

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 5, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON
WEDNESDAY, 2 MARCH 2016 AT 4.00 PM**

PRESENT: Councillor D W W Thomas (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

J P Curtice

Councillor(s)

C R Doyle

Councillor(s)

R V Smith

Officer(s)

Helen Morgan-Rees - Head of Education Improvement

Gareth Borsden - Democratic Services

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): C R Evans, F M Gordon, H M Morris, C Thomas and L V Walton

22 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

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

23 **MINUTES.**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 6 January and 3 February 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

24 **REVIEW OF NEETS - DISCUSSION WITH HELEN MORGAN-REES. (HEAD OF EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT).**

The Chair welcomed Helen Morgan-Rees, Head of Education Improvement, to the meeting and outlined the two topics that the CAC is reviewing, namely NEETs and Young People's suitability for employment when leaving school.

Helen Morgan-Rees, Head of Education Improvement for both City & County of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council outlined to Members the background and challenges associated with her role and working for both Authorities. She indicated that the Chief Education Officer had sent his apologies.

She distributed information relating to the NEET figures for Swansea Comprehensive Schools, Special Schools and EOTAS provision for the previous six years.

THE CAC and the officer then discussed the variations in the figures, the actual numbers of NEETs, the numbers in each cohort for the years outlined in the statistics.

They indicated that the data shows that some schools are clearly better than others in dealing with vulnerable young people and retaining them in mainstream education.

The need for a personalised curriculum and much earlier intervention was highlighted as well as the need for a much better understanding of the factors which contribute to making a child a NEET.

The VAP data is key to identifying and sharing good practice. Schools could do more with the data.

Members indicated that the sharing of expertise and good practice by schools could be improved upon.

Helen Morgan-Rees indicated that Careers Wales utilise our VAP data alongside their own assessment system, and that Neath Port Talbot have developed their own system based on the Swansea system.

She stated that due to the detailed level of personal information contained in the VAP, the data is not always shared with Governors.

She referred to the proposed new curriculum that is due for implementation in 2020/21 which focuses on 4 main areas through a "curriculum for life", one of which is Employability Skills. She indicated that the current Pioneer Schools will lead on these proposals.

She stated that a meeting of the All Wales Pioneers Schools Group is being held later this month and she indicated that the new scheme is being built from the workforce up. The Pioneer Schools have been given more freedom to experiment with new ideas.

The new curriculum provides an opportunity to build and ensure a better personal needs based curriculum.

Members stated the new scheme needs to be properly funded and centrally driven and implemented in order to be successful.

Issues around literacy levels, particularly with boys, problems around the transition between primary and comprehensive schools, comprehensive schools relationship with feeder schools, the relationship between NEETs and free school meal, and pupil deprivation grant spending and effectiveness were all discussed.

The Officer indicated that there was clear guidance on the ERW website regarding the spending of the pupil deprivation grant and the City of County of Swansea schools spending is centrally monitored and reviewed if necessary. The spending of the grant should be linked to attainment and improvement.

25 **FEEDBACK FROM NEETS SCHOOLS SURVEY.**

Helen Morgan-Rees verbally reported that only 3 primary schools had responded to the survey. No comprehensive schools who are more linked to NEETs had responded.

Details of the responses received and information relating to the VAP data would be circulated to all Members of the CAC.

Members indicated their extreme disappointment with the lack of responses from schools to the survey.

The meeting ended at 5.10 pm

CHAIR