



EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON MONDAY, 26TH SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 5.30 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor T. Parry - Chair
Councillor J. Rao - Vice-Chair

Councillors:

E. M. Aldworth, C. Bishop, A. Farina-Childs, A. Gair, M. P. James, B. Miles, L. Phipps,
M. Powell, J. E. Roberts, J. Winslade and K. Woodland.

Cabinet Members:

Councillor C. Andrews (Education and Communities) and J. Pritchard (Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change).

Together with:

Officers: R. Edmunds (Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), S. Ellis (Lead for Inclusion and ALN), A. West (21st Century Schools Manager), P. Warren (Strategic Lead for School Improvement), L. Thomas (21st Century Schools - Principal Officer), J. Southcombe (Finance Manager), Victoria Bodenham (School Improvement Officer), Jamie Duggan (Assistant Head – Idris Davies 3-18 School), C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Manager), S. Hughes (Committee Services Officer), J. Lloyd (Committee Services Officer) and R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer).

RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting would be live-streamed and a recording made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items - [Click here to view](#). The Committee was advised that voting on decisions would be taken via Microsoft Forms.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson and C. Gordon, together with Mr M. Western (Cardiff ROC Archdiocesan Commission for Education).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES – 5TH JULY 2022

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Education Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5th July 2022 be approved as a correct record. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 10 votes for, 0 votes against and 1 abstention) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Education Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5th July 2022 (minute numbers 1-9) 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 had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

5. EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Manager presented the report which outlined details of the Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the period September 2022 to March 2023 and included all reports that were identified at the Education Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5th July 2022. Members were asked to consider the Forward Work Programme, alongside the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, prior to publication on the Council's website.

The Scrutiny Committee was advised of the special meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee scheduled for 19th October 2022 to consider the Education Strategy report.

A request was made for a general update on the 21st Schools Programme and Members were advised that the Scrutiny Manager would liaise with Officers to identify a suitable date.

A Member informed the Scrutiny Committee of the Live Vacancy Event scheduled for 7th November 2022 and suggested inviting the Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator to a future meeting.

Following consideration of the report, and in noting the two additional items, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme be published on the Councils' website.

6. CABINET REPORTS

None of the Cabinet reports listed on the agenda had been called forward for discussion at the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

7. SAFEGUARDING

The Cabinet Member for Education and Communities introduced the report to update Members regarding safeguarding developments in 2021/22.

The Committee was advised that safeguarding children and young people is a key statutory duty of the Council and is embodied in the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 and Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019). The Local Authority has a responsibility to promote a culture of safeguarding by ensuring that its range of statutory responsibilities and non-statutory responsibilities are met. The report explained that the LA works in partnership with Children's Services, Health, Police, education providers, HR, parents/carers and other partners to ensure that there is a robust multi agency approach towards safeguarding arrangements. It was highlighted that safeguarding is a priority and the report apprised Members with the details of relevant work undertaken in this area

Following consideration of the item, the Education Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the report.

8. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING PROGRAMME – TRINITY FIELDS SCHOOL EXPANSION UPDATE REPORT

The Cabinet Member for Education and Communities introduced the report to update Scrutiny Members on a proposed amendment to the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme Band B proposal for the expansion of Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre. The Cabinet Member for Education and Communities provided an overview of the current progress and Members were advised that due to a number of factors outlined in the report, the proposal sought to amend the previously endorsed decision of Cabinet on 7th April 2021 to expand the school on to the Council owned sports pitch adjacent to the existing school site. It was noted that the report will be considered by Cabinet on 5th October 2022 and as key consultees the views of the Scrutiny Committees were sought on the amended plans.

Reference was made to the financial implications and a Member asked what contingency plans are in place to consider the increasing cost of building materials. The Head of Education Planning and Strategy advised the Committee of significant pressures in the building industry. It was explained that when the project is at tender stage a further business case will be submitted to Welsh Government for increased funding, should the need arise. Despite initial budget estimates for the proposal being based on the latest Welsh Government cost standards, projects currently in progress are demonstrating that works are coming in above and beyond the estimate. Members were assured that Officers are used to dealing with these instances and have a clear process to follow.

During the course of discussion, a Member sought further details on the financial implications, relating to any cost savings, when comparing the original option against the alternative configuration for build. The Head of Education Planning and Strategy advised the Scrutiny Committee that Welsh Government and Members had previously agreed in principle to earmark £12.5 million for the Trinity Fields School expansion and if the scheme, as originally outlined, had progressed it would not have been achievable at that cost. Members were informed that the current estimate for the alternative configuration for build is at £7 million, although it was highlighted that this is an outline figure at this stage which is expected to increase. However, despite cost pressures, it is anticipated to be delivered close to the original £12.5 million that has already been allocated.

In response to a question regarding the creation of a second special school in the borough, the Head of Education Planning and Strategy advised the Scrutiny Committee that this would be considered under Band C of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. Members were informed that an estimate could not be provided at this point in time; however, it would be well over £12.5 million, and would be subject to consultation and further business case approval by Welsh Government

Clarification and further details were sought in relation to the timescale for the Band C Programme. The Scrutiny Committee was informed that the original indication for B and C was 2026, but Welsh Government has indicated to local authorities that they are changing it to more of a rolling program.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

The Education Scrutiny Committee:

- a) Considered and scrutinised the information contained in the report.
- b) Endorsed the recommendation to Cabinet to expand Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre via a two-storey extension on part of the School Car Park.
- c) Asked Officers to investigate a longer-term option to create a 2nd Special School in the Borough under Band C of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.

The meeting closed at 5.55 pm.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 14th February 2023 they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR