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Bridgend County Borough Council



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Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate

Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 /
643147 / 643694

Gofynnwch am / Ask for:

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Tuesday, 13 October 2020

Dear Councillor,

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

A meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 will be held remotely via Skype on
Monday, 19 October 2020 at 14:30.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008 (including whipping declarations)
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 16
To receive for approval the minutes of the meeting of 21/01/2020 and 03/02/2020
4. Forward Work Programme Update 17 - 22
5. Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination Report 23 - 26
6. Nomination to the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel 27 - 30
7. Urgent Items
To consider any item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Yours faithfully

K Watson

Chief Officer - Legal, HR & Regulatory Services

Please note: Due to the current requirement for social distancing this meeting will not be held at its usual location. This will be a virtual meeting and Council Members and Officers will be attending remotely. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon as practicable after the meeting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643147 / 643148.

Councillors

T Giffard
JPD Blundell
RJ Collins
M Jones
B Sedgebeer
J Gebbie

Councillors

SK Dendy
AJ Williams
KJ Watts
PA Davies
RME Stirman
JH Tildesley MBE

Councillors

TH Beedle
A Williams
KL Rowlands
SE Baldwin

Registered Representatives

Tim Cahalane - Roman Catholic Church
Ciaron Jackson - Primary School Sector
Rev. Canon Edward Evans - Church in Wales
Lynsey Morris – Secondary School Sector

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON
TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2020 AT 09:30

Present

Councillor T Giffard – Chairperson

TH Beedle
KL Rowlands

JPD Blundell
B Sedgebeer

PA Davies
RME Stirman

M Jones
AJ Williams

Apologies for Absence

NA Burnett, SK Dendy, J Gebbie, KJ Watts and A Williams

Officers:

Julie Ellams
Rachel Pick
Andrew Rees

Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Scrutiny Officer
Democratic Services Manager

89. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 4, Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2023-24

Cllr T Beedle declared a personal interest in this item because he is Chair of Bridgend Governors Association.

Cllr JP Blundell declared a personal interest in this item because he is a community governor at Cefn Glas Infants.

Cllr P Davies declared a personal interest in this item because she is a governor at Bryntirion Infants and Juniors.

Rev Canon Edward Evans declared a personal interest in this item because he is a community governor at Bryntirion.

Cllr T Giffard declared a personal interest in this item because he is a governor at Tremains Primary School.

Cllr M Jones declared a personal interest in this item because he is Vice Chair of Bettws Primary.

Cllr K Rowlands declared a personal interest in this item because her son is in an apprenticeship in the BCBC Education Department.

Cllr R Stirman declared a personal interest in this item because she is a non LEA governor at Tynyrheol Primary School and a LA school governor at Bettws Primary School.

Cllr AJ Williams declared a personal interest in this item because she is a parent governor at Coity Primary School.

Cllr P White declared a personal interest because he is a governor of Maesteg Comprehensive School and Nantyllon Primary School.

90. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Members considered the minutes of the meetings of 9th October 2019 and 30 October 2019.

9th October 2019 – Cllr Beedle stated that his concerns regarding the validity of governor training and LEA members failing to attend meetings and their lack of involvement, were not recorded in the minutes. The Chair of Governors had introduced a skills audit and this was also not reflected in the minutes.

30 October 2019 – Cllr Giffard stated that he had declared a personal interest in the “Review of Post 16 Education Provision Across Bridged” item because he was a governor at Tremains Primary School but it had not been recorded in the minutes.

Rev Canon Edward Evans stated that he was unable to attend the 30 October 2019 meeting so had sent in a series of questions to be asked in his absence. There was no reference to his questions in the minutes. The Democratic Services Manager agreed to look into this.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees dated 9th October 2019 and 30 October 2019 be approved as a true and accurate record subject to the corrections detailed above.

91. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2020-21 TO 2023-24

The Group Manager – Financial Planning and Budget Management presented the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2023-24 which set out the spending priorities of the Council, key investment objectives and budget areas targeted for necessary savings.

The Group Manager- Financial Planning and Budget Management explained that following receipt of the better than anticipated 2020-21 provisional settlement from Welsh Government, school budgets had again been protected from the 1% efficiency target in 2020-21. In addition the draft MTFs included funding for a number of budget pressures for the Education and Family Support Directorate including schools.

A member referred to the 10% cut to the contribution to the Central South Consortium (CSC) and asked how sustainable this was bearing in mind similar cuts had been made for the last three years. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support replied that savings of 17.5% had been made over the last 5 years and this was challenging for CSC. In order to reduce overheads, CSC had moved to new premises and they were focusing on maintaining front line services whilst reducing back room staff. The Headteachers from Cynffig Comprehensive School and Llangewydd Primary School agreed that they had not seen any change to the number of Challenge Advisor visits and the provision of workshops and conferences to date. A member asked if similar cuts were being made to contributions by all authorities. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support explained the Joint Committee would agree the same reduction across the board and indicated that the final reduction was likely to be less than 10%.

