



**CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL**  
**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**  
**COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COMMITTEE SUMMONS**

C.Hanagan  
Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication  
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council  
The Pavilions  
Cambrian Park  
Clydach Vale CF40 2XX

Meeting Contact: Claire Hendy - Senior Democratic Services Officer (01443 424081)

**YOU ARE SUMMONED** to a meeting of **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at the **Virtually** on **WEDNESDAY, 18TH NOVEMBER, 2020** at **5.00 PM**.

Non Committee Members and Members of the public may request the facility to address the Committee at their meetings on the business listed although facilitation of this request is at the discretion of the Chair. It is kindly asked that such notification is made to Democratic Services by Monday, 16 November 2020 on the contact details listed above, including stipulating whether the address will be in Welsh or English.

**AGENDA**

**Page  
No's**

**1. APOLOGIES**

To receive any formal apologies for absence from Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.

**2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

To receive disclosures of personal interest from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct

Note:

1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the

personal interest: and

2. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they must notify the Chairman when they leave.

### **3. MINUTES**

To receive the minutes of the previous meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020.

**5 - 10**

## **REPORTS OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS**

### **4. CONSULTATION LINKS**

Information is provided in respect of relevant [consultations](#) for consideration by the Committee.

## **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES**

### **5. MOVEMENT OF PUPILS WITHIN WELSH & ENGLISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS DATA REPORT**

To receive an update on the amount of pupils transferring from Welsh medium provision to English medium provision since the COVID 19 outbreak.

**11 - 14**

### **6. CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM BLENDED AND DISTANCE LEARNING OFFER**

To receive a presentation in respect of the work carried out by the Central South Consortium during the Covid 19 Pandemic.

**15 - 18**

### **7. CHAIR'S REVIEW AND CLOSE**

To reflect on the meeting and actions to be taken forward.

### **8. URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any items, which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency

## **Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication**

### **Circulation:-**

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

(County Borough Councillor S. Rees-Owen and County Borough Councillor J Edwards respectively)

**County Borough Councillors:**

Councillor S Evans, Councillor J Brencher, Councillor H Fychan, Councillor A Calvert, Councillor S Powell, Councillor M Powell, Councillor M Griffiths, Councillor D Owen-Jones, Councillor S Morgans, Councillor G Stacey, Councillor L De Vet and Councillor W Jones

**Co-Opted Members:-**

Mr M Cleverley, Representing NASUWT and Teachers' Panel  
Mr J Fish, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative  
Ms A Jones, Representing UNITE  
Mr C Jones, Representing GMB  
Mrs C Jones, Representing the National Union of Teachers and Teachers' Panel  
Mr D Price, Representing UNISON  
Mr A Rickett, Voting Diocesan Authorities' Representative  
Mrs R Nicholls, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative

This page is intentionally left blank



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Thursday, 22 October 2020 at 5.00 pm at the Virtually via Zoom Application.

### **County Borough Councillors - Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Members in attendance:-**

Councillor S. Rees-Owen (Chair)

Councillor J Edwards	Councillor J Brencher
Councillor H Fychan	Councillor A Calvert
Councillor M Powell	Councillor M Griffiths
Councillor D Owen-Jones	Councillor S Morgans
Councillor L De Vet	

### **Co-Opted Members in attendance:-**

Mr J Fish, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative  
Mrs R. Nicholls, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative

### **Officers in attendance:-**

Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication  
Mr P Nicholls, Service Director, Legal Services  
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Ms L Davies, Service Director – Public Protection Services  
Ms C Edwards, Head of Service Transformation And Data Systems  
Ms A Richards, Temporary Service Director for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools

### **County Borough Councillors in attendance:-**

Councillor W Lewis

## **12 Welcome & Apologies**

The Vice Chair opened up this evening's meeting due to the being a technical difficulty with the Chair of the Committee's device. Members acknowledged that once the Chair was able to join she would then take over the role and continue with the proceedings.

Apologies were received from County Borough Councillor S. Evans, W Jones, S Powell and G Stacey.

