

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale on Wednesday 25th October 2017 at 5 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor W.Lewis – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

J. Brencher	J. Harries	S. Rees
A. Calvert	L Hooper	
H. Fychan	S. Powell	

Non – Committee Member in Attendance

County Borough Councillor J. Rosser – Cabinet Member Education and Lifelong Learning.

County Borough Councillor G. Thomas – Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny

Co-opted Members

Mr.J.Fish – Voting Elected Parent/Governor Representative

Officers in Attendance

Ms E. Thomas Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

Mr P Nicholls – Head of Legal – Litigation, Planning & Environment, Community and Children's Services

Ms A. Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools

Ms C. Hutcheon, Head of Youth Engagement and Participation and SEET Service

Mrs G. Zecca-Hanagan – 21st Century Schools Support Officer

Ms C Hendy – Democratic Services Officer

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from: County Borough Councillor S.Rees-Owen, S.Evans and Co- opted Member Mr S Jones

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED - In accordance with the Code of Conduct, there were no personal declarations of interests made, pertaining to the agenda.

25. OFFICER ANNOUNCEMENT

With the agreement of the Chair the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning announced to Members that Ms Luisa Martin-Thomas from Tonypany Community College has won Gold in the UK Pearson's award in the secondary school teacher category. Another teacher Mr Nathan Keeble from Aberdare Community School was also in the running after winning the outstanding young teacher award in Wales. It's pleasing to note that the talent and dedication of teachers in schools in RCT is being recognised nationally.

Members **RESOLVED** to send a letter of congratulations to both staff for their achievements.

26. MINUTES

RESOLVED – to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee of the 27th September 2017.

27. REPORT IN RESPECT OF THE SCHOOL HOILDAY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

The Head of 21st Century Schools provided Members with a report in respect of the provision of the School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP) pilot scheme which is also known as the food and fun programme. The Scheme was held in Heol y Celyn Primary School and Penywaun Primary School over the summer holidays.

It was explained to Members of the Committee that in January 2017, Welsh Government (WG) announced that it was committing £5,000 to further roll out the 'Food and Fun Programme' in 2017. Members were informed that the programme was coordinated by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), working closely with Local Authorities and partner agencies including Cwm Taf University Local Health Board.

The Head of 21st Century Schools explained that in March this year, the Council successfully submitted a funding application to the WLGA to pilot the SHEP in two schools in RCT namely Heol Y Celyn and Penywaun Primary schools. Both schools were selected due to the high percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. Members were informed that the scheme took place over four weeks during the school holidays and at the end of the pilot feedback was extremely positive. It was

explained that the Council will submit another funding application to the WLGA next year for further funding to deliver SHEP to more schools across RCT.

Members asked questions and were pleased to hear that the scheme had made a positive impact on both pupils and parents.

Members agreed that if funding allowed, there should be an increase in the number of schools participating in the SHEP subject to the Council successfully submitting a funding application to the WLGA.

Members thanked Officer for their hard work and after in depth consideration **RESLOVED** to receive a report at a future meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

28. OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN EDUCATED OTHER THAN SCHOOL (EOTAS)

The Service Director Access, Engagement and Inclusion presented the Committee with the Outcomes for Children Educated Other Than School (EOTAS). It was explained to Members that each local authority has to make arrangements for the provision of suitable education other than school for those children of compulsory school age who by reason of illness, exclusion from school or other, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them.

Members were informed that in Rhondda Cynon Taf the EOTAS provision is usually provided by means of a placement in a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), or through access to group or individual tuition. It was explained that Rhondda Cynon Taf has one primary and one secondary PRU. The Primary PRU, Tai Education Centre, is situated in Penygraig and the Secondary PRU, Ty Gwyn, relocated from Glyncoch to the old site of Aberdare High School in September 2016.

Members were pleased to see that both schools are currently categorised as green schools within the National Categorisation System and requires the lowest level of school improvement support from Central South Consortium.

Members scrutinised the report in-depth and put forward their questions to officers in respect of provision for pupils whose main education is other than at school. Members put their concerns forward in respect of Key Stage 2 outcome data. In respect of Key Stage 3 outcome data, Members were pleased to see an improvement in mathematics in 2016/17 however it was expressed that they would like to see more improvement at the end of Key Stage 3.

Members considered the provisional data for Key Stage 4 outcomes for Ty Gwyn, Group and Individual Tuition. It was highlighted that the new redefined performance measures for Key Stage 4 (outlined in Section 10.1) had not been applied to the threshold measures reported in Section 10.2 (Table 8). In light of this error and the provisional nature of the data, members were advised that revised datasets would be re-presented to Scrutiny Committee in January 2018 once all Key Stage 4 data for all schools had been verified by Welsh Government in December 2017.

Members acknowledged that there has been a significant improvement in the provisional number of learners achieving Level 1 and 2 Threshold however there is still work more work to be done in ensuring that more learners achieve Level 2 + Threshold.

In respect of attendance data, Members raised concern in respect of the slight drop in both primary and secondary attendance in PRU settings. Officers explained to Members that many of the learners attending EOTAS provision had significant and complex needs including high levels of anxiety relating to school attendance, participation in learning and/or social interaction.

After further discussion Member **RESOLVED** to:

- Acknowledge the information contained in the report
- Receive a further report for Key Stage 4 outcome data in January
- Receive case studies to view the impact and progress made by pupils.

29. YOUNG PEOPLE'S ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN RCT

The Head of the Youth Engagement and Participation Service presented the report to Members. It was explained to Members that the Council has a statutory duty to provide youth services for 11 -25 year olds.

Members were also informed that the Service has been subject to two service changes as part of the Council's Medium Term Service Planning arrangements.

The aim of the Youth Engagement and Participation Service is to support young people aged 11 to 25 year to achieve their full potential and overcome barriers to learning progression. Members were informed on how the service is delivered to young people across the authority and what has been achieved through out 2016/17. Members were very pleased to see the good work the service has done with the young people within Rhondda Cynon Taf and asked what could be done to encourage greater uptake of the service.

Members were shown a slide show of the work both pupils and staff have achieved. Members congratulated the service on the awards received. After further scrutiny Members **RESOLVED** to:

- Accept the content of the report.
- Meet with a group of young people who access the service to find out their view on how the authority can improve
- Receive an updating report in a future Meeting.

W. Lewis (Chair)
Meeting closed at 7:15pm