitmore and colleagues.

Recommendation 8

The role and staffing complement for challenge advisers has only been formalised during the current academic year. It will be necessary to build further on this in the coming academic year to identify support for chairs of governing bodies and introduce a buddy system to support new chairs of governors and those in need of development. It is further planned to identify effective chairs and governors of governing bodies to provide mentoring support for other governing bodies.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR CHRISTINE RICHARDS
DEPUTY LEADER & CABINET
MEMBER FOR SERVICES FOR
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29 June 2015

Summary: This is a letter from the Attainment and Wellbeing Scrutiny Inquiry Panel to the Cabinet Member for services to children and young people and for Education following the meeting of the Panel on the 11 June 2015. It is to follow up on impact of a previous scrutiny inquiry into Attainment and Wellbeing in Schools in Swansea.

Dear Councillor Richards and Councillor Raynor,

Attainment and Wellbeing Scrutiny Inquiry Impact – 11 June 2015

The Panel would like to thank you and officers for attending our meeting on the 11 June and for providing us with the impact report on the scrutiny recommendations arising from the inquiry into attainment and wellbeing across schools in Swansea.

We were pleased to hear that the UNCRC and Rights Respecting schools aspects have been particularly successful and would like to congratulate schools and the council alike for this important progress which is helping to improve the school lives of many children across Swansea.

We do still have some concerns around the progress made in relation to the aspects of the report relating to school governors including, for example, Recommendation 6 which was about encouraging a wider range of people with different knowledge and skills sets to become governors. We did feel that the authority is not being proactive enough in this area. The impact of recommendations 4, 6, 7 and 8 have not produced the outcomes we would have hoped at this point so we will refer them onto the recently convened School Governance Scrutiny Inquiry for inclusion in their work.

Your Response

Could you please provide us with further information in relation to progress/impact in relation to Recommendation 3 which was not included within the impact report

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discussed on the 11 June (see below for summary of recommendations mentioned in this letter).

We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Fiona Gordon

Convener, Attainment and Wellbeing Scrutiny Inquiry

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Recommendations mentioned in letter:

Recommendation 4

Investigate different media for the wider training of governors including the use and availability of online training tools and involvement in appropriate inset days and in wider all school training.

Completed – yes, partially

Progress - The outcome to ensure the UNCRC and Wellbeing are an integral part of the Governor Training Programme has been achieved within the recommended timeframes. It is not possible at the present time to consider offering on-line training for governors specifically on UNCRC. The focus for developing on-line training (across Wales) for governors will be the mandatory elements of governor training. It may be possible to review this at some time in the future and for Swansea to consider developing an on-line training option for UNCRC governor training when all mandatory elements have been embedded on-line. There will, however, be costs incurred to develop this package and given current financial constraints and forecast budgets over the next few years it is highly likely that funding will not be available to pursue this option.

- The panel felt this had not move ahead substantially and would like to follow up on this further. This will therefore be referred to the School Governance Scrutiny Inquiry Panel for further work.

Recommendation 6

Work to encourage a wider range of people to become governors with a wide variety of skills and knowledge and that are truly reflective of wider society.

Completed – yes, partially

Progress - The outcomes to ensure more school governors who reflect a wider community interest and are trained and have appropriate skills is in progress and ongoing and will be achieved within the timeframes of the recommendation.

- The panel felt that we need to do more in this area and that the authority is not being proactive enough in this area. The panel will therefore refer this recommendation onto the Governance Scrutiny Inquiry for further input.

Recommendation 7

It develops 'questions to ask' guidance in relation to wellbeing in schools for governors using the issues identified in section 3.12 and in consultation with Headteachers and governing bodies. This should be made available online for schools and governors to access.

Completed: No

Progress: The outcome for Governing Bodies to appoint a wellbeing link governor is in development and will be achieved in 2015/16.

- As this is in process of being developed the panel felt that the Governance Inquiry could input into this further and there refer it to them.

Recommendation 8

It facilitates the introduction of a system leaders approach within governing bodies. That is new chairs of governors being supported by experienced governors from other schools across the regions and new governors offered a buddy system from within the individual governing Body.

Completed: yes, partially

Progress: The outcome to continue with existing support arrangements for Governors and influencing the introduction of a system leaders approach has partially been achieved and continues to be developed in 2015/16.

- As this is in process of being developed the panel felt that the Governance Inquiry could input into this further and there refer it to them.