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CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2016, 2.30 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting, together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk

11 **Correspondence** (*Pages 1 - 18*)

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My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

15 January 2016

Carl Davies
Home office Prevent Co-ordinator
County Hall
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Dear Carl

On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank you and Barrie Phillips, for attending the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee meeting on 12 January 2016 to present Cardiff's Prevent Strategy. After consideration of the strategy Members had the following comments:

The Committee greatly appreciated the explanation of the various elements of the strategy and considered it to be very robust. Members also noted that the Welsh Government was developing an updated guidance and self assessment tool and requested that copies be made available to the Committee as soon as it had been published.

The Committee were also pleased to hear details of the training and awareness raising that was being provided through the WRAP programme and are also aware that the Local Government Association had published a leaflet "Leading the preventing violent extremism agenda - a role made for Councillors". Members requested that specific training be developed for Councillors and be provided as soon as possible.

Finally Members did express their concern that the Prevent Strategy did not have clear links with all Council Departments, and did not seem to include unregistered Schools. Members recommended that the Strategy be reviewed to ensure that these two areas are included in the next version of the strategy.

I hope that these comments, advice and requests for information, will be of use and support the implementation of the Prevent Strategy in Cardiff. The Committee looks forward to receiving the requested information listed above together with a positive response to this letter within the next month.

To recap, this letter requests several actions, requests for information and recommendations, as follows and requires:

- A copy of the latest guidance and self assessment tool

- Training on the role of Councillors in the Prevent Strategy
- Revise the strategy to include unregistered schools and links with all Council Departments

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR – RICHARD COOK
Chairperson of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

CC Barrie Phillips – HE/FE prevent Coordinator

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

15 January 2016

Councillor Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member - Education and Skills
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
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Dear Sarah

On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank you for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 12 January 2016 to provide an opening statement and answer questions on the agenda item **Cardiff Schools Annual Report 2014/15**.

I would also like to thank Nick Batchelar and Angela Kent for their presentation of the report and answers to Members questions. Members were also pleased to welcome Hannah Woodhouse, Managing Director of the Central South Education Consortium, John Hayes, Head Teacher of Ysgol Gyfun Cymraeg Plasmawr, Helen Turner, Head Teacher Pencaerau Primary School and Kevin Tansley, Head Teacher Ty Gwyn Special School, and wished to thank them for their contribution to the scrutiny of this item.

Members raised a number of comments, concerns and recommendations for your consideration, which they asked me to write to you about.

The Committee welcomed the report and that it showed a steady and sustained improvement of performance in Cardiff. Members noted that this improvement was at a greater pace than the rest of Wales. The Committee did however note with some concern that secondary schools were not yet performing as well as primary schools, Members looked forward to an improved picture once the poor performance in three secondary schools had been addressed.

The Committee were pleased to hear from the head teachers that they felt that they were working much more closely with the Consortium. They were now working in improvement groups, were identifying and embedding good practice from other schools into their working practices, and were actively using the leadership training being offered by the Consortium. Members were also pleased to hear that pupil tracking was now embedded into schools performance improvement process and that teachers were held to account for their work.

The Members did reiterate that the categorisation of pupils by ethnicity may not be particularly useful, as some pupils were now 3rd or 4th generation. Members considered that a better category could be “pupils who can not speak English”, and suggested that you could consider using this categorisation in future reports.

The Members noted that the report did not contain information on the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework 2015 performance as well as the results of individual school. Members noted the reasons for this, but recommended that they be included when the report is presented to Cabinet. Members also asked if copies of the individual school data could be sent to Martyn Hutchings, so that he can copy them to all Members.

The Committee was surprised to hear that, in respect of the gender gap, girls performance is stronger than boys in all of the core subjects, however compared with the National Outcomes, there is a notable underperformance in the attainment of girls in English. Members requested that this inconsistency should be investigated to determine exactly what actions need to be implemented to address this issue.

In discussion around the performance of pupils for whom English is not their first language, Members wished to highlight that currently there is a very successful immersion initiative, for pupils who wish to learn Welsh. The Committee recommended that a similar initiative should be developed for pupils who can't speak English.