A member asked if there had been cuts within the Directorate or if the schools had taken the majority of the cuts. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support replied that there had been significant staff cuts over the last 5 years and that considerable savings had been made from vacancy management.

A member referred to the MTFs Principles and in particular the “One-Council” approach. She believed that departments did not talk to each other and gave the example of home

to school transport and safe routes to school. Free school transport was provided to children in Coity who lived close to the school but were unable to walk because there was no safe route.

The member said that there was no joined up thinking and that her suggestion to extend on land adjoining an oversubscribed school, rather than build a new school, was rejected because of the cost of building a retaining wall. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support replied that there had been many conversations regarding the challenges around safe walking routes. They had to follow WG guidance and some cases were easier to resolve than others. The School Modernisation Programme dealt with new schools and extensions and often there were competing priorities. Members recommended that there should be a one Council approach with officers from Education, Planning and Finance working in a holistic manner to provide footways and crossing points thereby reducing the reliance on and cost of school transport.

A member asked what impact there had been on sickness levels in light of the staff cuts and if the authority was using agency staff. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support replied that sickness levels had not improved with a small number of staff being off for a significant length of time. He also reported that work related stress had grown from last year. There was a very supportive occupational health scheme and they worked closely with HR to support staff back into work. They avoided using agency staff wherever possible. The Headteachers from Cynffig Comprehensive School and Llangewydd Primary School agreed that most days there would be a supply teacher on site and even though they tried to put mechanisms in place it was difficult to avoid. They had not seen an increase in work related stress but did see staff susceptible to small illnesses.

A member asked if devolved budgeting worked and could the authority be confident that schools were getting the right level of funding. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support explained that there were 59 schools with a common goal and planning was challenging. The biggest pressure was teachers' pay and pension increases for the period April to August 2020 which had been fully funded and the future impacts of teachers' pay awards which would come into effect from September 2020. There was also a significant number of special school pupils identified as requiring 1:1 additional support. The Group Manager- Financial Planning and Budget Management explained that the pay and pension increase should be fully funded for 20/21 and that £185,000 had been identified as a budget pressure for 1:1 support for special school pupils.

The Headteachers from Cynffig Comprehensive School and Llangewydd Primary School were disappointed that even though there had been a significant improvement in the settlement, there was no additional funding allocated to schools. Teachers pay and pensions pressures had been met which kept them at status quo. There was no more in real terms and they had to continue to be extremely creative to deal with new pressures. The Committee welcomed the better budget settlement but considered that the Council was at standstill and it would be harder to make savings going forward as many schools had experienced an increase in the behavioural demands of pupils, which schools had to fund themselves and which would get more difficult to fund.

A member asked for further information regarding the budget for behaviour support. Bad behaviour could lead to permanent exclusions and this could have an impact on staff and their wellbeing. The previous staff survey had not been sent to school based staff and teachers and if staff were unhappy then that could lead to sickness and absence. Members noted that a deficit budget added to the problem. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support explained that half of the schools had deficit budgets and a few had considerable deficit budgets. If the deficit was more than 5% a deficit recovery plan was put in place. Pressures had been identified with behaviour support and

schools were doing a remarkable job of maintaining the attendance of very challenging pupils. He also recognised the statutory duty of protecting staff. The Committee expressed concern that the increase in behavioural demands of pupils could have an impact on the wellbeing of staff, which in turn could lead to an increase in sickness and place pressure on school budgets. Members recommended that a request be made to the Corporate Director Education and Family Support for school staff to be included in the staff survey seeking their views on management, workplace well-being, communications within the Council, opportunities for learning and development.

A member asked what the uptake was for the Corporate Landlord SLA and if it was working. The Headteacher of Cynffig Comprehensive School explained that they had opted for tier 1. She was not sure how effective it was and there seemed to be different opinions between primary and secondary schools and tier 1 and tier 2. Another member stated that from her experience the system was working well with issues categorised and most resolved the same day. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support explained that this fell within the Communities Directorate. Members recommended that an item be placed on the Forward Work Programme on the take up by schools of the Corporate Landlord service.

A member raised the issue of pupil behaviour and exclusions and the impact on staff. Members asked who picked up the bill for transporting a child to a different school following exclusion. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support replied that the wellbeing of staff was paramount. He confirmed that there would be no additional cost to the school and that exclusion would be a last resort. All schools worked extremely hard to maintain attendance. Sometimes a fresh start at a different school could work and the LA would cover the cost. The challenge was greater when a child was excluded on 2 occasions due to the cost of home tuition or an out of county placement.

