



## **EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH  
ON TUESDAY, 3RD JULY 2018 AT 5.30PM.**

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PRESENT:

Councillor D. Havard - Chair  
Councillor C. Andrews - Vice-Chair

Councillors:

A. Collis, S. Cook, A. Farina-Childs, B. Miles, T. Parry, J.E. Roberts, R. Saralis, J. Simmonds and R. Whiting

Together with:

R. Edmunds (Director of Education and Corporate Services), (K. Cole (Chief Education Officer), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), S. Mutch (Early Years Manager), E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer) and K. Houghton (Committee Services Officer).

Also Present:

Co-opted Members: M. Barry (Parent Governors), R. Morgan (Parent Governors), J. Havard and M. Western (Cardiff ROC Archdiocesan Commission for Education Representative)

E. Pryce (EAS), J. Wood (EAS), M. Jones (The Parent Network), Tracey Wallbank (PETRA) and Ffion Wallbank (PETRA)

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Marsden (Cabinet Member for Education and Achievement), P.J. Bevan, W. David, D.T. Hardacre, M.P. James and G.D. Oliver. Also, P.J. Ireland (NUT) and D. Davies (Caerphilly Governors Association),

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

### **3. MINUTES – EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor T. Parry requested a correction to the minutes. She is noted as an apology in the minutes however she was present for the meeting.

Subject to the aforementioned correction it was moved and seconded that the minutes of the 22nd May 2018 be approved as a correct record and by show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that subject to the aforementioned correction the minutes of the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Tuesday the 22nd May 2018 (minute nos. 1-13) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**4. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE**

There were no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

**5. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER**

It was noted that an apology for absence had been received from Councillor P. Marsden, Cabinet Member for Education and Achievement; as such the report previously circulated was noted without comment. Members were asked to provide any feedback directly to Councillor Marsden via e-mail.

**6. EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Senior Committee Services Officer presented the report which outlined the draft Education for Life Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme from July 2018 to April 2019.

Members were asked to consider the work programme and make any amendments or propose any additional items to be included for future meetings.

Following consideration, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the work programme appended to the report be approved.

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

Consideration was given to the following reports.

**7. SUMMARY OF ESTYN INSPECTION UNDER THE NEW COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK (CIF) – SEPT 2017 TO MAY 2018**

K. Cole, E. Pryce and J. Wood introduced the report which presented the judgements made by Estyn inspection teams of Caerphilly schools for the academic year 2017-2018 (where published) under the new common inspection framework introduced in September 2017.

Members were advised that, to date, only 8 schools have had published inspection reports issued with another 4 expected in due course. As a result the sample size for the data shown in the report is based only on those initial 8 schools.

Mr Pryce drew particular attention to 4.12 of the report which showed the results of the Caerphilly Borough schools inspected under the new framework in comparison with the school's national categorisation at the time of inspection. Llanfabon Infants School was highlighted as the only significant disparity between the National Categorisation and the Estyn judgement.

K. Cole acknowledged the hard work undertaken by those schools that had moved out of the 'Significant Improvement' category. It was felt that the recent Estyn inspection results reflected a promising picture for primary schools in Caerphilly Borough. The picture for secondary schools was less positive and further support in this area would be needed. Reference was made to Lewis School Pengam and Members were advised that the Authority is working closely with the school through the Improvement Board and its Estyn Improvement Plan.

The Chair thanked K. Cole, E. Pryce and J. Wood for their presentation and Members questions were welcomed.

Members queried the timescales and process for informing the Committee of adverse Estyn judgements. Estyn judgements are published up to 44 days after the inspection and are highly confidential until the point they are in the public domain. This makes it a complicated process in terms of informing interested parties when an adverse inspection report is expected prior to publication. If information is leaked prior to publication then the inspection becomes invalid and would need to be undertaken again. The current procedure is to meet with the school's Senior Management Team, Ward Members and Cabinet Member the day before publication to prepare a public statement and formulate a plan to manage public reaction. This procedure is only carried out if an Estyn judgement has placed a school in either the 'Significant Improvement' or 'Special Measures' categories.

Members sought an update on progress made by Bedwas High School and what issues remain. The Chief Education Officer confirmed that the Local Authority worked closely with the Headteacher in the first instance to send a letter of reassurance to all parents on the day the inspection report was released. The school continues to be supported and receives a monitoring visit from Estyn once a term followed by a letter identifying progress made. Results so far have been positive with some areas still to improve. A new Headteacher has been appointed and will be in post for the beginning of the 2018 Autumn term.