Finally Members noted that the Director of Education and Lifelong learning was developing a long term plan for education “Cardiff 2020” members requested that a draft of the plan be presented to this Committee in March 2016.

I hope that these comments, advice and recommendations, detailed above will be of use and support in improving outcomes for Cardiff's pupils. The Committee looks forward to receiving the requested additional information listed above and response to its recommendations; as such the Members require a formal response to this letter within the next month.

To recap, this letter requests several actions, requests for information and recommendations, as follows and requires:

- That the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework 2015 performance be included in the report to Cabinet
- That a copy of the performance of individual schools 2014/15 be sent to Martyn Hutchings, Scrutiny Services
- That the inconsistency in the National and Local Gender performance be investigated

- That an Immersion initiative, similar to that used for pupils who cannot speak Welsh, be considered for pupils who start school unable to speak English; and
- That the Director of Education and Lifelong learning presents to Committee, in March, the draft “Cardiff 2020” plan.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Cook', with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Angela Kent, OM Schools Performance
Hannah Woodhouse, Managing Director, South Central Consortium
John Hayes, Ysgol Gyfun Cymraeg Plasmawr,
Helen Turner, Pencaerau Primary School
Kevin Tansley, Ty Gwyn Special School

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My Ref / Fy Ref: CM33348

Your Ref / Eich Ref :

Date / Dyddiad: 15 February 2016

Councillor R. Cook
Chair
Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
County Hall
Atlantic wharf
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear / Annwyl Richard,

Thank you for your letter dated 15th January, 2016 following the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the 12th January, 2016 in which you request several actions, additional information and make recommendations.

You requested that:

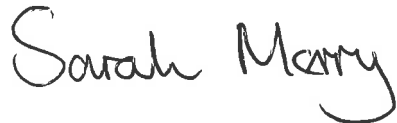
1. The National Literacy and Numeracy Framework 2015 performance be included in the report to Cabinet. The report had already been sent to the Cabinet Office prior to receipt of your letter. A copy of the report on Performance in Literacy and Numeracy 2015 has been circulated to Cabinet Members.
2. A copy of the performance of individual schools 2014/15 be sent to Martyn Hutchings, Scrutiny Services. I can confirm that this has been arranged.
3. The inconsistency in the National and Local Gender performance be investigated. This is being done by the Head of Achievement and Inclusion and the senior challenge adviser through the progress reviews with individual schools.
4. An immersion initiative, similar to that used for pupils who cannot speak Welsh, be considered for pupils who start school unable to speak English – the relevant LA officer has been contacted and will investigate the feasibility of such an initiative.



5. The Director of Education and Lifelong learning presents to Committee, in March, the draft "Cardiff 2020" plan. I am sure that the Director will welcome the opportunity to present the plan to the committee when it is sufficiently developed.

I will be discussing progress with the actions listed above in my regular meetings with education officers.

Yours sincerely
Yn gwyir



**Cllr /Y Cyng Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member for Education/
Yr Aelod Cabinet Dros Addysg
Member for Cathays /
Aelod Dros Cathays**

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

15 January 2016

Hannah Woodhouse
Interim Managing Director
Tŷ Dysgu
Cefn Coed
Parc Nantgarw
Cardiff
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Dear Hannah,

On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank you and Councillor Chris Elmore, Chairman of the Consortium Joint Committee, for attending the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee meeting on 12 January 2016 to present the Consortium's draft Self Assessment and draft Business Plan 2016/17. I would also like to thank Nick Batchelar and Angela Kent for their contribution to the discussions on the two papers. Following consideration of the report and answers to Members questions, the Committee raised the following concerns and recommendations:

The Committee noted that these papers were being reported to all five Consortium member Authorities, during this month and Members welcomed the opportunity to review the two documents at such an early stage, and be invited to provide advice and comment on their content prior to their formal approval by the Joint Committee.

