



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Education**

Remotely via Teams

Thursday, 22 April 2021 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor L R Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
D W Helliwell

Councillor(s)

M Durke
B Hopkins

Councillor(s)

S J Gallagher
L James

Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas

Co-opted Member(s)

A Roberts

Co-opted Member(s)

Other Attendees

Jennifer Raynor

Cabinet Member - Education Improvement, Learning & Skills

Officer(s)

Rob Davies
Rob Phillips
Helen Morgan-Rees
Michelle Roberts

Head of Secondary Phase Unit
Challenge Adviser
Director of Education
Scrutiny Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): A M Day, S M Jones, M A Langstone and L J Tyler-Lloyd

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

None

2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

None

3 Letters and Minutes

The letter and meetings were received.

4 Public Questions

No public questions were received.

5 Update - Additional Learning Needs Reform and its implementation

Rob Phillips, Challenge Adviser and ALN Champion attended the Panel and presented slides on the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Strategy in Swansea, discussing the following issues with Councillors.

- Difference between equality and equity for pupils
- The Additional Learning Needs and Tribunal Act (ALNET) objectives, seven objectives that underlie the Act including:
 1. ALN to replace term SEN
 2. Act to cover 0-25 year olds
 3. A unified statutory plan – the IDP
 4. Increased participation of children and young people
 5. High aspirations and improved outcomes
 6. A simpler less adversarial system
 7. Increased collaboration
 8. Avoiding disagreements/ earlier resolution
 9. Clear and consistent rights of appeal
 10. The ALN Code
 11. A bilingual system
- The importance of culture change in enabling its introduction. ALN is a Directorate priority and is about making transformational changes.
- The Swansea ALN Strategy have six priorities these are Transition, Capacity, Provision, Quality, Partnership and Assessment
- The ALN Strategy journey includes, for example: developing person centred practice, provision mapping, training opportunities and developing statutory processes.
- That the Act covers a much wider range of pupils than covered presently.
- Children, young people and their families are central to the process. With the Individual Development Plans (IDP) having clear outcomes about what they intend to achieve at the outset. The underlying principle in this is to avoid disagreements through early resolution of issues.
- There has been person centred practice in Swansea for some time, process is built around the child.
- Multi Agency collaboration is key
- Carrying forward recommendations made after Special Teaching Facilities review but this is a longer term achievement
- Inroads have been made into provision for challenging learners including the new Pupil Referral Unit provision, the Re-integration Plan and the Behaviour Strategy.
- An ALN funding review is on the horizon. The demands and challenges that form part of the ALNET Act and the strategy in Swansea will need to be funded so we have capacity here to do it.
- Parents are being involved in the process at a number of levels and co-productive activity is taking place where it is appropriate.
- Panel pleased to see Swansea at the getting a solid grip of change required and beginning to make them a reality on the ground.

6 Estyn Report and Letter - Education Response to the Pandemic

The Director of Education explained that during the disruption over the last year due to Covid it has been difficult to assess performance and report upon it. So it has been very useful to hear how we are doing and the provision of a level of reassurance from an external regulator. Estyn completed this as part of a national thematic review on the response to the pandemic across education in Wales.

Five recommendations were made in the national review and we are working to address these. Estyn is coming to Swansea next week to see how we are responding to them and how they are being integrated into the recovery plan.

Estyn recommendations for the Welsh Government to work with regional consortia, local authorities, and other partners and providers to:

R1 - Urgently address barriers to learning at home, particularly where this is due to a lack of access to suitable computers or adequate connectivity

R2 - Improve the quality of the distance and blended learning experiences for pupils by supporting more effective teaching across and within schools and PRUs

R3 - Develop a coherent approach to improve progress in literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills of vulnerable pupils disproportionately affected by the pandemic, for example pupils eligible for free school meals

R4 - Establish strategies to monitor and address the long-term impact of the pandemic on the physical and mental health of pupils

R5 - Create opportunities to take stock and evaluate the impact of policies and practices developed since the start of the pandemic to inform future ways of working and curriculum design

7 Update - New Curriculum including progress with its implementation

Rob Davies, Head of Secondary Phase Team provided a presentation updating the Panel on the current position with regard to the implementation of The New Curriculum for Wales (CfW) here in Swansea.

- *Prior to pandemic*
Working Group established to set up a Curriculum Implementation Welsh Government (WG) release final CfW22 documentation –Jan 20
Science of Learning Cross Phase Heads Conference, Swansea Curriculum Implementation Plan launched – 4-phase plan
- *Hiatus with main curriculum work due to disruption of the pandemic but:*
A lot high-quality professional learning has taken place
A small amount of more “normal” development continued through networks & governor training
WG continued with CfW roadmap – Journey to CfW released Nov 21 (4-phase plan), CfW bill passed – March 21 – Qualifications Reform Consultation – April 21 and School Improvement Guidance Consultation – March 21
- *Next steps include:*
Give schools space for the summer term, probably longer
Update Swansea’s Curriculum Implementation Plan to reflect changes given the pandemic and newly emerging regional landscape
Aim to revisit with schools in the autumn, or when time allows

- Swansea has a three implementation plan 2019-2022 but because of Covid there has been a degree of disruption. The plan will be reviewed to incorporate any changes needed.
- There is restructuring of the school improvement service at a local level but it is uncertain in relation to changes to the regional footprint. The Challenge Adviser will become School Improvement Advisers. Their role will be a much more supportive one for schools in this current time.
- From the Additional Learning Needs perspective the new curriculum is very exciting as it is able to be more responsive to ALN needs.

8 Education Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/2021

The Panel reviewed the work programme.

The meeting ended at 5.25 pm

Chair