



City and County of Swansea

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

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Thursday, 9 May 2024 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor L R Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

A Davis
S Joy
A J O'Connor

Councillor(s)

B Hopkins
J D McGettrick

Councillor(s)

S M Jones
F D O'Brien

Other Attendees

Cllr R Smith Cabinet Member Education, Learning and Skills

Officer(s)

Helen Morgan-Rees	Director of Education
Louise Herbert Evans	Team Manager Education Capital
David Bawden	Strategic Co-ordinator for Education Skills
Michelle Roberts	Scrutiny Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): A M Day and F M Gordon
Co-opted Member(s): Beth Allender

146 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

A Personal Interest was disclosed for Item 6 by Cllrs L Jones, F O'Brien, J McGettrick and A O'Conner.

147 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

None

148 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting on the 18 April 2024 were agreed by the Panel.

149 Letter/s

The letter to the Cabinet Member following the Panel meeting on the 18 April 2024 was noted.

150 Public Questions

No public questions were received.

151 Quality in Education (QEd) / Sustainable Communities for Learning Update (PowerPoint presentation)

The Panel thanked Councillor Robert Smith (Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills), Helen Morgan Rees (Director of Education) and Louise Herbert Evans (Team Manager Capital) for attending the Panel and providing a PowerPoint presentation updating the Panel on progress with Sustainable Communities for Learning. The report covered:

- An overview of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme
- How the programme was delivered
- Projects delivered under the remaining Band B
- The new rolling Strategic Outline Programme Revision
- Programme risks and issues
- Universal Free School Meals
- Community Focused Schools
- Additional Learning Needs
- Childcare and Early years capital programme
- Capital Maintenance; and
- Local Development Plan Strategic Sites

The following issues/questions were raised by the Panel. A summary of the Panels views on progress made and the responses to their questions, will form part of the letter to the Cabinet Member following the meeting.

- The Bishop Vaughan and Daniel James sites, including ownership, reasons for how things are going to be done and the funding arrangements/most cost-effective option.
- Accessibility across the Gowerton School site.
- Working construction companies to provide for example assemblies with young people in relation to introducing apprenticeships and opportunities in construction.
- Mutual Investment Model (MIM) and lessons learnt from Private Finance Initiative (PFI).

152 Swansea Skills Partnership Annual Update

The Panel thanked Councillor Robert Smith (Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills), Helen Morgan Rees (Director of Education), and David Bawden (Strategic Co-ordinator Education Skills) for attending the Panel and providing a report updating the Panel on progress with the Swansea Skills Partnership. The discussion covered:

- Background to the Swansea Skills Partnership
- Progress update and the new strategic priorities

- Workstream one: Develop stronger collaboration partnerships with employers
- Workstream two: Develop collaborative partnerships to explore the delivery of 14-19 vocational programmes from a place and provision perspective
- Workstream three: To establish collaborative partnerships to develop and deliver a wider range of high-quality post 16 programmes

The following issues/questions were raised by the Panel. A summary of the Panels views on progress and the responses to their questions, will form part of the letter to the Cabinet Member following the meeting.

- The Panel noticed in the report that there is a green hub opening shortly in Gower College, which Panel pleased to hear about. It was asked whether any other areas that are being encouraged to do this.
- Panel welcome and congratulate the work being done by the Swansea Skills Partnership but it was mentioned that for it to be fully inclusive it needs to have higher level of business engagement on the Partnership itself.
- Panel recognise and support the work around vocational learning and were pleased to hear about the new suite of vocational qualifications called VCSE's.
- Will the VCSE courses be accessible to all pupils including ALN pupils.
- Will there still be business elements or courses available for young people who may want to understand about business aspects too.
- Developing a number of courses that can be accessed online and how that would work. It was mentioned that we must be mindful of young people ability to access the equipment needed to complete online.

The Panel felt this was inspiring and groundbreaking work and will put Swansea ahead in Wales making a real difference to young people here.

153 End of year review in Education Scrutiny 2023 - 2024

The Panel discussed their year in Education Scrutiny and were asked to highlight any areas that have worked well or could be improved. The following was noted:

- Visiting schools and seeing the work being done on the ground was excellent but better to do this in person when possible as it was felt that better engagement and more constructive scrutiny can take place.
- It was felt that the recent scrutiny with a school causing concern was particularly beneficial and completed in a professional manner. The school had also been pleased with the progress.
- PowerPoint presentations can be useful but need to ensure we have them circulated with the agenda papers to ensure time for consideration of the detail contained in them and therefore better scrutiny.

Panel meetings will take place at 4.30pm from June 2024 onwards unless they involve a school visit when they will start at 4.00pm.

The meeting ended at 5.40 pm

Chair