The Committee reflected on the contents of the draft Business Plan 2015/16 and expressed their concern that the document lacked focus in some of the actions to address improvements. For example under improvement priority ONE, the action 'to reduce the variations in performance between schools' says 'Secure improvement at pace in red and amber support schools reflecting what works through effective intervention'. Other actions had a more detailed narrative. Members recommended that the Business Plan must include clearer explicit actions with targets, milestones and outcome measures.

Members sought further clarification of the role of challenge advisors in reducing the number of Neets, as their role had been highlighted at previous meetings. Members requested that the role must be referenced in the business plan, as a specific action, for 2016/17.

I hope that these comments, advice and requests for information, will be of use and support in improving outcomes for pupils. The Committee looks forward to receiving the requested information listed above together with a positive response to this letter within the next month.

Yours sincerely

COUNTY COUNCILLOR – RICHARD COOK
Chairperson of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

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Date 18 January 2016

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Your Ref:



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Councillor Sue Lent
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Families, Children and Early Years
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

Dear Sue

I am sorry that you were not able to attend Committee on 12 January 2016, and your apology was noted by the Committee. I would therefore like to thank Tony Young and Nicola Poole for attending Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to present the progress report on the **Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014**.

The Committee welcomed the information contained in the report and appendices and were pleased with the progress being made in implementing the requirements of the Act. Members were pleased to hear, from officers, that they had planned to provide monthly briefings to Committee, on the implementation of the six work streams that were relevant to this Committee's Terms of Reference. The Committee agreed to include these briefings in its future work programme.

Members noted that the Governance section of the briefing did not include any reference to Scrutiny's involvement, despite the commitment to bring regular briefings. The Committee requested that the Governance structure be amended to include scrutiny of the implementation of the Act.

Members had previously questioned the overall cost of the requirements of the Act as they did not feel that its implementation would be cost neutral as indicated by the Welsh Government. The Members welcomed the commitment by the Director to seek additional funding, for the implementation of the Act, as part of the 2016/17 budget.

I hope that these comments, advice and requests for information, will be of use and support in improving outcomes for children. The Committee looks forward to receiving the requested information listed above together with a positive response to this letter within the next month.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a long horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Tony Young, Director of Children's Services
Melanie Jackson - Personal Assistant to Deputy Leader
Irfan Alam – Assistant Director of Social Services

Date 22 January 2016

My Ref SS/CYP/MJH



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Councillor Peter Bradbury
Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives & Social Enterprise
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

Dear Peter

On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank you for attending the meeting on 12 January 2016 to present the Cabinet briefing paper on the **New Model for Cardiff's Play Service**. I would also like to thank Andrew Gregory, Malcolm Stammers and Jane Clemence for attending and answering Members questions. During the way forward section of the meeting Members considered the information in the report and answers to their questions, and identified a number of comments, concerns and recommendations for your consideration, as detailed below:

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to be briefed on the changes being brought in following the Budget savings decision made in February 2015 along with the Cabinet commitment that "All Play Centre's to remain open and staffed for children's play for five evenings per week until the alternative arrangements are put in place".

Members expressed their concern that the briefing paper did not seem to set out clearly how the play service and each play centre would move from its present operational model to the Play Grant Commissioning Model. Members queried this during the presentation and received further clarification, however they requested that a further briefing paper should be provided that sets out clearly the plans for the change in play service provision around each Play Centre. The Committee also requested copies of the submitted business plans, on a confidential basis, so that Members can ensure the robustness and sustainability of the proposals.

The Committee also heard from representatives from Ely and Grangetown Play Centres about their experiences of the changes to the Play Service in their areas. They both expressed concern that some of the proposals were not viable. They had not received sufficient support and advice to help them develop plans to take over the buildings and run the Play Centres and commented that they felt forced into developing business plans. Both representatives felt passionately about their Play Centres. They also felt that the move to a play grant commissioned service, with the option to provide play in alternative all-purpose community settings, would remove the child friendly, inclusive environment, with structured play areas and personalised facilities that the present Play Centres provide.

