

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 NOVEMBER 2015

Present: Councillor Richard Cook (Chairperson), Councillors Boyle, Chaundy, Gordon, Murphy, Dianne Rees and Lynda Thorne

Co-opted Members: Mrs P Arlotte (Roman Catholic representative), Carol Cobert (Church in Wales representative), Ms Catrin Lewis (Parent Governor Representative) and Mrs Hayley Smith (Parent Governor Representative)

41 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Joyce and Councillor Morgan.

42 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairperson reminded Members of their responsibility under Part 3 of the Members' Code of Conduct. There were no declarations of interest.

43 : MINUTES

The minutes of the Committee Meeting of 13 October 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

44 : SCHOOL PERFORMANCE MONITORING - SCHOOL INSPECTIONS AND LITERACY AND NUMERACY REPORT

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Sarah Merry (Cabinet Member for Education), Nick Batchelar (Director of Education and Lifelong Learning), and Angela Kent (Head of Achievement and Inclusion).

The Committee had previously agreed to receive a series of performance monitoring reports focusing mainly on the Estyn Inspection Action Plan, but also the Annual Performance of Schools report for the last academic year.

Certain areas of performance were already available to be scrutinised and this report and appendices dealt specifically with the Outcomes from Inspections and the performance in National Literacy and Numeracy Tests.

Officers gave a presentation in respect of the outcomes of school inspected in the period September 2010 to July 2015.

The Committee were advised in relation to the Outcomes from Inspections that, whilst the report identified a number of key issues and outlined schools judged as requiring significant improvement, requiring special measures and two secondary schools where the Local Authority had taken intervention action, improvements have been made but that it was an ongoing process.

The actions being undertaken in partnership with the Central South Consortium were outlined in the report and the Committee noted that the improved arrangements to

identify and intervene in underperforming schools were impacting on leadership capacity, standards of attainment and the quality of provision in schools.

The Chairperson invited questions from the Committee.

The Committee questioned whether lessons had been learnt from the Eastern High School Inspection Report, particular bearing in mind the ongoing consultation in respect of the proposed merger of Glyn Derw and Michaelston Community College. The Committee were advised that careful consideration had been given to the appointment of an experienced leader and practitioners; to improvements that could be made to the school environment; and the need to strengthen the inclusion provision.

The Committee were advised that a report on the merger would be provided to the Committee following the completion of the consultation.

Members were advised that all school assessments were now in line with Estyn inspections. It was noted that previously schools had been informed that they were performing well but had then received a disappointing assessment from Estyn as Governors had not realised the significance that a deficit budget would have on that assessment.

Officers then gave a presentation in respect of the National Literacy and Numeracy Tests.

The Committee were advised of the key issues contained in the report In relation to the performance in National Literacy and Numeracy Tests, namely that the outcomes from tests scores and teacher assessments were improving in most areas and at the end of every key stage; at the end of the key stage the proportion of pupils whose test results were in the average band or above was lower than the proportion of pupils assessed by the teacher as being at the expected level or above; and that the performance of girls is higher than boys in nearly all indicators in the average band, and in reading in the above average band.

The Committee queried whether or not the literacy results in the Foundation Phase provided were in any way affected by children within those year groups who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) and whether the percentage of children with EAL can be ascertained. Members were advised that the Consortium had indicated that the figures do contain a percentage of children with EAL and those figures could be disaggregated and provided.

The Committee asked whether year on year monitoring of Year 6/Year 7 pupils was taking place bearing in mind it is such a crucial time for them, particularly when considering some of the literacy and numeracy skills of those starting comprehensive/secondary school. Officers indicated that teachers are provided with the necessary training to equip them to deal with pupils with those issues.

The Committee were concerned to ensure, as they had done previously, that teachers had access to a pool of expert teachers to support them. Members were advised that the Consortium has developed excellence hubs for teachers to tap into. Members were also informed that schools did have access to the improving teacher programme and the outstanding teacher programme.

Members queried the progress made in addressing attainment issues in respect of Looked after Children, children with English as an Additional language and those using the Free School Meal service. Members were advised that it is an improving picture, the gap is closing particularly in Primary Schools. The Committee requested that the Annual Schools report to be presented in January 2016 should include a breakdown of that data to enable Members to assess the progress made.

The Committee noted that a great deal of the information provided in the report was in tabular form and requested that in future, where possible, information be presented in graph form to enable Members to more easily assess the information and the trends emerging.

The Chairperson thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for attending the meeting, for their presentations and for answer questions from Members.

AGREED: That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to the Cabinet Member highlighting the issues raised. [View Letter](#)

45 : DRAFT CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY REPORT

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Sue Lent (Cabinet Member, Early Years, Children & Families and Deputy Leader), and Tony Young (Director of Social Services).

The Director advised the Committee that the report was not yet ready to be considered by the Committee and would be brought back to a future committee.

46 : CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM CORRESPONDENCE

Martyn Hutchings, Principal Scrutiny Officer presented the report.

The purpose of the report was to enable Members to consider the content of a letter received from the Central South Consortium dated 27 October 2015.

The Committee agreed with the proposal to hold termly meetings with the Scrutiny Chair with a view to sharing best practice.

However, bearing in mind the Council is still in Estyn Monitoring, Members felt that it would be unwise to reduce the number of times the Committee scrutinises the work of the Consortium to once a year and therefore propose that the current practice is continued, namely inviting the Consortium to attend 3 meetings a year, until the Council has been removed from Estyn monitoring.

AGREED: That the Chairperson writes to the Central South Consortium informing them of its decision. [View Letter](#)

47 : CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

The Committee received copies of correspondence sent and received in relation to matters previously scrutinised by this Committee.

AGREED – That the correspondence report and attached documentation be noted.

48 : WAY FORWARD

During the way forward discussion the Committee agreed on the content of the letter the Chairperson would send to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee, highlighting the issues raised and comments made in relation to the agenda items that had been discussed during the meeting.

49 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 8 December 2015 at 4.30 pm in Committee Room 4.

The meeting terminated at 4.05 pm