A member asked how visible the School Liaison Officers were in the schools and what level of support was provided by the police. The Headteacher from Cynffig Comprehensive School explained that they had a school police liaison officer who attended for various reasons such as knife crime and substance misuse. His availability had reduced because of cuts but he still carried out work with the children. PCSOs worked well with the schools however the level of support they provided appeared to be inconsistent across the schools. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support explained that partnership working was key and they did a lot of work with a number of agencies such as Early Help, MASH, PCSO's and CAMHS. Members recommended that a request be made to the Police to establish the differing levels of support the Police and PCSOs provided to support schools across the County Borough.

A member referred to home to school transport and in particular, the proposed cuts for post 16 pupils. He believed it discriminated against pupils who lived a distance from comprehensive schools through no fault of their own eg pupils who lived in the valleys who attended CCYD. He also asked what was happening to Post 16 education in Bridgend. Some of the options would require pupils to travel more and how did that sit with home to school transport. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support replied that post 16 education was non statutory and there was no requirement to provide transport so it would not be discriminatory from a legal point of view. The budget was in deficit so they had to take action to arrest the decline. They were meeting with different providers and considering various options such as travel passes but this was a real challenge. They were in the process of preparing a paper to be submitted to Cabinet in April. They were aware that this could impact on several hundred pupils. The Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help said that he sympathised but this was the tenth year of austerity and there was no end in sight. It was difficult to see how many families

in deprived areas would be able to afford transport. They were looking at a number of scenarios and the solution might not be a blanket approach but a case by case solution.

A member raised concerns that staff at the Youth Offending Service were working with pupils and this information was not being passed on to the school. There did not appear to be a one council approach. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support explained that there should be a team meeting with a representative from the Youth Offending Service, in attendance and he agreed to look into it.

A member referred to the rise in the number of pupils entitled to free school meals and asked if this had an impact on school budgets. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support replied that the increase in the number of pupils eligible for free school meals and the cost of additional learning needs were a budget pressure. Another Member added that in his ward, there were a number of pupils entitled to free school meals and this ward would also suffer if post 16 opportunities were also removed. He also queried the way any credit was written off at the end of the day rather than accumulating and allowing the pupil to spend more another day. The Corporate Director Education and family Support explained that Cabinet had been asked to look at a number of options including free Breakfast Clubs for secondary schools, to look at the price of school meals and pilot schemes for the summer holidays and Christmas holidays. WAG were looking at year 7 Breakfast Clubs for pupils transitioning. Consideration was also being given to using the Pupil Development Grant to purchase food for a small breakfast club. The Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help said that he had attended a Young Carers open morning at CCYD and talked about the difficulties of children going to school feeling hungry. He was pleased to be involved in WG and BCBC initiatives and recognised that school staff were observant and took steps to help pupils in need. Members recommended that it be established whether a Pupil Development Grant could be used for the provision of food.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Following the Committee's consideration of the draft budget proposals for the Education & Family Support Directorate, Members determined to make the following comments and recommendations:

- The Committee welcomed the better budget settlement but considered that school budgets were at standstill and it would be harder to make savings going forward as many schools had experienced an increase in the behavioural demands of pupils, which schools had to fund themselves and which would get more difficult to fund. The Committee expressed concern that the increase in behavioural demands of pupils could have an impact on the wellbeing of staff, which in turn could lead to an increase in sickness and place pressure on school budgets.
- That an item be placed on the Forward Work Programme on the take up by schools of the Corporate Landlord service.
- That in relation to EFS1 and EFS41 Home to School Transport, Post 16 Education and the School Modernisation Programme with the development of new schools and its impact on existing catchment areas and Section 106 Agreements there needs to be a one Council approach with officers from Education, Planning and Finance working in a holistic manner to provide footways and crossing points thereby negating the reliance on and the cost of school transport. That safe routes to school be part of the review of Post 16 education.

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 - TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2020

- That a request be made to the Corporate Director Education and family Support for school staff to be included in the staff survey seeking their views on management, workplace well-being, communications within the Council, opportunities for learning and development.
- A request be made to the Police to establish the differing levels of support the Police, PCSOs and School Liaison Officers provide to support schools across the County Borough

That in relation to EFS5, the increase in number of pupils eligible for free school meals, that it be established whether the Pupil Development Grant can be used for the provision of food for breakfast clubs.

92. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Democratic Services Manager presented the Forward Work Programme. He explained that SOSOC1 would receive the Education Outcomes report on 5 February 2020 and Learner Travel on 9 March 2020. Members asked if students and the Youth Mayor or colleagues, could be invited and if the meeting could be webcast. A member suggested that the meeting should be held in one of the comprehensive schools and the start time changed to 3 pm to accommodate the pupils. Another member stated that he would have child care issues at this time and this could also be a problem for other members of the committee. The Democratic Services Manager explained that if it was held in a school, the meeting could not be webcast and he agreed to look into this option.

93. URGENT ITEMS

None

The meeting closed at 11:26

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 - MONDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2020

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON
MONDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 14:30**

Present

Councillor T Giffard – Chairperson

JPD Blundell	PA Davies	SK Dendy	J Gebbie
M Jones	KL Rowlands	B Sedgebeer	RME Stirman
KJ Watts	A Williams	AJ Williams	

Apologies for Absence

TH Beedle, NA Burnett, RJ Collins and JH Tildesley MBE

Officers:

Nicola Echanis	Head of Education & Family Support
Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Michelle Hatcher	Group Manager - Inclusion
Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer – Scrutiny
Rachel Pick	Scrutiny Officer

95. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of personal interest were received in respect of Agenda Item 3:

Councillor Amanda Williams – As a Parent Governor at Coety Primary School;
Councillor JP Blundell – As a School Governor at Cefn Glas Infants School;
Reverend Canon E Evans – As a School Governor at Bryntirion Comprehensive School.

96. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

The Central South consortium (CSC) Senior Challenge Advisor presented a report, the purpose of which, was to present the Committee with the educational outcomes for 2018–2019 for the foundation phase, key stages 2, 3 and 4, and post-16 in Bridgend schools.

The report evaluated the educational performance in Bridgend schools for 2018-2019.

He explained that the content of the report was different to previous years, due to Welsh Government introducing significant changes as to how schools and local authorities report performance measures and how they should be used. Further details in relation to this were expanded upon in the background information to the report (paragraph 3).

Appendix A of the report contained tables with headline data for key stage 4 and post-16.

The report also needed to be considered within the context of Estyn’s inspection of Bridgend’s local government education services in March 2019, which highlighted many of the performance strengths of the local authority as well as identifying areas for further development. The full Estyn inspection report can be found at Appendix B (to the report).

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 - MONDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2020

To support Members in understanding the changes to performance measures, Central South Consortium (CSC) and the local authority ran an update session for all elected members in September 2019. A copy of this presentation was attached at Appendix C of the report.

The next section of the report, included outcomes in the form of performance details including results of school/pupil performance in the following school year age groups:-

- Foundation Phase
- Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 3
- Key Stage 4
- Post-16

In terms of Education outcome data strengths, the report also highlighted that Foundation Phase outcomes remain well above the all-Wales average.

Improved performance of Key Stage 2 outcomes, when compared to regional and the all-Wales average.

Under the new interim performance measure at Key Stage 4, the local authority has performed well, generally in line with regional averages and above the all-Wales average. With regards to this, the gap in performance between eFSM and nFSM was smaller than the national average.

Also, under the new interim performance measures, boys' performance at Key Stage 4, was better than the all-Wales average.

In respect of Education outcome data, areas for development, there was evidence of continued improvement in literacy performance at Key Stage 2.

Improvement had also been seen in Post-16 at A* - C measure, which was as good as, or better than the all-Wales average.

The report advised that the gap in performance between eFSM and nFSM pupils, needed to be closed at all phases and stages. The pace of progress in schools was also causing some concern and required some improvement.

Paragraphs 4.52 to 4.76 inclusive of the report, outlined information with regard to the challenge and support provided by the CSC, together with other statistical information and associated data in relation to BCBC schools, including inspections and/or reviews of certain schools by Estyn. This also included details of the ongoing relationship CSC has with the Council, and the proposed relationship going forward.

The report also reflected that CSC continued to take a lead role in the development of the Curriculum for Wales; working with pioneer schools, Welsh Government and in partnership with the other regional consortia across Wales. Examples of the type of work this included, was shown in paragraph 4.75 of the report.

Finally, the report highlighted that in 2018-19, additional funding was provided to support Bridgend specific priorities via the Local Authority Annex. The funding allocated was £19,449.

In 2018-19, the funding was used to fund activities as part of the Bridgend Festival of Learning. Stakeholders commented on the success of the Festival of Learning during the local authority Estyn inspection in March 2019.

Members asked the following questions:

A Member reiterated a previous request for reports to include a clear concise Executive Summary - the report was available to the public and needed to be understood. The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support advised that he would take the request forward.

A Member referred to the structure of the reports supporting information contained as part of its Appendix and felt that more explanation could have been provided, in respect of both the new changes and points system.

The CSC Senior Challenge Advisor advised that this was to a degree still work in progress, and that a presentation had been provided to Members upon the new changes to performance measures in September 2019 and the training slides were appended to the report before Members. He added that, Key Stage 4 had now moved away from 'percentage threshold measures', to point scores. This had been introduced as a result of a narrative from Welsh Government and the WLGA, that the new points system provided a better understanding of how schools were performing in wider areas of the curriculum.

A Member commented upon the overall gap in education performance between boys and girls on core subjects, compared to the national average and Bridgend, on a year by year basis.

The CSC Senior Challenge Advisor advised that the Progression Pathway would address improvements and that it was also hard to draw comparison between Key Stage 4 for this year and the year before.

A Member referred to page 9 of the report and the section on Education outcomes data and noted, that there was no reference to Key Stage 3, where performance in Bridgend had dropped for that year to just below the national average. She felt that further information was required here.

The CSC Senior Challenge Advisor advised that 4.47 to 4.51 of the report was concentrating on areas for development only at the various Key Stage phases within schools. He acknowledged there had been a dip in performance in Key Stage 3 this year, but overall the trend was positive.

The Chairperson asked teacher representatives present at the meeting, how the significant changes introduced by Welsh Government, in terms of how schools (and local authorities) report performance measures including how these should be used, had affected their schools.

Secondary School Headteachers advised that measuring Science performance had changed, 3 times in 3 years, with some mixed messages from WG. There had been confusion for young people, and the need to explain the changes to staff and Governing Bodies, regarding the average point score and the language use changes.

Primary School Headteachers welcomed some of the changes, were pleased to move away from big data approach and reiterated that the tracking process was a robust measure to track an individual's progress.

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 - MONDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2020

The Head Teacher of YG Llangynwyd commented that there would also be a reduction in qualifications available through the medium of Welsh.

The Head teacher of Heronsbridge Special School, advised that the new proposals in place, had resulted in better progress in-school, but did not assist those who wanted to compare school performance.

A Member referred to paragraph 3.6 of the report, where it referenced that it was now inappropriate to publish school-level data for Foundation phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 in a public report.

The CSC Senior Challenge Advisor advised that one of the changes introduced had seen a move away from data being shared and compared between schools, towards a more collaborative system. Data previously collated still existed he added, however, it was no longer aggregated by local authorities externally on a school by school basis for comparable purposes between schools. The way forward was leading more to the deriving of collaborative, rather than competitive data, he concluded. However, there was recognition of a need to look at awareness raising about the changes in performance and the reporting of categorisation, as it was not understood.

A Member informed the Invitees, that she was aware that a child in Year 6 at a local school took a mathematics test on-line for which they paid a fee to complete. She was aware that there were similar tests in other subjects that could similarly be carried out by pupils on-line. She asked the representatives of CSC if they felt this was a positive move forward.

The CSC Senior Challenge Advisor confirmed that there was a national reading test, as well as reasoning and a numeracy test, all available on-line. These tests were adapted tests whereby pupils could take tests at different difficulty levels. The tests gauged where pupils had strengths and weaknesses. Pupils could take the tests again to obtain a better result later in the term year. In terms of the tests improving pupil attainment since they had been introduced, he stated that he had received mixed messages on this.

The Head teacher of Heronsbridge School advised that he was in support of the above on-line assessments/tests, as they were easily accessible and allowed teachers and pupils to gauge progression in terms of children obtaining different levels of attainment. Added to this, the results of these were also immediate.

The above was echoed by the Head teacher of Llangewydd Primary School. These type of tests were advantageous to take at the beginning and end of year terms, to look at pupils outcomes and assess if they have improved in key subject areas.

The Head teacher from Brackla Primary School advised that the on-line assessments were available for children in school Years 2 - 9, but she felt the tests were not suitable for the younger age pupils, as they could place significant stress and pressure at an early age. The tests were also not suitable for vulnerable children and those with ALN.

A Member asked whether when issues were identified, they were reported to Welsh Government.

The Chair of the Bridgend Primary Federation advised that they fed back to WG at each meeting.

The Member suggested that if feedback had been provided, given the pressure putting younger children under, the feedback needs to be made strongly.

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 - MONDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2020

A Member asked whether children in a class knew levels their cohort are on.

The Headteacher of Llangewydd Primary advised it was a personal assessment, compared with previous tests and shared with parents.

The Headteacher of Heronsbridge School advised that the tests were specific to the child. SEN and ALN pupils could be significantly older children than their mainstream peers.

A Member asked whether there had been any feedback from the children on the online tests.

School advised that there hadn't been an evaluation yet, but children liked IT and don't like tests.

A Member referred to the positive performance of pupils eligible for Free School Meals compared with the national performance, but highlighted the gap with the performance of nFSM pupils.

The CSC Senior Challenge Advisor explained that this was narrower for Bridgend than across Wales, and that there was quality teaching in classrooms so all gained but the differential remains.

A Member referred to the statement on page 27 of the Estyn report: "In general, across the Local Authority, very few schools share what works well in improving provision for more able and talented pupils", and the Key Stage 4 top quartile and Post 16 dip.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support advised that there was work in progress, but that embedding best practice for more able and talented pupils in policy, was a priority for developing.

The Member requested that in future the report includes an update upon progress on this.

The Headteacher of Llangewydd Primary School advised that the policy needed to be geared to schools, and have a particular focus upon FSM.

A Member asked about school collaboration and how best practice is currently shared.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support advised that there is a focus on sharing best practice through workshops, although they didn't focus on more able and talented and there was a need to have a policy in place. The Central South Consortium were developing a policy, but there was significant guidance for schools.

