



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the Education & Skills Policy Development Committee

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday, 16 June 2021 at 4.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor M Durke (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

J P Curtice  
L R Jones  
M B Lewis

**Councillor(s)**

F M Gordon  
M A Langstone  
S Pritchard

**Councillor(s)**

B Hopkins  
H Lawson  
D W W Thomas

**Officer(s)**

Gareth Borsden  
Helen Morgan-Rees  
Stephanie Williams

Democratic Services Officer  
Director of Education  
Principal Lawyer

**Apologies for Absence**

None.

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**4 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.

**5 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Education & Skills Policy Development Committee's held on 12 & 20 May 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**6 Workplan 2021/2022.**

The Chair welcomed all members and officers to the meeting and outlined that he hoped the committee could build on its good working relationship over the past few years and continue to work together and develop the foundations set by the previous Chair, Councillor Robert Smith who was the new Cabinet Member for Education, Learning & Skills.

He indicated that the report agreed at the previous meeting on Supporting Education Recovery was being presented to Cabinet on Thursday 17 June 2021 by Councillor Smith.

He referred to the recent Welsh Government announcement which promoted well-being objectives, which was to be welcomed. This would give the topic a greater

national overview and focus. <https://gov.wales/written-statement-renew-and-reform-supporting-learners-well-being-and-progression>

He outlined that the Education Scrutiny Panel had suggested that this committee could potentially give consideration to the topic of learning champions/mentors for review during this municipal year, and this had been briefly discussed at the previous meeting of this committee.

Helen Morgan-Rees indicated that the topic could be worth some exploration and discussion by Members as it could tie in with the overall issue and theme of education recovery after Covid and beyond.

The recovery plan work in Swansea contained in the Cabinet report referred to above, includes references to the disruption to learning that young people have suffered, insecure foundations to learning due to the disruption of learning provision during the pandemic, a lack of progression for learners, and inequality issues with some young people facing much greater challenges and barriers to learning during Covid.

She indicated that the need and potential ways on how to re-engage learners in the education process following Covid is one that would be worthwhile being discussed and developed. The issue of how young people could be better supported and their aspirations raised not only by school/parents/families etc, but by the wider community and various multi agency partners is one worth debating. The potential establishment of a community learning mentor or champion could prove a valuable resource.

The input from certain schools who are already developing ideas along these lines, along with those from external agencies and partners should be sought.

Members discussed the proposal and indicated that any ideas or policies that could be developed to prevent young people from being disaffected and stimulate their interest in learning and achieving was too be welcomed, especially the more vulnerable pupils. They indicated that during Covid the importance many young people placed on education and learning was to be welcomed and encouraged.

The Chair indicated that the committee needs to, where possible identify any examples of good practice in this field, both local and nationally if possible, and suggested that following a recommendation from Professor Alma Harris in Swansea University that the Committee should receive evidence from Professor Chris Chapman of Glasgow University and he referred to his internally recognised work on "Neighbourhood Scotland" and "Equity and Educational Effectiveness in Scotland".

The Chair also suggested that the substance misuse organisation called Barod would be a useful group to receive evidence from, on the effects on young people of substance misuse and its impact on them.

He also indicated that input and submissions from South Wales Police and the wider Police Service would also be welcomed, particularly around the issues of preventing

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and supporting vulnerable young people from getting involved in the criminal justice system.

**Agreed** that further to the discussions and suggestions above, the Chair liaise with the Democratic Services Officer on arrangements for the next and future meetings, and the agendas be confirmed subject to the availability of the individuals and organisations noted above.

The meeting ended at 4.37 pm

**Chair**