



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Education & Skills Service Transformation Committee

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams

Wednesday, 8 November 2023 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor M Durke (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

F M Gordon
S Joy

Councillor(s)

B Hopkins
Y V Jardine

Councillor(s)

L R Jones
T M White

Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden
Sarah Hughes
Helen Morgan-Rees
Melissa Perry
Kelly Small

Democratic Services Officer
Team Manager for Education Strategy
Director of Education
Solicitor
Head of Education Planning & Resources Service

Also present

Councillor R V Smith, Cabinet Member for Education and Learning

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): S Pritchard

18 Disclosures of Personal & Prejudicial Interests.

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

19 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Education and Skills Service Transformation Committee held on 27 September be approved and signed as a correct record.

20 Right Schools in Right Places.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills introduced the report and stated that the report provided an opportunity for the beginning of a discussion and a review of the whole school estate across the authority.

He indicated that the proposed new School Provision Plan (SPP) could provide an opportunity to develop and deliver the principles for delivering educational services going forward for many years across the City.

The Director of Education stated that proposed plan will support decision making for school buildings and estates for many years going forward and will link in with the transformation agenda and demographic changes that are already taking place across the city.

She indicated that the plan will link in well with the Sustainable Communities for Learning (SCfL) and Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) initiatives that have already been developed.

The Head of Planning & Resources then took the committee through the circulated report and verbally outlined and updated members on the proposals contained in the proposed SPP including the following areas:

- Background to the development of the plan which dovetails and links with other initiatives like SCfL, SOP etc;
- Changes and upgrades to school buildings including capital works and maintenance programme;
- Context of the plan which will become an actual document that can be used, looked at and referred to by all involved in the education community;
- SPP is suggested to run for a 9 year period to link in with the SCfL, and SOP which are on similar timescales;
- Input of the Quality in Education (QEd) programme board which meets monthly to consider school estate issues;
- Engagement with schools and headteacher representatives will also be sought before the plan would be finalised;
- Context and background to the development of the plan, including demographic changes, falling birth rate in Swansea, high inward migration, changing working patterns, audit commission guidance on school numbers, Welsh medium provision, faith schools, ALN provision and pupils taught at home;
- Discussions have taken place with the universities and health board to attempt to plan for the rise in inward migrati;
- Potential impact of strategic housing sites and developments contained within the LDP;
- Parental choice impact, school admission numbers and catchment areas;
- Potential trigger point in the new plan for a school review if pupil numbers change by plus/minus 10% over a two year period;
- School building surveys undertaken each year – buildings split into 4 categories A, B C or D, and these could be recorded in the SPP for each school along with information on school building ages;
- Display Energy Certificates (DEC) ratings for each school are a good indication of energy efficiency and this data could also be included in the SPP;
- Accessibility to school, including transport links and availability and travel times for children, the SPP could suggest a limit for travelling for both primary and secondary sectors;

- Committee members had received information and discussed the complexities and issues around school transport provision at a recent workshop;
- Vocational provision and links with other providers;
- Aim is to bring a draft version of the plan to the January meeting of this committee for members to discuss.

Members discussed the report and presentation and asked questions of the Officers and Cabinet Member who responded accordingly. The key areas arising from discussions included:

- Travel time issues for pupils;
- Need to include all school buildings in plan, not just main buildings;
- Audit commission guidance on 6th form numbers and sustainability of provision going forward;
- High turnover of pupils, particularly in city centre and combination of high numbers of new pupils, pupil turnover and deprivation issues can impact on schools;
- Size of amenity space in schools for play/sports etc compared to actual building size could be included in SPP;
- Huge rise in cost of building materials and subsequent rise in maintenance costs for schools.

The Chair thanked the Head of Education Planning and Resources for her informative report.

21 Work Plan 2023-2024.

The Chair outlined the workplan for the committee for the remainder of 2023/2024.

He proposed that the next meeting in December be held online only via Teams. Members of the committee supported the proposal.

The meeting ended at 4.47 pm

Chair