



Report of the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning

Education Scrutiny Performance Panel – 14 September 2023

Progress against the ten recommendations of the 2021-2022 Education & Skills Policy Development Committee

Purpose:	To brief the Panel on work undertaken to progress recommendations made following the work of the Education & Skills Policy Development Committee
Content:	An overview of work undertaken by Swansea Council and partners against the ten recommendations presented in a report to Cabinet in July 2022
Councillors are being asked to:	Consider the information provided and give views.
Lead Councillor:	Cabinet Member for Education & Learning
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Over the course of the 2021-2022 municipal year, the Education and Skills Policy Development Committee (PDC) focussed its attention on supporting the challenge faced by learners as they emerged from the pandemic. Over eight sessions, committee Members heard a range of evidence detailing the challenges faced by learners as well as solutions and opportunities that could be taken forward.
- 1.2 Following this work, a report to was presented to Cabinet in July 2022 summarising the findings and ten recommendations were made in order to support learners to allow opportunities of future pathways of learning to be maximised, despite the challenges they have faced.
- 1.3 This report provides an overview of the progress against each of those ten recommendations to the end of the summer term 2023.

2. Progress against the ten recommendations of the Education and Skills PDC

2.1 *Swansea Council explores with all key partners how we understand Swansea and its neighbourhoods*

A range of datasets are used to provide information to provide knowledge about local areas. The Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is linked to most analysis of school performance data, contextual data and analysis of attendance and exclusions. This can be cross-analysed with other factors, e.g. linking to Free School Meals (FSM), Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and for Looked After Children (LAC).

Data from the Pupil Level Annual School Census each January gives context at various levels, e.g. individual schools, groups of learners and geographical areas such as Lower Layer Super Output Areas and wards. Detailed analysis of this data is run annually for all schools and relevant officers who require it.

Detailed learner records are held securely on management information systems that are able to report on a range of aspects of performance and context as required. Data can be linked to geographical data for local area analysis using postcodes.

Birth records are monitored by area which supports future planning.

The Welsh Community Care Information (WCCIS) System provides information around children in specific areas and is used by appropriate officers in the Education Directorate.

Partnerships with other services and organisations support further understanding of communities both generally and with specific situations.

The Education Welfare Service (EWS) is integrated within the Early Help Hubs and take part in monthly locality meetings, which are then fed back to other officers in the Directorate. The EWS have also met with Local Area Co-ordinators to identify ways to work collaboratively in the future to understand communities.

The Contextualised, Missing, Exploited and Trafficked (CMET) team discuss particular areas of concern around exploitation. The Education Directorate are invited to both strategic and operational meetings. Also in attendance are the anti-social behaviour team, Youth Offending Service, Police and the Local Health Board. Joint reporting from a range of agencies provides a wealth of data around communities.

The Education Directorate is also invited to engagement and exploitation meetings with South Wales Police, working jointly to identify areas of concern and how young people in those areas can be supported.

The corporate and regional safeguarding boards consider contextual information across the area to aid planning of services.

2.2 *Swansea Council maps community assets and community engagement for all Swansea schools*

Work has not progressed with mapping out the offer of engagement and use of assets by schools at a whole across the County to date, however, The Welsh Government commitment to invest in Community Focussed Schools supports the benefits of doing so. The Partnership and Involvement Team are currently mapping out community engagement activity held by different teams across the Council, to strengthen opportunities to work together and inform future work. The Partnership and Involvement Team also work closely with schools on learner voice.

2.3 *Swansea Council reviews the use of Free School Meals as an indicator of vulnerability*

'FSM6' (every FSM in the last six years) is now used as a measure on the Vulnerability Assessment Profiles. This is a more stable measure than just using current eligibility. This information is used alongside data taken from the WIMD, as FSM alone is not a perfect measure of deprivation, only income deprivation.

FSM and WIMD are both used routinely in analysis of school performance data, contextual data, attendance and exclusions in order to monitor various groups and identify possible issues and trends which may need intervention.