## **13 Declaration of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

**14 Minutes**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

**15 Children & Young People Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/2021**

The Service Director Democratic Services & Communications presented Members with the Draft Work Programme for 2020/2021 from (October to December in the first instance).

It was explained that following the Council's AGM held on the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020 Scrutiny is now able to present its forward work programme for 2020/2021 Municipal Year, It was highlighted to Members that the work programme would initially be that of a three month basis with the Committee having the opportunity to review its Work Programme in December 2020.

Members acknowledged the current pressures on the Council as it focuses on the impact of the pandemic and its associated plans for response and recovery and agreed that this approach allows for business critical matters to be priority.

The Chair proceeded to ask the Committee to identify any areas that they wish to review in greater detail and opened up the meeting to Members.

A Member highlighted the FPN Working Group report and it was agreed that this would be added to the work programme for a future meeting. After further consideration Members **RESOLVED** to Agree the Children and Young People Scrutiny Work Programme for 2020/2021 (October to December)

**16 Update of the Council's Latest Position in response to COVID -19 from an Education Prospective**

The Service Director Democratic Services and Communication explained that the Committee has the opportunity to scrutinise review and challenge the Council's current position in response to the ongoing Covid19 pandemic and explained that the Director of Education & Inclusion along with Service Director Public Protection and Temporary Service Director for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools would provide Members with a verbal update, firstly to update Members on the critical actions taken by the Council over the Summer period including the current COVID 19 processes and practices in RCT and secondly, to inform Members of the current plans being undertaken for the Autumn Term and the up and coming Firebreak announced by the Welsh Government..

The Director of Education & Inclusion thanked the Committee for the opportunity to once again update Members on the actions taken during the pandemic and explained that the Service Director Public Health and Temporary Service Director 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools was also presented to answer any questions from Members in respect of collaborative actions taken to minimise any positive Covid 19 cases within our schools.

The Director of Education continued to explain that she would provide Members with an overview of some of the support mechanism provided to schools during this current time, it was highlighted that a great deal of guidance had been

provided to all schools and communication channels were strong are illustrated in frequent Headteachers meetings, cluster meetings and termly updates with Chairs of Governing Bodies where Schools and the Local Authority are able to address any current issues and concerns.

Parent and carer communication is frequent with information being passed through various means such as text messaging, Director's letters to parents/carers, quick referral guidance or frequently asked questions for parents/carers made available on the Council website etc.

It was also explained that a lot of engagement and partnership working has taken place to ensure that schools are running as smoothly and as safely as possible and to minimise the risks for pupils and staff. Some examples are as follows:

- Staggered start times and finishing times;
- Sneeze screens
- PPE , Face coverings;
- Sanitiser
- Social distancing measures appropriate signage etc.
- Enhanced cleaning
- Maintaining discrete contact groups

The Temporary Service Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools presented Members with an overview of the extensive Health and Safety measures the authority and schools have put in place for pupils' safety. It was explained that clear guidance documents are in place for all areas such as traffic impact assessment, cleaning, hygiene compliance checks, along with support from health and safety colleagues. All risk assessments and support plans were checked by the Council Health and Safety Team and advice provided where required to ensure completeness and are signed off by Chair of Governors. The Director thanked the Temporary Service Director 21<sup>st</sup> Century School for her update.

The Director of Education continued to explain that home/distance learning continued at the end of the Summer Term. The Central South Consortium has developed guidance, support and professional learning for blended/distance learning which has ensured that our schools are well supported and unskilled.

Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee were also provided with data in respect of Covid 19 cases within Rhondda, Cynon Taf schools. The Director asked that when Members are considering the data it was important to consider learner population which is approximately 38,800 learners.

Members were advised that there had been a steady growth of cases with RCT, however this fluctuated day to day. Members were provided with graph data which gave the Committee an overall view of both pupil and staff cases.

The Service Director Public Protection informed Members of the work carried out by both Services, it was explained that at the start of September robust measures and processes were in place to deal with any sudden increases. There had been around the clock support from the track and trace teams, Education and Public Health and Protection teams to help schools deal with cases.