A Member referred to the number of permanent exclusions increasing over the last three years and requested that the number of pupils moved to other schools and the Pupil Referral Unit following exclusion, be provided to Members of the Committee.

A Member asked whether BCBC had claimed the Period Poverty money and whether Welsh Government would be funding the School Holiday Enrichment Programme this year.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support confirmed both of the above.

Members wished to make the following comments and conclusions:

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 - MONDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2020

- A Member reiterated a previous request that an executive summary be provided for long reports, highlighting any concerns and the recommendations.
- A Member queried the structure of the changes to performance measures for 2019 and requested an explanation of the points scoring. Members' attention was drawn to the Training Presentation appended to the report which had been presented to Members in September and a further session could be provided if required.
- A Member questioned why Key Stage 3 was not included in the Areas for Development in the report, despite the reported decrease in performance in the most recent year.
- A Member referred to the statement on page 27 of the Estyn report: "In general, across the Local Authority, very few schools share what works well in improving provision for more able and talented pupils", and requested that in future the report includes an update upon progress on this.
- A Member referred to school collaboration and asked how best practice is currently shared.

A Member referred to the number of permanent exclusions increasing over the last three years and requested that the number of pupils moved to other schools and the Pupil Referral Unit following exclusion, be provided to Members of the Committee.

97. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny presented the Committee with the FWP which included in Table A, the topic prioritised and agreed for the next Committee meeting, as follows:

- 9 March 2020 - Learner Travel;

The Committee requested:

- That pupil representatives affected by Learner Travel Proposals be invited to the meeting.
- That the topic of Post 16 Education be scheduled for scrutiny at the same Scrutiny Committee meeting as Learner Travel, and pupil representatives from some schools directly affected by the Post 16 Education proposals be invited to the meeting.
- That consideration be given to changing the time of the meeting to accommodate the pupil invitees to after school if necessary.
- That meetings be held in term-time.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer – Scrutiny drew Members' attention to the list of proposed future topics in Table B.

The Committee requested:

- That the topics of Homelessness, Emergency Accommodation and Supporting People Grant be considered together in a future meeting.
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98. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY - FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS

The Chief Officer, Legal, HR and Regulatory Services submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to present the feedback from the previous meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 for discussion, approval and actioning.

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 - MONDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2020

RESOLVED: That Committee approved the feedback and responses to the comments and recommendations prepared by Members at the previous meetings (Attached as Appendix A, B & C to the report.)

99. URGENT ITEMS

None.

The meeting closed at 16:30

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

19 OCTOBER 2020

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL, HR & REGULATORY SERVICES

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

1. Purpose of report.

- a) To present proposed initial items for the Committee's draft interim Forward Work Programme;
- b) To request any specific information the Committee identify to be included in the item for the next meeting;
- c) To request the Committee to identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal calendar of meetings, using the agreed criteria form.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities.

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

Scrutiny Update

3.1 Following the Covid-19 Pandemic lockdown in March, Scrutiny Committees were initially postponed as the Council focussed upon key priorities in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. A report was presented to Cabinet in June 2020 requesting that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) consider the creation of a Cross-Party Recovery Panel. The COSC met on 6th July 2020 and approved

the establishment of a Recovery Panel with the aim of shaping, informing and advising Cabinet on the Council's recovery planning to form the basis of the recovery phase of the pandemic. The Panel met 6 times and heard from 5 sets of invitees between 4th and 25th August 2020 and produced recommendations to COSC on 7th September 2020 which were further reported to Cabinet on 15th September, and a formal response from Cabinet is expected. The Recovery Panel is now awaiting the Public Service Board's Community Impact Assessment to consider the findings, before selecting the next area of focus to be examined in greater detail.

- 3.2 A Combined meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees 1 and 2 scheduled in March was postponed due to lockdown, but was subsequently held remotely via Skype for Business on 13th July 2020. Scrutiny considered proposals for Post-16 Education and Learner Travel and made recommendations to Cabinet upon the proposals. Cabinet considered the Scrutiny recommendations for Post-16 Education on the 21st July and took a decision on the preferred option, and considered the recommendations upon Learner Travel on the 15th September' and deferred the decision to amend the Local Authority's Learner Travel Policy until after the review of the current statutory distances by Welsh Government in March 2021.
- 3.3 Planning and preparations for this year's cycle of Budget Research and Evaluation Panel (BREP) meetings commenced well ahead of the first meeting on 24th July 2020, with 3 meetings being supported to date, and arrangements are underway for the fourth meeting.
- 3.4 Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings did not recommence while Scrutiny Officers supported 6 meetings of the Recovery Panel during August, to enable the Panel to conclude its initial recommendations to be reported to COSC and Cabinet in September.