Concerns were raised as to the quality and impacts of using supply staff in schools. Members were advised that the Headteacher of a school is responsible for managing the provision of supply staff. If the school is well managed then the impact on students would be minimal. Schools tend to have a pool of trusted supply teachers that they pull from when needed. It was noted that Estyn inspections do not make allowances for supply teachers and they would be judged on the same standards as if they were a permanent member of staff, thus contributing to the school's whole performance in the event of an inspection. Mrs Cole confirmed that schools often work together to support staff shortages through staff secondments and schools using grant funding to employ a 'floating' teacher who has knowledge of the school and pupils who can step into classes when substitution is needed. Schools are also being encouraged to include supply staff in training and development opportunities within the school.

Clarification was sought as to why there could be such a level of disparity between the EAS expected outcomes and Estyn Inspection outcomes as recently experienced at Llanfabon Infants School. The difference between a schools target setting methodology and the Estyn Inspection framework were explained and it was acknowledged that these would usually run along similar lines. In this instance the outcome had not been anticipated and this would need to be addressed from a lessons learned perspective. Members were assured that the EAS were working closely with the school in light of the inspection outcomes and this would include more robust target setting in order to move forward in a positive way, placing greater emphasis on the views of teachers, parents and pupils.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

## 8. WELLBEING OBJECTIVE 2017-18

S. Mutch reported on the full year implementation of the Wellbeing Objective 2017-18 which sought Members' agreement as to whether the judgement of 'partially successful' has been achieved. The Officer confirmed that significant progress had been made in completing the five aims identified within the objective. Four out of five aims have been completed however Wellbeing Objective aim 2 has not been fully achieved. This aim is 'to improve outcomes for all learners, particularly those vulnerable to underachievement'. Significant progress has been made in this area but improvement is still required particularly in the area of education indicators at Key Stage 4, despite improvements in the Local Authority's ranked position against other local authorities. For these reasons a judgement of partial success has been made.

S. Mutch went on to focus the presentation on the success of the Parents Engaging To Raise Aspirations (PETRA) project. Jointly funded through Communities First, Families First and Flying Start the Parent Network have been commissioned to undertake this project. The Parent Network has now established PETRA as a social enterprise funded by a multitude of partners including local authority areas. The project works with small groups of parents and partners them with authors and illustrators to produce children's books tackling a number of issues such as friendship, mental health, climate change, dementia and transgender. Each group receives training prior to developing their book in order to develop their understanding of the structure of a story and story telling. This has resulted in developing aspirations, skills and confidence in the parents which has in turn been passed on to the children, bringing books into the home, as well as communities, schools and libraries. The project has also engaged with final year student Illustrators at the University of Cardiff to produce artwork for the books and provide the students with an opportunity to develop their portfolio of work.

The books have been received well and are supported by the Welsh Book Council with a commission to sympathetically translate four books into Welsh. In addition, PETRA is working with Gelligaer Community Council to produce a book. This is the first time the project has been approached by a Community Council to work on a book and will also be the first to be written in Welsh first.

A case study highlighting PETRA's success for one family was presented with F. Wallbank the daughter of one of the projects parents providing the committee with a reading from a book in both English and Welsh.

The Chair thanked S. Mutch, M. Jones, T. Wallbank and F. Wallbank for their presentation and Members questions were welcomed.

A Member raised concerns regarding the engagement with final year student illustrators at the University of Cardiff, in what is a critical year in their studies and the use of professional illustrators in some cases. The Officer confirmed that professional illustrators and storytellers have been engaged to run workshops and develop the skills of the projects participants and this has been very successful. PETRA is currently liaising with Crosskeys College, looking at opportunities to involve local student illustrators in producing the books.

A Member enquired as to the promotion of this project and the books and was advised that this has been deliberately kept 'low-key' in order to allow the project to grow organically and not expand too quickly.

An Officer highlighted that there is a quarterly meeting of the Community Councils within the Borough and that a presentation from PETRA in this forum could be valuable. The next meeting will take place on 11 November 2018.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and the judgement of partially successful at the full year stage in respect of the Well-being Objective assessment be agreed.

The meeting closed at 18:52pm

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2018 they were signed by the Chair.

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CHAIR