

CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM JOINT EDUCATION SERVICE.

Minutes of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service. meeting held on Tuesday, 22 January 2019 at 10.00 am at the Valleys Innovation Centre, Navigation Park, Abercynon CF45 4SN.

County Borough Councillors - Central South Consortium Joint Education Service. Members in attendance:-

Councillor S. Merry (Cardiff Council)

Councillor J. Rosser (Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)

Councillor C. Smith (Bridgend County Borough Council)

Councillor B. Penrose (Vale of Glamorgan)

Councillor L. Mytton (Merthyr Tydfil Council)

Council Officers in attendance:-

Mr C. Bradshaw (Lead Chief Executive, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)

Mr N. Batchelar (Director of Education, Cardiff Council)

Ms P. Ham (Director of Learning & Skills, Vale of Glamorgan)

Mr L. Harvey (Director of Education, Bridgend Council)

Ms G. Davies (Director of Education & Inclusion Services, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)

Mr P. Griffiths (Service Director, Performance & Improvement, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)

Others in attendance:-

Ms E. Thomas (Acting Manager, Central South Consortium)

Ms L. Blatchford (Acting Manager, Central South Consortium)

Mr A. Williams (Acting Assistant Director & Senior Lead, Central South Consortium)

Ms D. Lewis (Senior Lead Learning & Teaching Experiences, Central South Consortium)

Mr R. George (Strategic Lead, Central South Consortium)

1 Declaration of Interest

Members had no personal interests to declare in matters pertaining to the agenda

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillor C. Smith (Bridgend County Borough Council) and Ms L Blatchford (Central South Consortium).

3 Minutes

RESOLVED to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Joint Committee held on the 19th December 2018.

4 Update on 16+ Provision throughout the Central South Consortium

The Director of Learning and Skills (Vale of Glamorgan) explained that as Members of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Joint Committee would recall that at its meeting held on the 8th November 2018, Members agreed to increase the frequency of its meetings from three to at least five times a year. It was agreed that this would create opportunities for Members to learn from schools and other council services involved in improving education outcomes. As a result of this Members requested information from the Directors of Education from each Authority in respect of 16+ provision.

Each Director of Education explained the provisions available within their authority. The Director of Learning and Skills (Vale of Glamorgan) updated Members on the provision within the Vale of Glamorgan, it was explained that there are eight secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan seven of which have 6th form provision. St David's Sixth Form College Cardiff offers a similar arrangement for the Catholic School sector.

It was explained that Stanwell and Cowbridge Comprehensive schools seem to have a successful uptake however; the uptake for Llantwit Major is low. Members were also informed of the new mixed secondary school with a joint sixth form. The ALPS data shows that very small numbers are following certain subjects which is a concern. The Director of Learning and Skills (Vale of Glamorgan) also highlighted the logistical issue of time and travel when learners attend courses in other schools.

The Cabinet Member for Education for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council informed the Committee of the changes that had taken place within the County Borough over the last few years. It was explained that Sixth Form Provision for the four Secondary Schools is now provided by the new Merthyr College. The Cabinet Member continued to explain that at first the proposal was met with some concerns from parents and the public. The College provision is now embedded and results are pleasing to see. There is an inability to compare results, however outcome data is positive.

The Director of Education from Bridgend County Borough Council gave an overview of the provision of post 16 within Bridgend. It was explained that there are nine secondary schools that have post 16 provision along with the Bridgend College. Bridgend are currently consulting on proposals to change Post 16 provision.

Within Rhondda Cynon Taf, the Director of Education and Inclusion highlighted the vast changes implemented within the County Borough in recent years as part of 21st Century School developments. It was explained that currently RCT have two 3 – 16 Schools (Porth, Nant Gwyn), two 3 – 19 Schools (Ysgol Llanhari, Tonyrefail), two new 11 to 19 schools (Y Pant, Aberdare Community School) and further 11 secondary schools (11 to 19), although a further 3-19 Welsh medium school will open in September 2019 (Ysgol Gartholwg).

It was explained that under the 21st Century School Developments 3 new schools opened in September 2018 in Porth, Tonyrefail and Tonypany. Treorchy is also undergoing significant refurbishments and highly improved facilities are now in place, with further works planned.

The Director of Education and Inclusion for Rhondda Cynon Ta also informed

the Committee of the proposed changes to the Pontypridd and Cynon Area are currently under consultation. Proposals include a further two 3-16 schools and the removal of 6th form provision in 3 schools.

In relation to the provision with the Cardiff Area, The Cabinet Member for Education along with the Director of Education explained the current provision of Education within Cardiff. It was explained that there are eighteen Secondary Schools, eleven of which have sixth form provision. The Cardiff and Vale College, St David's sixth form College also provide 16+ provision. There are seven Special School two of which have ASD provision.

After an overview by each Local Authority Members discussed the provision in detail, In respect of the ALN Bill Members felt there are many issues facing the 19 to 25 age group which will need to be looked at in the future.

Members commented on the rising standards and growth in population in relation to the Local Development Plan (LPD).

