



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Education & Skills Policy Development Committee

Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

Wednesday, 13 November 2019 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor R V Smith (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

J P Curtice
L R Jones

Councillor(s)

B Hopkins
M B Lewis

Councillor(s)

O G James

Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden
Damien Beech
Rob Davies
Stephanie Williams

Democratic Services Officer
Head of Primary Phase Unit
Head of Secondary Phase unit
Principal Lawyer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): M Durke, M A Langstone and D W W Thomas and N Williams & H Morgan Rees

22 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

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

23 Minutes.

Resolved that the minutes of the Education & Skills Policy development Committee held on 9 October 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

24 Overview of the Draft Curriculum Implementation Plan from Education Officers.

Damien Beech and Rob David gave a verbal presentation outlining the background and work done to date on the preparation for the new curriculum.

They outlined that a Swansea Teaching, Assessment & Curriculum Group has been established with representation from both primary and secondary phases, with a good mix of schools represented on them. They indicated that the group contains a wide range of very experienced headteachers, one of which is currently being seconded by ERW as its Head of Curriculum.

They referred to the good advice being issued by Welsh Government via their blog and the various engagement events organised by ERW. They indicated that the advice being given to schools by this Authority very much mirrors that being issued by Welsh Government and ERW.

They indicated the general message coming from ERW is for schools not be nervous or fearful of the new curriculum, whilst acknowledging it is a considerable move away from the current system.

The group have visits to pioneer and QI schools planned and have also engaged with schools in Cardiff and the Vale and are taking in as much evidence of good practice as they can in order to best prepare schools in the City & County of Swansea.

They indicated that an initial advice pack has been circulated to primary schools.

They indicated that the new curriculum will inevitably be slightly different in every school but the broad basis and background should be similar.

They indicated that Prof Mick Waters who was heavily involved in the production of the new professional standards for teachers will be speaking to headteachers in Swansea on 14 November. He is also on a panel advising Welsh Government on "Re-imagining Schools".

They outlined that the new curriculum will not ultimately be introduced until 2022, which should allow time for sufficient planning, upskilling/training and promoting confidence for teachers.

They distributed to Members of the Committee a copy of the Draft Curriculum Implementation Plan for discussion and comments and spoke in support of the document.

They detailed, outlined and discussed the contents of the proposed document, which includes the following areas:

- Introduction and background to the proposals;
- Involvement of Challenge Advisors, SCCASH and SCASEN teacher groups;
- Four main phases for implantation -
 1. Evaluate current curriculum – Sept 2019-20
 2. Planning & designing new curriculum – Sept 2020-21
 3. Trialling & refining – Sept 2021-22
 4. Implementing, monitoring & reviewing – Sept 2020 onwards
- Phase 1 – schools are currently in different places, message being given out is to take time, research, get evidence, upskill, evaluate & feedback.
- 3 Main Priority Aims – prepare and support schools for curriculum reform and promotion of professional learning, develop a strong evidence based approach to pupil learning and develop & support a well-informed workforce.
- Actions – monitoring of the needs of schools, supporting schools during the review of their current curriculum, review of lessons learned from pioneer schools, need to upskill teachers, sharing of research findings and information, engagement with teachers/parents/pupils, cluster work co-

ordination, promotion of a connected curriculum particularly between Year 5, 6, 7 & 8.

- Ways of Working – challenge advisor support through visits/ networks and development programs.
- Lead People.
- Milestones & Outcomes.
- Ten Steps – starts with review, involves stakeholders, different options, links for learning & review.
- Evidence Based Approaches – promoting the findings from research and good practice such as Sutton Trust & Prof Stuart Kime who is due to speak to the Headteachers forum in February.
- Connected Curriculum & Cultural Capital – liaison between cluster schools needed to develop a joined up approach to global/national/local knowledge, skill and experiences.
- Dispelling the Myths – Curriculum for Wales blog which provides updates, information and advice to schools. The myths section highlights many misinterpretations of the curriculum that have become evident in the system.

Following the presentation Members again outlined their concerns relating to various issues and asked questions on various topics including the complete change from the current system to the new curriculum, whether schools and education staff will have the capacity for change, is there capacity for assessment and monitoring in the system, the monitoring and implementation of the new curriculum, issues around literacy levels, city deal job opportunities and vocational training opportunities, issues around the potential impact of several different feeder schools linking into one comprehensive, the issue of teacher engagement into the changes depending on their age/experience etc, lessons learned from the curriculum reform in Scotland, implications for children currently in the system and the need to maximise the opportunities for disadvantaged children.

Officers responded to the issues raised and highlighted by Members in detail and responded accordingly and outlined and referred to the various initiatives and plans being developed to assist schools and teachers with the new curriculum.

The Chair and Members welcomed the background work undertaken to date on the preparation for the new curriculum and thanked the officers for the information provided during their presentation.

25 Workplan 2019/2020.

The Chair reported that the meeting of the committee scheduled for 11 December had been cancelled due to the General Election and the officers due to be attending had been rescheduled for the February meeting of the committee.

The meeting ended at 5.09 pm

Chair