2.4 *Council considers how well schools engage with parents and communities in person, via social media, formally and informally*

This individual recommendation has not been progressed to date.

2.5 *Council considers how philosophy in Swansea schools and communities can improve communication and wellbeing*

This individual recommendation has not been progressed to date, however, elements will be covered in schools through the new curriculum.

2.6 *Council explores the idea of Swansea Council becoming Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) informed Council*

An overview of ACEs is included in the mandatory safeguarding training that all Council staff must complete.

A subgroup of the Corporate Safeguarding Steering Group has developed an action plan to identify the steps for The Council to become an ACEs-informed Council. This plan includes a consideration of ACEs in future policy development.

- 2.7 *Council considers developing on-site facilities to increase vocational opportunities in schools, where required and continues to develop vocational opportunities for all learners for whom this is a preferable route*

A new vocational strategy has been developed to develop opportunities for learners. A copy of this strategy has been included in appendix A.

Dylan Thomas Community School are exploring the possibility of adapting a space for vocational provision. Initial plans have been sourced by the school. Further detail is required from the school to ensure plans align to Swansea's vocational strategy.

A secondment is currently in place to develop bespoke packages of support, including vocational opportunities, for learners at risk of disengagement with education.

- 2.8 *Council maps existing Learning Champions to inspire learners and seeks the support of both universities in driving forward Learning Champions for Swansea learners*

There is currently no resource allocated to this project. Should resource become available, this will be further explored.

- 2.9 *Council provides all pupils in Swansea with a library card, promotes leisure/sports facilities to schools and communicates as well as outdoor learning as part of the schools' curriculum*

Historically, all libraries in Wales participated in 'Every Child a Library Member', with funds provided by the Welsh Government. This ceased a number of years ago with it not being as successful as hoped and challenges obtaining required registration information due to Data Protection.

The process now is that if libraries are approached by a school for classes or individual children to become members of a library for school visits, the parent registers the child online for the information to be processed and library card prepared to be collected by the parent or when the child visits with school.

Sport and Health officers promote local sports and leisure facilities. Many of the community activities both during term time and in the school holidays take place in facilities such as leisure centres, which are operated by Freedom Leisure and community buildings, which are owned by Swansea Council but managed on a day-to-day basis by voluntary management committees.

The Sports and Health team lead and support regular activities and large-scale events which take place at other facilities such as Swansea Bay Sports Park and Wales National Pool Swansea.

Examples of activities delivered include school swimming lessons at Freedom Leisure sites and Wales National Pool Swansea; StreetGames and Us Girls holiday camps at Penlan Leisure Centre; disability inclusion festivals at LC2 Swansea; Fit and Fed events in community centres; Hockey Euros International

Tournament and other events at Swansea Bay Sports Park; community events at local parks and open spaces; mountain bike rides at Clyne Valley Country Prk trails; and opportunities to participate/join community sport clubs.

These activities are promoted through a range of mechanisms including social media accounts, the Council Website, in person when Sports and Health officers attend schools and promotion of club / facility opportunities through Swansea Sport Awards recognition.

The Welsh Government is currently bringing forward the Outdoor Education (Wales) Bill. The purpose of the Bill is to establish a statutory duty on local authorities to ensure that all young people receiving maintained education are provided with the opportunity to experience residential Outdoor Education, for at least one week, at some stage during their school years. The Bill will also establish a statutory obligation for providers of maintained education to be allocated funding to enable them to do this.

2.10 *Council publishes its exclusions reduction strategy*

The Council's Inclusion Strategy was approved by Cabinet in May 2023. This strategy has a specific aim to promote inclusion (and reduce exclusion).

Detailed termly and annual analysis of exclusion data is run in order to identify trends and patterns in fixed-term exclusions. Exclusions are also part of the annual Vulnerability Assessment Profiles.

9. Legal implications

9.1 There are no legal implications within this report.

10. Finance Implications

10.1 There are no financial implications within this report.

11. Equality and Engagement Implications

11.1 The report is for information and not for decision.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Vocational Strategy