It was also explained that in secondary schools robust recording of seating plans in all subject areas enable schools to identify close contacts requiring self-isolation. Partnership working and support is paramount and is working extremely well with schools in our County Borough. Members were pleased to see that Public Health Wales acknowledged that there are very tight practices to deal with contact tracing in our schools.

The Director paused at this point of her presentation to take questions from Members of the Committee.

A Member thanked the officers for a very informative update and asked for clarity on a few points, firstly in respect of the general wellbeing of pupil and staff the Member asked for reassurance that there were procedures in place to monitor both physical and mental health of staff as many are dealing with complex situations and are going above and beyond their normal duties to ensure our pupils are at the forefront.

The Director explained that wellbeing is a priority for the Service, and it was acknowledged that these were challenging times. In respect of pupils the childcare hubs had been a lifeline to many of our vulnerable pupils and provided a familiar setting for many. In respect of staff it was explained that HR provides very good support and guidance in line with the trade union support and this is constantly being monitored to ensure help and support is available at all time. Frequent forums are established to ensure that we are responsive to the needs of schools and that the guidance provides clarity in relation expectations, processes and procedures. Schools are well supported in the hope that this impacts positively on their wellbeing.

The Member continued to question officers in respect of the social distancing aspect of pupils within schools. With regards to our older school buildings there were concerns raised in relation to the width of school corridors and classroom sizes and as whether this affected the social distancing measures required for Covid 19 in comparison with the newer 21<sup>st</sup> Century school buildings. Also one of the main concerns for Members was that of parents and guardians congregating outside of the school with very little social distancing and no face coverings, Members wanted to know if there was anything that could be done to address this behaviour for the safety of staff and pupils.

Officers explained that there is no particular patterns with our older schools however staff have robust measures in place to ensure that safe social distancing is adhered to where this is possible. Guidance had been provided for schools in relation to Covid safe measures in both old and new buildings. With regards to addressing with issue of groups congregating outside the school premises, officers explained that schools follow the guidance provided by Welsh Government and have issued information to parents/carers. The Director has also issued letters to parents/carers, as have headteachers. Signage has been provided for schools to reinforce expectations, along with staggered start and finishing time to minimise the numbers at the school gates etc.

Another Member asked a question in regards to the congregating outside the school building and asked whether it was possible to make the wearing of face covering mandatory for parents of guardians. The Director explained that face coverings outside it is not a mandatory requirement therefore as an Authority we can only encourage their usage.



The Member wanted clarity on school attendance and if there are any statistics on pupils attending school or are parents keeping children home due to the current situation, also the Member wanted to know if there is any evidence of pupils moving from Welsh medium education to English medium education and the reasons behind the move.

Officers explained that attendance rates are stable at present with 90% attendance rate in primary settings and 80% in secondary settings. Announcements of the changing lockdown measures, such as local lockdowns can have a slight impact on attendance however there is a steady improvement in relation to attendance. With regards to Welsh medium education and any move towards English schools officers explained that this doesn't seem to be an area of concern at present.

Members continued to ask questions in respect of transport, breakfast clubs, afterschool clubs where there seems to be minimum spaces at this time and Members wanted to know how as an authority we were dealing with this situation. An updated was provided on provision and Members advised that a reduction in provision was necessary on health and safety grounds.

Members congratulated staff on how effectively the system of tracking positive cases is working with our schools and the quick communication between all staff, governing bodies and parents.

Members asked if there had been any issues with staffing capacity during this time and if there was the need for agency cover and if the governance function effectively across schools.

With regards to teaching capacity in schools Welsh medium provision is a challenge however there are no great issue so far and this will be monitored on a regular basis .In respect of governance Members found it pleasing to see that virtual meetings and discussion have been very effective with an increase in governor attendance at meetings and also training session.

The Director of Education continued to inform Members of the current position within our schools and the plans in place for the autumn term and coming Firebreak that has been put in place. Local arrangements are informed by detailed local authority guidance which reflects the national position.

After further discussion and questioning for the Committee Members  
RESLOVED to:

- Acknowledge the Verbal update from the Director of Education & Inclusion in conjunction with the Service Director Public Health & Protection.
- Receive a report at a future meeting to provide Members with data in respect of Welsh medium children transferring to English medium schools and any reasons behind the potential move.
- Receive a report in respect of crossing control at schools and what is being done to minimise pupils congregating outside schools especially during the pandemic

## **17 Chair's Review and Close**

The Chair thanked Members and Officers for their time and contribution to the

Meeting and at that point wished Members a good evening and closed the meeting.

**18 URGENT BUSINESS**

**This meeting closed at 6.45 pm**

**CLLR S REES-OWEN  
CHAIR.**



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21**

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020**

**MOVEMENT OF PUPILS IN WELSH MEDIUM SCHOOLS**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES**

**Author:- Catrin Edwards, Head of Service Transformation and Data**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide a summary of the movement of pupils in Welsh medium schools.

### **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. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 This information report is provided to Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee to inform Members of the movement of learners in and out of Welsh medium schools.

### **4. WELSH MEDIUM PUPILS**

#### **4.1 Primary aged children**

In January 2020, Pupil Level Annual Census suggested that 4220 primary aged pupils in Rhondda Cynon Taf were receiving their education through the medium of Welsh.

During the academic year 2019/20, 873 primary aged children moved school within Rhondda Cynon Taf. Of this cohort, 83 pupils moved into a Welsh medium school (35 moved due to house moves) and 72 pupils left a Welsh medium school (24 moved due to house moves). This equates to a net increase of 11 pupils.

In September 2020, 4137 primary aged children received their education through the medium of Welsh.

During the first half of the autumn term 2020, 456 primary aged children moved schools. This data includes pupils moving at the end of the last academic year. Of the 456 transfers, 55 left Welsh medium and 49 moved into Welsh medium. A net reduction of 6 pupils.

Primary	Number on roll	Total into Welsh medium	House moves	Total left Welsh medium	House moves	Net Change
Academic year 2019/20	4220	83	35	72	24	+11
Academic year 2020/21	4137	49	21	55	15	-6

#### 4.2 **Secondary aged children**

In January 2020, Pupil Level Annual Census suggested that 3141 secondary aged pupils in Rhondda Cynon Taf were receiving their education through the medium of Welsh.

During the academic year 2019/20, 213 secondary aged children moved school within Rhondda Cynon Taf of which 6 pupils moved into a Welsh medium school (4 due to house moves) and 15 pupils left (4 due to house moves). This equates to a net reduction of 9 pupils.

In September 2020, 3243 secondary aged children received their education through the medium of Welsh.

During the first half of the autumn term 2020, 126 secondary aged children moved schools, of this total 17 left Welsh medium and 5 moved into Welsh medium. A net reduction of 12.

Secondary	Number on roll	Total into Welsh medium	House moves	Total left Welsh medium	House moves	Net Change
Academic year 2019/20	3141	6	4	15	4	-9
Academic year 2020/21	3243	5	4	17	4	-12

**5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no negative or adverse equality or diversity implications associated with this report.

**6. CONSULTATION**

6.1 There are no consultation implications aligned to this report.

**7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

**8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

8.1 There are no legal implications that are relevant to this report.

**9. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP**

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

**10. CONCLUSION**

10.1 In the primary sector, the net movement of pupils in the Welsh medium sector for the academic year 2019/20 resulted in a net increase of 2 and a net reduction of 6 for the first half of the autumn term 2020.

10.2 In the secondary sector, the net movement of pupils in the Welsh medium sector for the academic year 2019/20 resulted in a net reduction of 9 and a net reduction of 12 for the first half of the autumn term 2020.

