



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 20TH NOVEMBER
2019

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES
MUSIC SERVICE PROVISION IN RCT REPORT

Author: - Martyn Silezin, 14-19 Strategy Officer
(Tel No 01443 281165)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide Members with feedback on the Music Services provision in RCT.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Scrutinise and comment on the information contained within this report.
- 2.2 Consider if any further information is required.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To raise Members' awareness of the Music Service.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Music service was reorganised in 2015 and now consists of a coordinator, a part time administration assistant and 20 tutors.
- 4.2 The Service provides an instrument hire service, individual instrument tuition, small group instrument provision, preparation for the practical element for GCSE, singing tuition, whole class instrument tuition, choral

groups, ensemble leading and whole class curriculum provision. The Service also provides a number of ensembles outside the school day including a string group, a foundation orchestra, a senior orchestra and a community choir.

- 4.3 Whilst the emphasis is mostly on orchestral instruments, there is a thriving provision for guitar, drums, recorder and ukulele. The service makes every effort to meet all reasonable requests for any musical experience but is limited by the availability of suitable instruments and tutors.
- 4.4 The Service receives £129,000 to run these services and supplements this with Service Level Agreements with schools, direct payment from learners, revenue from concerts, support from the Friends of RCT Youth Music and any grants that the service is successful in obtaining.
- 4.5 As a direct response from schools who have difficulty in finding the administration time to collect monies from their learners, we have developed a Parent Pay Scheme where payments may be made through the website or over the phone directly to the authority.
- 4.6 Currently the service provides in 47 primary schools, 7 Secondary schools and 3 all through schools. Ensembles are provided after school on a Friday and engages 94 learners and the community choir on a Thursday evening which engages over 50 learners. The Service currently engages with 2373 musicians, of which 311 (13.1%) claim free school meals (eFSM).
- 4.7 Despite the falling trend in the number of learners taking up instruments in the rest of Wales, in RCT 1090 learners were involved in 2016-17, 1730 in 2017-18 and 1861 in 2018-19.
- 4.8 The service prepares learners for their grading examinations for the ABRSM and the Trinity examination modes. In 2018-19 101 were successful in the ABRSM examination and 26 for the Trinity Board.
- 4.9 All provision within schools is established through full consultation with individual schools in order to meet their needs. The learners that engage with the service are selected by the school and the times are negotiated to suit both parties.
- 4.10 Schools have the option of using their Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) or their Educational Improvement Grant (EIG) to provide musical provision for their learners.
- 4.11 All ensemble engagement for learners on Free School Meals (eFSM) is provided free of charge.
- 4.12 Instrument hire is very successful and affords new learners access to quality instruments at a reasonable price whilst they decide if they wish

to continue with that instrument. Although the service does not make a monetary concession for those on eFSM, payments may be spread throughout the year, schools could use their PDG or EIG, or the learner may apply to the Friends of RCT Music for the full cost of the hire.

- 4.13 The Service has currently benefitted from a one off grant of £120,000 from the Welsh Government (WG). This money has been used to improve the instrument stock and to provide whole class tuition free to targeted schools with the view to increasing participation. Not all schools in the first phase took up the offer. A second phase has been planned but the WG has yet to confirm the funding.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as the contents of this report are for information purposes only.

6. CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 No consultation exercises have been undertaken.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 As the number of learners increases there will be increased pressures on tutors, administration and coordination that may require increasing the staffing in this area.
- 7.2 As whole class tuition increases in popularity there will be an increasing need for whole class sets for instruments.
- 7.3 Monies from the Welsh Government are a one off and no firm plan is in place for the future.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP

- 9.1 Educational performance has a clear link to the Council's priority of Building a Strong Economy. Improving educational performance will have a positive impact on this priority.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The majority of schools engage with the Music Service and 2,373 musicians are involved, of which 13.1% are eligible for eFSM. Increasing numbers of learners are taking up musical instrument tuition

despite a national trend of diminishing numbers. Learners who are eFSM are able to access ensembles free of charge and schools can use PDG and EIG to provide music tuition for disadvantaged learners.

- 10.2 The Music Service in Rhondda Cynon Taf continues to be core funded and is supplemented with a Service Level Agreement with schools and other funding streams to ensure its sustainability.
- 10.3 Moving forward, the service will undertake an audit of the number of schools who are utilising the PDG and EIG to fund access to the Music Service and will continue to encourage schools to explore innovative approaches to ensuring equality of access to musical opportunities.