In respect of vocational subjects, Members felt there has been a push on A Level subjects rather than vocational subjects which may be more suited to some learners. It was felt that Welsh Government have been concentrating on IT learners etc. Members felt that pupil wishing to work in the fields such as retail, hospitality are not being encouraged in the right direction to follow the range of courses available. Members felt that work should be done to review the guidance and service provision of the Careers Service. Members were informed of the Gatsby Project which aims to benchmark good practice in offering careers advice.

Members continued their discussion with the Directors of Education and agreed to monitor 16+ Provision.

5 Additional Learning Needs Bill Update

The ALN Transformation Lead Central South thanked the Committee for the opportunity to update Members on the work undertaken across the region to prepare for the Additional Learning Needs and Tribunal (Wales) Act (2018).

The ALN Transformation Lead explained that the National Assembly for Wales passed the ALNET Bill on 12th December 2017 and after receiving Royal Assent became the Additional Learning Needs Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (ALNET) ON 24TH January 2018.

Members were informed that the aims of the ALNET is to create

- A unified legislative frame work to support all children of compulsory school age or below with additional learning needs (ALN) and to support young people with ALN who are in school or further education (FE)
- An integrated, collaborative process of assessment, planning and monitoring which facilitates early, timely and effective interventions
- A fair and transparent system for providing information and advice, and for resolving concerns and appeals.

The ALN Transformation Lead explained further that the ALN System set out in

the Act will be fully implemented over a three year period. The implementation period is expected to run from September 2020 to August 2023.

It was explained that for the time being, local authorities and all those who work with children and young people with SEN, must ensure that they continue to comply with duties placed upon them by the Education Act 1996. They must continue to have regard to the SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002).

The ALN Transformational Lead for Central South reminded Members that in order to support the implementation of this new system the Welsh Government is providing financial assistance through the ALN Transformational Grant. This is the second of the four financial years that the grant will be available. The money is delegated via a host authority acting on behalf of the other authorities in the region, using the same footprint as the four regional education consortia. The grant must be used on a regional strategic basis and consideration should be given to regional sustainability beyond the life time of the grant. The conditions of the grant spend stipulate that there has to be in place a:

- Regional implementation plan
- State of the region summary document, detailing areas to focus on in preparing for transition to the new ALN system
- Multi- agency regional Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Act training plan.

In respect of the regional plan the Joint Committee was informed of what work had been done across the region. It was explained that between March and July 2018 extensive analysis was carried out across the region to identify strengths and areas for development. Full co-operation was obtained between all five local authorities, four further education colleges, two health boards and the Central South Consortium. It was further explained that following these activities a summary document detailing the state of the region was created as well as a consequent regional plan.

Members were informed that the implementation of the new requirements will begin in September 2020 and be completed by the end of 2023. It was explained that the Regional Plan has eight priorities that region needs to work to:

1. Creating a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary regional implementation plan that underpins the successful transition to the new way of working
2. Delivering an awareness-raising programme that ensures all professionals, parents, carers, children and young people and the third sector receive timely information about the reforms and associated timescales.
3. Implement a comprehensive workforce development plan that is compliant with ALNET Act and complementary to the wider national education reforms.
4. Develop support and provision for post compulsory-aged learners through identifying local and potential regional offers.
5. Ensure that the new statutory expectations for early years are understood and delivered and that appropriate support is provided to increase capacity in early years settings.
6. Improve strategic engagement with health to support the establishment of the statutory role of the Designated Educational Clinical Lead Officer and develop shared expectations and supportive working practices.

7. Review and improve Welsh medium provision and specialist support to increase regional capacity.
8. Support the rights of the child and young person with ALN through the development of user-friendly practices that clearly explain processes and what support they can expect to receive as well as promoting their rights of appeal.

The Members were informed that a multi-agency, multi –disciplinary steering is in the process of being formed. Governance structures are in place as are performance management processes to ensure that the project remains on task, within the confines of the grant spend recommendations and monitors financial accountability.

The ALN Transformational Lead Central South informed Members where as a region we want to be and as a region what we need to do next.

Members discussed the need for developing a better interface for Further Education (FE) in relation to the amount for money to fund out of county placements. It was explained that work is being done to see if there is scope to keep young people near home .

In respect of early years, Members discussed the significant implications, as there will be a cost implication to consider for the future.

In relation to improving engagement with health Members and Officer discussed the role of Designated Educational Clinical Lead Officer, which will be a statutory role. It was explained the Clinical Lead Officer would be able to develop a dialog between Health and the Local Authority at a strategic level.

A Member questioned the Welsh Medium Provision for ALN pupils. It was explained that the provision would be the same as English Medium children. Intervention seem to be developed through the English Medium however the Welsh Government regulations states the provision is set for both Welsh and English ALN provision.

With regards to post 16 education for pupils, Members discussed the challenges and the way forward.

After more in depth discussion Members **RESOLVED** to:

- Note the contents of the report
- Receive a progress report at a future meeting.

6 URGENT BUSINESS

This meeting closed at 11.50am

CLLR S. MERRY
CHAIR.