Recommencing of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 3.5 The Schedule of Meetings for the remaining municipal year was agreed at Annual Council on 30th September 2020. As the Recovery Panel has now been established, it is recognised that, moving forward, meetings of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees will need to be focused and strategic to avoid a duplication of work.

Forward Work Programme

- 3.6 Under the terms of the Council's Constitution, each Overview and Scrutiny Committee must publish a Forward Work Programme (FWP) as far as it is known.
- 3.7 An effective FWP will identify the issues that the Committee wishes to focus on during the year and provide a clear rationale as to why particular issues have been selected, as well as the approach that will be adopted; i.e. will the Committee be undertaking a policy review/ development role ("Overview") or performance management approach ("Scrutiny").
- 3.8 The FWPs will remain flexible and will be revisited at each COSC meeting with input from each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SOSC) and any information gathered from Forward Work Programme meetings with Corporate Directors and Cabinet.

4. Current situation / proposal.

- 4.1 Following the approval of the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meeting dates at Annual Council on 30th September, the scheduling of standing statutory reports to Scrutiny Committees upon: the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Performance, the Corporate Plan, Budget Monitoring, Scrutiny Annual Report, etc. has been mapped.
- 4.2 This Forward Work Programme Update report is being submitted to the Committee for consideration and the outcome will be fed back to COSC on 2nd December 2020 to set a focussed overall Scrutiny Forward Work Programme.
- 4.3 At the time of reporting, the Council has been advised that the Local Government Financial Settlement from Welsh Government will be later than expected, and so scrutiny of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) will need to be considered by Scrutiny Committees after Cabinet considers the draft MTFS proposals on 19th January 2021 and not in the December cycle of meetings as originally planned. Consequently, arrangements will be made to move the date of the January meeting to facilitate this, subject to approval by Council.
- 4.4 It is proposed that it would be timely that the Committee receives an updated briefing from the Corporate Director – Education and Family Support upon the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic upon the Education and Family Support Service area and the operational response at its next meeting on Monday 7th December 2020 at 9.30am. The Committee is therefore asked to identify any specific information they would like to be included in this update for their next meeting.

Identification of Further Items

- 4.5 The Committee is requested to identify any further items for consideration on the interim Scrutiny Forward Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal calendar of meetings, using the prior agreed criteria form. The Committee are reminded of the criteria form which Members can use to propose further items for the FWP which the Committee can then consider for prioritisation at a future meeting. The criteria form emphasises the need to consider issues such as impact, risk, performance, budget and community perception when identifying topics for investigation and to ensure a strategic responsibility for Scrutiny and that its work benefits the Authority.

Corporate Parenting

- 4.6 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a Local Authority towards looked after children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'corporate parent', therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for the children and young people looked after by Bridgend.
- 4.7 In this role, it is suggested that Members consider how each item they consider affects children in care and care leavers, and in what way can the Committee assist in these areas.

Scrutiny Member Training

4.8 Members may recall that Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Questioning Skills Training for Scrutiny Members and Training for Scrutiny Chairs was postponed due to the national lockdown. However WLGA can now offer the training via Microsoft Teams software, which has recently been installed on Members' devices. It is therefore proposed that the following sessions be provided via Microsoft Teams (dates to be arranged):

- One session of Scrutiny Questioning Skills for all Scrutiny Members;
- One session of Scrutiny Chairs' Training for 3 Scrutiny Chairs, and invite the Chair of the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel, the Chair of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel and the Chair of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Panel.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules.

5.1 The work of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend. Any changes to the structure of the Scrutiny Committees and the procedures relating to them would require the Bridgend County Borough Council constitution to be updated.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality impacts arising directly from this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long-term - The approval of this report will assist in the planning of Scrutiny business in both the short-term and in the long-term on its policies, budget and service delivery.
- Prevention - The early preparation of the Forward Work Programme allows for the advance planning of Scrutiny business where Members are provided an opportunity to influence and improve decisions before they are made by Cabinet.
- Integration - The report supports all the wellbeing objectives.
- Collaboration - Consultation on the content of the Forward Work Programme

has taken place with the Corporate Management Board, Heads of Service, Elected Members and members of the public.

- Involvement - Advanced publication of the Forward Work Programme ensures that the public and stakeholders can view topics that will be discussed in Committee meetings and are provided with the opportunity to engage.

8. Financial Implications.

8.1 The delivery of the Forward Work Programme will be met from within existing resources for Overview and Scrutiny support.

9. Recommendations.

9.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Confirm the proposed initial items for the Committee's draft interim Forward Work Programme in paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4 above;
- b) Identify any specific information the Committee wish to be included in the item for the next meeting;
- c) Request the Committee to identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal calendar of meetings, using the agreed criteria form.

