

LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 14th November, 2019.

Present: Councillor G.C. Kemp (Chairman); Councillor Ms. R.M. Birch (Vice—Chairman); Councillors A.R.T. Davies, S.J. Griffiths, N.P. Hodges, T.H. Jarvie, Mrs. S.D. Perkes and N.C. Thomas.

Co-opted Members: Mrs. J. Lynch-Wilson (Parent Governor – Primary Sector), Dr. M. Price (Roman Catholic Church).

Non-voting Observers: Mr. I. Cramb and Mr. T. Froud (Vale Youth Forum).

Also present: Councillor L. Burnett (Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration).

446 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors Mrs. J.M. Norman and A.C. Parker and Mr. H. Gapper (Welsh Medium Education).

447 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 17th October, 2019 be approved as a correct record.

448 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillor Mrs. S.D. Perkes declared an interest in relation to Agenda Item 5 – Summary of School Inspections for Summer Term 2019. The nature of the interest was that Councillor Perkes was a Local Authority appointed Governor for Jenner Park Primary School. Councillor Perkes had received dispensation from the Standards Committee to speak and vote on such matters.

449 DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN 2020-25 (REF) –

Cabinet, on 21st October, 2019 had approved a new draft Vale of Glamorgan Council Corporate Plan for 2020-25.

The report set out how the Council had developed the draft Corporate Plan for 2020-25 and outlined proposals for consulting on the draft Plan from 21st October, 2019 to 10th December, 2019, including involvement of all Scrutiny Committees, the Council's partners and the public.

The draft Plan set out the Council's new Wellbeing Objectives which were a requirement under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and framed how the Council would contribute to the National Wellbeing Goals and deliver its vision for strong communities with a bright future.

The plan set out the proposed new well-being objectives which were:

- To work with and for our communities
- To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth
- To support people at home and in their community
- To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment.

For each objective, the draft Plan set out a definition of the objective and the actions we would take over the five years to achieve them.

In developing the draft Plan, it was proposed that in response to feedback received that a new approach to corporate planning be adopted by producing an Annual Delivery Plan to accompany the overarching five-year plan.

The more detailed Annual Delivery Plan would be published each Spring and detailed the key activities that would be undertaken to deliver on the commitments in the Corporate Plan. This would directly inform individual Service Plans which were also produced annually and contained annual performance measures and targets.

Proposals relating to the performance management arrangements, including the approach to the Annual Delivery Plan, would be developed in the coming months with engagement being undertaken with elected Members and senior officers.

A Committee Member referred to Objective 2 outlined on page 25 of Appendix A and stated that there was not much reference to Adult Community Learning. In addition, the Member stated that there should be greater reference to who the Council would be working with and how Objective 2 would be met. In reply, the Head of Standards and Provision stated that the Member's comments would be fed back. Further to this point, the Cabinet Member, with permission to speak, stated that it was important to recognise that the Council was under financial pressures and so it would be useful for the Scrutiny Committee to have a presentation on Adult Community Learning and the work being undertaken to assist people back to work.

A Committee Member stated that she liked the cross-cutting themes within the Corporate Plan and in reference to Objective 2, she was pleased to see economic growth had been linked to mental health and emotional wellbeing which would assist people suffering from mental health to get back into work.

In relation to Objective 4 and the aim to respect, enhance and enjoy the environment, a Committee Member referred to the reference of preserving the cultural heritage of the Vale and he queried how the Council would influence this and whether there would be greater regard to protecting cultural heritage within the planning process.

A Committee Member referred to the projection for the number of households in the Vale which showed that there was a large increase in the number of people aged 65 and over while at the same time, showing a reduction in the number of children. The Member queried whether this indicated that there would be a surplus in school placements. In reply, the Head of Standards and Provision stated that the Member was correct, and that projections would impact on the number of school placements but further work in relation to demographics would be undertaken by the Department. In relation to this, the Cabinet Member, with permission to speak, stated that census projection figures were available on the internet. In addition the Public Service Board (PSB) would also publish information. It was important to recognise that the figures within the draft Corporate Plan were a 'snapshot' and it was recognised that there were some gaps in information, particularly in relation to healthy living. In addition, the Cabinet Member stated that the Policy Team would be able to assist if Members had any specific queries. Further to this query, a Committee Member referred to the number of out of county placements in the Vale, and she stated that she would like to see the actual figures for this.

The Chairman stated that it would be better if the Corporate Plan contained actual figures.

