



City and County of Swansea

**Minutes of the Education & Skills Policy
Development and Delivery Committee**

Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea - Guildhall, Swansea

Wednesday, 8 November 2017 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor R V Smith (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

L R Jones
S Pritchard

Councillor(s)

M A Langstone
M Sykes

Councillor(s)

M B Lewis
D W W Thomas

Officer(s)

Gareth Borsden
Chris Sivers
Beth Thomas
Nick Williams

Democratic Services Officer
Director of People
Participation & Children's Rights Worker (Schools)
Chief Education Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): S E Crouch, B Hopkins, M H Jones and K M Roberts

23 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

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

24 Minutes.

Resolved that the minutes of the Education & Skills Policy Development & Delivery Committee held on 11 October 2017 be approved as a correct record.

25 Views from Pioneer Schools.

Nick Williams, provided an verbal update for the Committee in support of the circulated paper from Welsh Government which outlined the background proposals and purpose of the Pioneer Schools initiative which was launched in June this year.

He outlined that the following schools in Swansea are part of the project – Gwyrosydd, Glyncollen, Llanrhidian, Parkland, Trallwn, Waunarlwydd, YGG Brianiago, YGG Lonlas, Pen Y Bryn Special School, Olchfa Comprehensive School, Pontarddulais Comprehensive School, Ysgol Crug Glas Special School

He stated that a Scrutiny Panel would shortly be visiting Olchfa as part of their review, and information gained could be shared with Members of this Committee.

He indicated that good working relationships are already progressing between the comprehensive and feeder schools to better develop transition arrangements for young people.

He detailed some of the schemes being introduced such as Digital Competency Framework (which will give equal weighting to IT skills as numeracy & literacy development), entrepreneurship, blended curriculum etc.

He indicated that the schemes being developed will need time to be embedded in the school programme and feedback and good practice will be shared with other schools in due course.

The issues of not enough young people taking IT formally at both GCSE and A level, the limited option choices for subjects, the need to embed IT skills and usage into as many lessons as possible, the availability of enough qualified IT staff and teachers, the need to better promote to young people the outcomes and job/career opportunities from studying IT/Computers were all discussed and outlined, as well as the need to also promote and encourage the use of the alternative curriculum and soft/life skills such as teamwork/communication etc for all pupils.

The need to progress and support the issue of revised and increased IT Teacher Training and upskilling with schools and university providers was also referred to again.

The possibility of developing a Digital Academy outside of the school system possibly in conjunction with the Universities was raised and discussed.

26 Children's Views of STEM Subjects.

Beth Thomas, gave a detailed and informative power point presentation which outlined the background and feedback from the Big Conversation event held with young people on 29 September at Gowerton Comprehensive.

As part of the presentation, she outlined in detail the feedback from the young people and referred to the following areas:

- Context and rationale behind the Big Conversation initiative;
- Aims and objectives of the event;
- Tasks and activities completed by young people during the day;
- Why do girls drop out of STEM subjects – only 9% of GSCE computer science uptake are female;
- Reasons why girls drop out, including pre school, during school & outside school factors, such as gender stereotyping, family & cultural influences, unintentional sexism including from teachers, peer/media/social pressures, sexual orientation issues;
- What can be done to improve the situation – more support from teachers, need to change social attitudes to stereotyping and sexual orientation, more girl and mixed based activities, make subjects more inclusive;
- Fit for Purpose Curriculum and what young people think it could look like – more work experience options, more life skills, greater access to digital

technology, greater and earlier careers advice, better option choices, more practical/non vocational courses needed;

- The next steps – next Big Conversation meeting on December 1.

Members of the Committee discussed the issues raised by young people during the presentation and highlighted that many of the issues raised by Members previously such as more non vocational courses, better IT provision, improved careers advice, improved teacher training, holistic/life skills had also been raised by the young people. These areas need to be addressed and tackled, in order to give young people the best opportunities to flourish.

Members also suggested options to include a wider cross section of young people at future events.

Beth Thomas indicated that Members were welcome to attend future events.

27 Draft Cabinet Report on City Deal Skills Development.

Chris Sivers presented a draft Cabinet report which provided feedback on the progress to date in developing policy on education & skills in order to meet the challenges being raised by the City Deal.

The item had been discussed at the previous meeting of this committee, and this report has been compiled to progress the matter.

Members discussed the report and suggested minor amendments to give the report a more local focus.

Resolved that the amended report proceed to Cabinet.

28 Workplan 2017/2018.

The Chair outlined the Workplan for the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2017/2018.

Members raised the issue of 14-19 provision and requested that the presentation to the December meeting take into account that increased age range and the current provision available.

Resolved that the Workplan as outlined be noted, subject to the amendment above.

The meeting ended at 5.29 pm

Chair