K Watson
Chief Officer - Legal, HR & Regulatory Services
13 October 2020

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Background documents: None

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

19 OCTOBER 2020

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL, HR & REGULATORY SERVICES

CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION NOMINATION REPORT

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request the Committee to nominate one Member as its Corporate Parenting Champion to represent the Committee as an invitee to meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:-
1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
 2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
 3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a local authority towards looked after children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'corporate parent' therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for the children and young people looked after by Bridgend. ¹

¹ Welsh Assembly Government and Welsh Local Government Association 'If this were my child... A councillor's guide to being a good corporate parent to children in care and care leavers', June 2009

- 3.2 In order to further develop and enhance the Council's Corporate Parenting role with its partners, a Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting comprising all Members of Cabinet was established by Cabinet on 4 November 2008.
- 3.3 The inaugural meeting of the Cabinet Committee was held on 27 November 2008 where it was agreed that the Cabinet Committee will meet bi-monthly. The terms of reference for the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting are:
- to ensure that looked after children are seen as a priority by the whole of the Authority and by the Children and Young People's Partnership;
 - to seek the views of children and young people in shaping and influencing the parenting they receive;
 - to ensure that appropriate policies, opportunities and procedures are in place;
 - to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Authority in its role as corporate parent against Welsh Government guidance.
- 3.4 At its inaugural meeting, the Cabinet Committee requested that a Corporate Parenting "Champion" be nominated from each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to become permanent invitees to the Cabinet Committee.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to nominate one Member as its Corporate Parenting Champion to represent the Committee as an invitee at meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.
- 4.2 The role of the Corporate Parenting Champion is to represent their Overview and Scrutiny Committee, partaking in discussions with Cabinet over items relating to children in care and care leavers.
- 4.3 It is also suggested that in this role each Champion considers how all services within the remit of Scrutiny affect children in care and care leavers and encourage their own Committee to bear their Corporate Parenting role in mind when participating in Scrutiny.
- 4.4 Scrutiny Champions can greatly support the Committee by advising them of the ongoing work of the Cabinet Committee and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 The work of the Subject Scrutiny Committee relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long Term – The establishment of the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee demonstrates the Authority’s long term commitment to improving and strengthening their role as Corporate Parents to care leavers and Looked After Children.
- Prevention – The Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee are preventative in their nature and ensure that appropriate policies, opportunities and procedures are in place for all care leavers and Looked After Children.
- Integration – This report supports all the well-being objectives.
- Collaboration – All members are Corporate Parents and this report supports collaborative working with Cabinet and Members of Scrutiny and emphasises the role of Corporate Parents for all Elected Members.
- Involvement – Corporate Parent Champions provide practical support and guidance to children in care and care leavers to ensure they achieve their well-being goals.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation(s)

9.1 The Committee is asked to:

- a) Nominate one Member of the Committee as its Corporate Parenting Champion to represent the Committee at meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.

K Watson
Chief Officer - Legal, HR & Regulatory Services
13 October 2020

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Background Documents

None

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1

19 OCTOBER 2020

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL, HR & REGULATORY SERVICES

NOMINATION TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD SCRUTINY PANEL

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to request the Committee to nominate one Member to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:-

1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 From 1 April 2016, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 introduced statutory Public Services Boards (PSB) across each local authority area in Wales. PSBs work together to improve the social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being of the board's area. The Act specified that one Committee take an overview of the overall effectiveness of the Board which the Authority determined to carry out via a PSB Scrutiny Panel which now sits under the remit of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- 3.2 The purpose of the Panel is to review and scrutinise the efficiency and effectiveness of the PSB and its decisions as well as the governance arrangements surrounding it. The Panel will hold up to two meetings a year and will make reports or recommendations to the Board regarding its functions, with the aim of enhancing its impact. These recommendations are to be presented to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval prior to submission to the Board.
- 3.3 A copy of any report or recommendation made to the Public Service Board must be sent to the Welsh Ministers, the Commissioner and the Auditor General for Wales.
- 3.4 The membership of the PSB Panel is determined annually and incorporates three Members from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, one Member from each of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees and counterpart representatives that sit on the Public Service Board.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to nominate one Member to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 The work of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long-term - The establishment of the PSB Panel will assist in the long term planning of the business of the Council by the continuation of effective relationships with other organisations to improve wellbeing in Bridgend County now and in the future.
- Prevention - The PSB Scrutiny Panel will monitor the Public Service Board's objectives and priorities within the Wellbeing Plan which address underlying causes of

problems and prevent them getting worse or happening in the future.

- Integration - The report supports all the wellbeing objectives.
- Collaboration - The PSB Panel supports partnership working with other organisations both locally and regionally.
- Involvement - The PSB Panel will maintain a relationship with other Organisations through effective partnership working and act as a critical friend to ensure the PSB are involving citizens of Bridgend when making decisions that affect them.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 The Committee is asked to:

- a) Nominate one Member to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

K Watson
Chief Officer - Legal, HR & Regulatory Services
13 October 2020

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Background Documents

None

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