There was a general consensus amongst the Committee that the Corporate Plan was aspirational and the Committee wished to send its congratulations to the Policy Team for drafting the new Corporate Plan. Members of the Committee commented that the Corporate Plan did not contain many specific actions, and were advised that the Annual Delivery Plan and Service Plan would contain greater detail on how the Objectives would be achieved.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the draft Corporate Plan (contained in Appendix A), the summary (contained in Appendix B) and the Equality Impact Scoping Assessment (Appendix C) be endorsed.

Reason for recommendation

To ensure the Council has an effective and up to date Corporate Plan which reflects the work being undertaken across the Council to improve the quality of life in the Vale of Glamorgan.

450 SUMMARY OF SCHOOL INSPECTIONS FOR SUMMER TERM 2019 (DLS) –

The Committee was provided an update on the outcomes of school inspections for the Summer term 2019.

The report outlined that Estyn inspected quality and standards in education across Wales using the Common Inspection Framework. Estyn inspected all providers at

least once during the seven-year period which began on 1st September, 2016. The date of a school's inspection was not linked to the date of the previous inspection. In the summer term, two primary schools (Jenner Park Primary and St. David's Church in Wales Primary) were inspected. Jenner Park Primary was judged to be good in four inspection areas and adequate and needed improvement in one area. St. David's Church in Wales Primary was judged to be good in three areas and excellent in two.

During the summer term the overall judgements achieved by Vale of Glamorgan schools which were inspected were as follows:

School	Inspection Area 1: standards	Inspection Area 2: wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Inspection Area 3: teaching and learning experiences	Inspection Area 4: care, support and guidance	Inspection Area 5: leadership and management
Jenner Park Primary	Good	Adequate and needs improvement	Good	Good	Good
St. David's CiW Primary	Good	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Good

No follow up work was identified in any of the above inspections.

Where Estyn identified excellent practice during an inspection, schools were invited to prepare a written case study which would be published by Estyn and shared with other schools. Excellent practice was identified in St. David's Church in Wales Primary; however, they were not invited to write a case study.

There were no schools identified as requiring significant improvement or special measures.

Appendix 3 provided an overall summary of Estyn activity in the Vale of Glamorgan since the introduction of the new inspection framework in September 2017.

The Chairman referred to the inspection of Jenner Park Primary School and inspection area 2 and asked for clarification regarding the combination of wellbeing and attitudes to learning. In reply, the Committee was advised that within this inspection area, Estyn would consider the attitude of pupils and whether they were able to make independent choices. In addition, pupil attendance would also be considered which was why a judgement of adequate had been attributed. Attendance was below the Welsh average and the school had put actions in place in order to address this. In addition, the Head of Standards and Provision stated that the wording of inspection area 2 could be better as it raised a negative connotation.

The Committee noted that Estyn would've taken account of the two Special Needs classes at Jenner Park Primary School.

A Member stated that it was important to recognise that there had not been a need to form any Performance Panels since 2017, and he queried which other schools had Estyn planned to visit. In reply, the Senior Challenges Advisor stated that Cogan would be visited the following week and Barry Island a week after that. Holton Road had already been inspected and the outcomes of these inspections would be reported to Committee during the next quarter.

Having considered the report, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the inspection judgements about the schools inspected during the Summer term be noted.

Reason for recommendation

In order that Members are aware of Estyn judgements about local schools.

451 WELSH GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGIC EQUALITY OBJECTIVES –
DRAFT CONSULTATION RESPONSE (MD) –

The Corporate Equalities Officer presented the report, the purpose of which was to allow Members of the Scrutiny Committee to consider and contribute to the Council's draft response to the Welsh Government's Consultation on its Draft Strategic Equality Objectives.

The Welsh Government had set out a series of draft equality objectives in the context of long term aims:

- Elimination of inequality caused by poverty;
- Strong and progressive equality and human rights protections for everyone in Wales;
- The needs and rights of people who share protected characteristics are at the forefront of the design and delivery of all public services in Wales;
- Wales is a world leader for gender equality;
- Elimination of identity-based abuse, harassment, hate crime and bullying;
- A Wales of cohesive communities that are resilient, fair and equal;
- Everyone in Wales is able to participate in political, public, and everyday life;
- The Welsh public sector leads the way as exemplar inclusive and diverse organisations and employers.

The Welsh Government believed that these longer term aims may assist the Welsh public sector to make progress through adopting some or all of the same aims if appropriate for them to do so. This would provide opportunities to advance equality together in an integrated and strategic way, wherever possible and practical to do so.