10.3 The local authority will continue to monitor the numbers of learners attending Welsh medium schools and ensure that we have effective plans in plans to promote the growth of Welsh medium education.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**  
**AS AMENDED BY**  
**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE**  
**18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020**  
**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**  
**AND INCLUSION SERVICES**



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21**

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICE**

**CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM BLENDED AND DISTANCE LEARNING OFFER**

**Author(s):- Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services**

### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To provide members of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee with some brief introductory context to Central South Consortium's presentation on their support to schools to develop their blended and distance learning provision.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:-

- 2.1 Consider the presentation from Central South Consortium school representatives.
- 2.2 Consider whether further information is required to evaluate the effectiveness of the support on offer to schools to assist them to deliver high quality blended and distance learning.

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The pandemic has disrupted learning across the County Borough, nation and around the globe. It is imperative that our schools deliver high quality blended and distance learning opportunities for children who are unable to attend school due to lockdown measures or self-isolation due to a diagnosis of Covid-19 or potential or close contact with a confirmed case.
- 3.2 As the commissioned service with responsibility for delivering school improvement services to our schools, Central South Consortium plays a critical role in delivering effective school improvement support and professional learning opportunities for our schools.
- 3.3 Members will be provided with an update on the professional learning offer and guidance provided by Central South Consortium to support the development of

blended and distance/remote learning, which will provide a basis for further scrutiny and exploration.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The response to Covid-19 has dramatically changed Education in Wales and across the world. Covid-19 cases and lockdown measures have impacted significantly on the capacity of schools to deliver face to face education and blended and distant learning opportunities are vital for ensuring continuity in learning.
- 4.2 As a school improvement organisation, Central South Consortium
- Support and provide effective guidance to promote equity for all learners in distance learning and engagement in learning;
  - Provide appropriate, ongoing support and guidance for senior leaders and practitioners, as schools evolve and adopt blended and distance learning through digital and non-digital approaches; and
  - Provide professional learning for all practitioners related to blended and distance/remote learning.
- 4.3 Settings and schools will need to consider how to evolve their current distance learning models to include in-school face to face contact and where applicable, from a distance through video conferencing, live streaming or recording of lessons. This approach is referred to '*Blended Learning*'. Adopting a single and seamless 'curriculum' approach is essential where practitioners can develop a more integrated approach to learning so that children and young people can build connections across subject areas. This has to be done safely and with appropriate consideration given to learner and staff wellbeing, and safeguarding.
- 4.4 Distance learning allows learning experiences to happen from just about anywhere and may or may not involve a digital device and internet connection. It should support the well-being of all learners, provide a choice of learning opportunities for the social, physical and emotional development of learners. As well as tasks to promote their resilience. This learning allows individuals to learn when and where it is more convenient for them and does not have to mirror learning as it normally occurs in school. Schools do have a responsibility to ensure that all learners engage in the learning offer and adopt a graduated response to supporting learners to overcoming any barriers to engagement.

#### **5. SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 5.1 Central South Consortium provides ongoing support and advice for schools across the region on blended and distance learning. Comprehensive information and guidance can be found at the links below:

[Guidance on continuity of learning during COVID-19](#)  
[Roadmap to blended learning](#)  
[Blended learning guidance](#)  
[Developing integrated approaches to blended learning](#)  
[A resource to support distance learning](#)  
[Distance learning considerations](#)  
[Models of blended learning](#)  
[Principles of remote instruction webinars](#)



## **6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 This is an information report. No Equality Impact Assessment screening form is required.

## **7. CONSULTATIONS**

7.1 This is an information report, no consultation is required.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no financial implications.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

9.1 None at present.

## **10. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP**

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

## **11. CONCLUSION**

11.1 Central South Consortium has developed a range of guidance materials and professional learning experiences for schools to promote equity for all learners in blended and distance learning. This has been achieved by providing ongoing support and guidance for senior leaders and practitioners in distance professional learning.

11.2 Improvement Partners have a key role to play in evaluating the strategic development and delivery of blended and remote/distance learning opportunities across our schools and in monitoring the impact on outcomes for learners. The organisation ensures that good practice is shared across schools in the region and that bespoke support is provided for schools that experience difficulties in delivering high quality blended learning and distance learning approaches.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
AND INCLUSION SERVICES**