Finally Members requested a further progress report on the operation of the Play Grant Commissioning Model and provision of the Council's Play Service following the completion of the Play Sufficiency Assessment.

I hope that these comments, advice and requests for information, will be of use and support in the operation of the Play Service. The Committee looks forward to receiving the requested information listed above together with a positive response to this letter within the next month.

To recap, this letter requests several actions, requests for information and recommendations, as follows and requires:

- A further briefing paper setting out clearly the plans for the change in Play Service provision around each Play Centre;
- Copies of the submitted Business plans, on a confidential bases;
- That the views of the Play Centre representatives be sought and taken into account during the implementation of the new Play Service;
- That a further report is presented to Committee following the completion of the Play Sufficiency Assessment

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a horizontal line underneath.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Andrew Gregory, Director of City Operations
Malcolm Stammers, Operational Manager Leisure and Play
Jane Clemence – Active Communities Officer



Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM33415
Dyddiad / Date: 22nd February 2016

Councillor Richard Cook
Cardiff Council
County Hall
Cardiff
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Annwyl/Dear Councillor Cook

Cyp Scrutiny 12 Jan - New Model For Childrens Play Services

Thank you for your letter of January 22nd conceding the Scrutiny Committee's meeting regarding Children's Play.

I am quite happy for officers to provide you with a briefing paper on the provision for Play in each Neighbourhood Management area when the Centre is to be transferred after it has been agreed with local Ward members.

As to the transfer of each of the Centre's then again I am happy to provide copies of the submitted business plans which will have been considered by the Community Asset Transfer Board in recommending entering into a lease agreement although the party that we are entering into the lease agreements with will need to give their approval as well.

I note your comments regarding the views expressed by the representatives from Ely and Grangetown Play Centres. I understand that the groups feel that more support could have been given in developing their respective business cases. However we have provided development officers to work with groups, (particularly in the case of Ely via ACE) and we have also given officer support from within Leisure & Play where an individual officer has been tasked with supporting the transfer of the Centres for the past 4 months or so. In addition, some of the groups have taken advantage of the consultants available via the "Steeping Up" process to assist in developing their plans and this support is ongoing. We continue to be very conscious of the views of the community, hence our continued engagement with the various community groups expressing interest in taking responsibility for the buildings.

There is no problem at all with providing you with a further progress report on the Play Commissioning Model and also the Play Sufficiency Assessment at the

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appropriate time.

As always I would like to thank you and your Committee for their interest in the subject of Play which is so valuable to our young people.

Yn gywir
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Bradbury', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Councillor / Y Cynghorydd Peter Bradbury
Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives & Social Enterprise
Aelod Cabinet Dros Datblygu Cymunedol, Mentrau Cydweithredol a Mentrau Cymdeithasol

**SWYDDFA'R DIRPRWY ARWEINYDD
DEPUTY LEADER'S OFFICE**



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Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM33817

Eich Nghyf / Your Ref:

Dyddiad / Date: 15th March 2016

Richard Cook
Cardiff Council
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Annwyl / Dear Richard

CYP Scrutiny 12 January - Social Services And Well Being Act 2014

Thank you for your letter dated 18th January and for your positive comments on the progress being made to implement the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

I am pleased that you engaged proactively on the governance structure as this is a vital part of our preparations to ensure we have the right accountability in place on the new requirements of the Act. We are in the process of revising this structure with our partners to take account of the requirements of part 9 of the Act to establish a Regional Partnership Board. The revised structure will include reference to the involvement of Scrutiny as you have suggested.

I am also pleased to report that some additional funding has been made available as part of the budget pressures bid for 2016/17 and this will be used to enhance the Information, Advice and Assistance Service. Additional qualified officer capacity will be recruited to this service to meet the requirements of the Act.

I am looking forward to providing you with the next update briefing at the March Scrutiny meeting with more detail on this Information, Advice and Assistance Service.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely

**Councillor / Cynghorydd Sue Lent
Deputy Leader / Dirprwy Arweinydd
Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Families
Aelod Cabinet Dros Y Blynyddoedd Cynnar, Plant a Theuluoedd**

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