



City and County of Swansea

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

Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

Tuesday, 18 February 2020 at 10.30 am

Present: Councillor L R Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
D W Helliwell
J A Raynor

Councillor(s)

S J Gallagher
L James

Councillor(s)

L S Gibbard
S M Jones

Co-opted Member(s)

D Anderson-Thomas

Co-opted Member(s)

Co-opted Member(s)

Other Attendees

Jennifer Raynor

Cabinet Member - Education Improvement, Learning & Skills

Officer(s)

Michelle Roberts
Brian Roles
Nick Williams

Scrutiny Officer
Head of Education Planning and Resources
Director of Education

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): A M Day, M Durke, B Hopkins, M A Langstone and L J Tyler-Lloyd
Co-opted Member(s): A Roberts

1 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

Cllr Susan Jones declared personal interest in Item 4.

2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

None

3 Annual Budget Proposals - as they relate to Education matters

The Panel thanked the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills, Nick Williams, Chief Education Officer and Brian Roles, Head of Planning and Resources for attending the panel to discuss the Annual Budget as it relates to Education matters.

4 Summarising Views and Making Recommendations

Following the discussion with the Cabinet Member and Officers the points below were agreed by the Panel, for submission to Cabinet on the 20 February. They will go via the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel Conveners letter.

1. We are pleased that Education continues to be one of the top priorities for Swansea Council, because we feel it as vitally important if we are to make the most of the City Deal as we build for future generations.
2. We were pleased to hear that the budget will see an increase in monies going to education and schools and will cover Teachers pay grant, Teachers pension costs and the pay increase for non-teaching staff. We were also pleased to hear about the grant of £4 million from Welsh Government for Capital Maintenance Repairs to our schools.
3. We agreed with the Cabinet Member that the aspiration of a three-year budget settlement for education is important and believe that we must continue to push for this at every opportunity. The benefit to schools (and education more widely) of being able to plan over three years cannot be underestimated.
4. We were pleased to hear about the work carried out with and between primary schools, secondary schools and the budget forum following the budget settlement. We felt that schools should be congratulated for their culture of working together not only in this but also in supporting each other to succeed.
5. We would like to thank Schools, Governors and the Education Improvement Service for their excellent work over the past year. Particularly how they have been able to grasp the challenges and move forward delivering good quality education here in Swansea.
6. We are pleased about the new cycle / walkways that are being developed across Swansea. However, there was concern that it was being proposed to remove free school transport for some pupils because:
 - a) Lighting and safety of walking routes in winter because of our role in safeguarding pupils.
 - b) Possible increase in traffic around those schools concerned, as parents may start to drive children to school when school buses are no longer available.
 - c) We were concerned that the estimated potential savings from stopping the provision of school buses, in these three areas, has already be taken out of budget.

Issues for response from Cabinet Member:

How sure are you that the savings projected in relation to the three new safe walking routes to school will be realised and if they are not, what impact will this have on the overall education budget?

The meeting ended at 11.10 am