There was a strategic equality objective for each of these long term aims and an associated measure. For each of the objectives, Welsh Government proposed that there would be a small number of key actions to demonstrate how the objective would be achieved over the period 2020 - 2024. The equality objectives were 'intersectional', recognising that people have overlapping protected characteristics. They would also be cross-cutting and interdependent. In this way the Welsh Government aimed for its work to be as inclusive as possible.

As part of the Welsh Government's consultation, respondents were asked to consider what were the greatest barriers facing those with protected characteristics in Wales; and, whether its draft equality objectives adequately captured and addressed these challenges when responding to the specific questions.

The Welsh Government was seeking to strengthen and advance equality and human rights in Wales. In this context, it intended to commence the socio-economic duty in Part One of the Equality Act 2019, to require certain Welsh public bodies (including Local Authorities) to consider the impact of their strategic decisions on the poorest people and groups. It also intended to review the Public Sector Equality Duty to ensure it was up to date, proportionate, and effective.

The Council's draft response could be found in Appendix B to the report. The draft response was broadly supportive, highlighting that the review was timely and how this had the opportunity to inform the review of the Council's Strategic Equality Objectives which were currently underway. A report on the draft Strategic Equality Objectives for the Council would be presented to Committee in due course and would consider both the Welsh Government's objectives and the recommendations in the 'Is Wales Fairer? 2018' report from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

To enable the response to the consultation to be submitted on time, it was recommended that the views of the Scrutiny Committee were referred to Cabinet and that Cabinet then considered the draft response to be submitted to Welsh Government by 19th November, 2019.

Cabinet would consider the views and recommendations of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 18th November, 2019.

A Committee Member, in referring to Appendix B and question 2 – Do you think there are any areas of inequality that are not addressed by draft Equality Objectives and that are of particular importance to you, stated that there was not much mention or specific reference to mental health, particularly in relation to these individuals finding work. The Committee agreed that this should be referred back to Cabinet.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the content of the Welsh Government's Consultation document (Appendix A) and the Council's draft response to the consultation (Appendix B) be noted.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet be advised of the Scrutiny Committee's view that the equality objectives for 2020-2024 should have greater consideration and reference to mental health as an area of inequality.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having considered the content of the Welsh Government's Consultation document and the Council's draft response.
- (2) So that there is greater consideration to mental health as an area of inequality, particularly in relation to those individuals seeking employment.

452 2ND QUARTER SCRUTINY DECISION TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATED WORK PROGRAMME SCHEDULE 2019/20 (MD) –

The Committee considered the 2nd Quarter Scrutiny Decision Tracking of Recommendations and an updated Work Programme Schedule for 2019/20.

A Committee Member queried Council funding for the Abracadabra Nursery in Rhoose. Members were advised that the nursery had been given 3 months' notice.

The Committee agreed that a presentation on Adult Community Learning would be presented at the meeting arranged for 13th February, 2020. In addition, Members requested a site visit to the new Catering Service and also a visit to High Street Primary School.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the report be noted.
- (2) T H A T subject to the inclusion of the following items of business, the work programme scheduled attached at Appendix C be approved and uploaded to the Council's website, the additions being that in February 2020 there will be a presentation on Adult Community Learning and a site visit will be arranged to the new Catering Service and to High Street Primary School.
- (3) T H A T the recommendations listed below be deemed completed:

18 July 2019	
Min. No. 170 – Support for Carers in the Vale of Glamorgan (REF) – Recommended	
That the Cabinet reference and report regarding Support for Carers in the Vale of Glamorgan be deferred to the next meeting scheduled for September.	Report considered by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 19 th September 2019. Completed
Min. No. 171 – Closure of Accounts 2018/19 (DLS) – Recommended	
(2) That information regarding the number and duration of vacant posts within the Directorate of Learning and Skills be circulated to Members of the Scrutiny Committee.	Not possible to accurately extract the information requested. For example vacancies were shown in relation to a number of Youth Service posts which were never filled. This would be misleading as the service was re-structured so, the posts no longer existed. Completed
19 September 2019	
Min. No. 305 – Support for Carers in the Vale of Glamorgan (REF) – Recommended	
(2) That the Scrutiny Committee receives a further update for its meeting in February 2020.	Added to work programme schedule. Completed

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To maintain effective tracking of the Committee's recommendations.
- (2) For information.
- (3) To maintain effective tracking of the Committee's recommendations.