



City and County of Swansea

Notes of the **Scrutiny Inquiry Panel - Readiness for School**

Chamber Meeting Room - Civic Centre, Swansea

Tuesday, 27 March 2018 at 4.30 pm

Present: Councillor H M Morris (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

L S Gibbard
B Hopkins

Councillor(s)

F M Gordon
L R Jones

Councillor(s)

D W Helliwell
P B Smith

Other Attendees

Mark Child

Cabinet Member - Health & Wellbeing

Officer(s)

Sian Bingham

Early Intervention Services Strategic Manager

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): A M Day, E W Fitzgerald and E J King

1 Declarations of Interest

None

2 Readiness for Schools Scrutiny Inquiry Impact and Follow-up Report

The Inquiry Panel reconvened to look at the impact of and progress made with the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Inquiry into Readiness for School. Cllr Mark Child, Sian Bingham and Sharon Jones attended the meeting to discuss progress.

The Panel are pleased to hear that their work and the resulting recommendations have made an impact in many areas and that substantial progress had been made. They are keen to hear about that changes that have occurred at operational and strategic levels. That the strategic changes will ensure a longer term commitment and strategy is in place, whilst at an operational level services are becoming more widespread, aligned and linked across different organisations.

They were interested to hear about the work being done to utilise resource in those areas not covered by Flying Start by developing that ethos, where possible, within other early years setting within these areas. Councillors are happy to hear about the success of the multi-agency Jigso Project and the extending of Childcare Offer Pilot.

The Panel is particularly pleased that the Public Service Board has agreed that early years should continue to be one of their key priorities moving forward.

The Panel is therefore satisfied with progress made on recommendations 1, 2, 4 and 9 and will not follow up on those any further.

They heard about those recommendations that are not yet complete but that there has been progress with a number of these recommendations including for example:

- Significant progress made with responding to specific requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act in relation to early years.
- That the Pupil Deprivation Grant is now mapped and data collected so that the type of spend is monitored and good practice can be highlighted. The panel are keen to see the good practice found shared across schools.
- That a working party comprising of all key stakeholders has been established to share recommendations and develop a united understand of the actions to be taken to develop a Foundation Phase Profile baseline. The Panel were keen for this to progress to help develop and ensure consistency and robustness.
- The new Foundation Phase Strategic Lead is starting to build working relationships with relevant people and will start to share good practice. The Panel are keen to see minimum standards in relation to transition to school from day care settings to be fully developed.

Councillors recognise that some of the recommendation made will have a longer term development timescale. They will therefore refer those outstanding recommendations, namely 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 to the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel to follow up upon in 12 months' time.

A letter will be written to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and Children, Education and Lifelong Learning reflecting the Panels views.

The meeting ended at 5.45 pm



**To/
Councillor Mark Child Cabinet Member
for Health and Wellbeing
Jen Raynor Cabinet Member for
Children, Education and Lifelong
Learning**

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

Scrutiny

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*Date
Dyddiad:*

13 April 2018

BY EMAIL

Summary: This is a letter from the Readiness for School Scrutiny Inquiry Panel to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning following the meeting of the Panel on 27 March 2018. The purpose of the meeting was to follow up on progress made against scrutiny recommendations.

Dear Cabinet Members,

Readiness for School Scrutiny Inquiry Impact and Follow up – 27 March 2018

As you are aware the Inquiry Panel reconvened on the 27 March 2018 to look at the impact of and progress made with the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Inquiry into Readiness for School.

We would like to thank Cllr Child, Sian Bingham and Sharon Jones for attending our meeting to discuss progress.

We were pleased to hear that our work and the resulting recommendations have made an impact in many areas and that substantial progress had been made. We were keen to hear about that changes that have occurred at operational and strategic levels. That the strategic changes will ensure a longer term commitment and strategy is in place, whilst at an operational level services are becoming more wide spread, aligned and linked across different organisations.

We were interested to hear about the work being done to utilise resource in those areas not covered by Flying Start by developing that ethos, where possible, within other early years setting within these areas. We are happy to hear about the success of the multi-agency Jigso Project and the extending of Childcare Offer Pilot.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU
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We are particularly pleased that the Public Service Board has agreed that early years should continue to be one of their key priorities moving forward.

We are therefore satisfied with progress made on recommendations 1, 2, 4 and 9 and will not follow up on those any further.

We also heard about those recommendations that are not yet complete but that there has been progress with a number of these recommendations including for example:

- Significant progress made with responding to specific requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act in relation to early years.
- That the Pupil Deprivation Grant is now mapped and data collected so that the type of spend is monitored and good practice can be highlighted. The panel are keen to see the good practice found shared across schools.
- That a working party comprising of all key stakeholders has been established to share recommendations and develop a united understand of the actions to be taken to develop a Foundation Phase Profile baseline. The Panel were keen for this to progress to help develop and ensure consistency and robustness.
- The new Foundation Phase Strategic Lead is starting to build working relationships with relevant people and will start to share good practice. The Panel are keen to see minimum standards in relation to transition to school from day care settings to be fully developed.

We recognise that some of the recommendation made will have a longer term development timescale. We will therefore refer those outstanding recommendations, namely 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 to the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel to follow up upon in 12 months' time.

We welcome your thoughts on any of the issues raised in our letter but do not require a formal written response at this time.

Yours sincerely,

COUNCILLOR HAZEL MORRIS

Convener, Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel

✉ Cllr.hazel.morris@swansea.gov.uk