

# Public Document Pack

## Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

### Bridgend County Borough Council



Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont, CF31 4WB / Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB

*Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg.  
Rhowch wybod i ni os mai Cymraeg yw eich  
dewis iaith.*

*We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Please  
let us know if your language choice is Welsh.*



Dear Councillor,

### **SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1**

A meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 will be held in the Hybrid in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB / Remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Monday, 18 November 2024 at 11:00**.

### **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 - 10  
To receive for approval the minutes of the meeting of 16/09/2024
4. Pupil Attendance 11 - 22  
Invitees:

Councillor Martyn Jones – Cabinet Member Education and Youth Services

Lindsay Harvey - Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People  
Nicola Echanis - Head of Education, Early Years and Young People

Mark Lewis – Group Manager (Early Years and Young People)  
Megan Aspee – Interim Manager Education Engagement Team  
Gail Biggs – Group Manager, Learner Support

Darren Jones – Principal Improvement Manager – Central South Consortium

#### Headteachers

Jonathan Lewis – Headteacher at Coity Primary School

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Iwan Jones – Assistant Headteacher at Llangynwyd Comprehensive

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

6. Forward Work Programme Update

23 - 50

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 and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

Councillors:

JPD Blundell

RJ Collins

HJ David

H Griffiths

Councillors

D M Hughes

J Llewellyn-Hopkins

I M Spiller

T Thomas

Councillors

JH Tildesley MBE

A Williams

AJ Williams

E D Winstanley

Registered Representatives

Angela Clarke

Samantha Lambert-Worgan

Church in Wales Representative

Parent Governor Representative - Special  
School

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON MONDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 11:00

Present Virtually

Chairperson (for the meeting): AJ Williams

JPD Blundell  
T Thomas

HJ David  
E Winstanley

D M Hughes

I M Spiller

Apologies for Absence

RJ Collins, J Llewellyn-Hopkins and A Williams

Officers:

Lindsay Harvey  
Nicola Echanis  
Mark Lewis  
Susan Roberts  
Robin Davies  
Stephanie Thomas  
Owen Shepherd

Corporate Director – Education, Early Years & Young People  
Head of Education and Family Support  
Group Manager, Early Years and Childcare Manager  
Group Manager, Schools  
Group Manager, Strategy, Performance and Support  
Early Years and Childcare Manager  
Youth Support Services Manager

Lucy Beard  
Stephen Griffiths

Scrutiny Officer  
Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Invitees / Registered Representatives

Kathryn John	Headteacher, Brackla Primary School and Chair of Primary Federation
Neil Pryce	Headteacher, Pil Primary School
Ryan Davies	Headteacher, Byrnteg Comprehensive School
Samantha Lambert-Worgan	Registered Representative - Parent Governor Special School

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Jon-Paul Blundell – Prejudicial – Item 4, Involvement in the Young People’s Directorate Strategic Plan 2023-26 last year  
Councillor Elaine Winstanley – Personal – Item 7, Employer Owen Cultural Trust mentioned in the information report  
Councillor Huw David – Prejudicial – Item 4, Member of Cabinet at the time the Strategic Plan was accepted and endorsed

**52. Approval of Minutes**

Decision Made	<u>Resolved:</u> That the minutes of a meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 dated 18 July 2024, to be approved as true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	16 September 2024

**53. Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023-2026 Update**

Decision Made	<p><u>Resolved:</u> Following consideration of the report and detailed discussion with Cabinet Members and Senior Officers the Committee made the following comments and Recommendations:</p> <p><b>T1: Pupil and staff wellbeing</b></p> <p>1. Members expressed concern about Learning Support staff leaving schools for employment in other sectors to potentially earn more and in more flexible or hybrid roles. Discussions with Invited Headteachers included:</p>
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- Losing staff at key times with four weeks' notice;
- The length of time taken for the recruitment process;
- A significant reduction in the quality and number of applications for such vacancies creating a challenge for schools.

**Following discussions and given concerns about the challenging impact of the above on schools, the Committee recommended that the situation be monitored and kept under review to provide assurance.**

**T2: Support for Pupil behaviour, attendance and exclusions**

2. Members asked what was being done to increase capacity in the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) in the Bridge Alternative Provision and in Heronsbridge School, as there was concern at the number of children placed in other schools, which may not be the most suitable environment for them. Officers responded assuring the Committee that a lot of work had been carried out to review available provision. Heronsbridge had been over capacity for a while and there were plans to look at the possibility of an available building which could potentially be used for additional classrooms depending on grants available and taking into consideration any financial implications on the school. Over the coming term a longer-term plan for capacity would be developed aiming to meet developing needs and increased demand in the service.

**The Committee felt it was important to ensure that all was being examined to extend provision in the special schools and recommended that the longer term plan for capacity be reported to a future meeting of the Committee and added to the Forward Work Programme.**

**T11: Effective Childcare and early years offer.**

3. Members referred to the proposal made as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2024-25 regarding the removal of nursery provision in primary schools and asked what progress had been made on ensuring there was enough childcare provision. Officers advised a full childcare sufficiency assessment would be carried out to look at the potential demand for childcare a prior to consideration of nursery provision. That

information would be gathered in the next 6-8 weeks and would give people the opportunity to have their say, and to obtain the best information possible, before a future decision is considered. Prior to submitting a consultation report, a plan for any shortfall in childcare places would be prepared.

**The Committee recommended that a further report be provided to SOSC 1 on the outcome of the review of the sufficiency of childcare places, prior to Cabinet consideration of Nursery provision.**

**Additional information:**

Following detailed consideration and discussion with Cabinet Members and Officers, the Committee made the following requests for information:

**T1: Pupil and staff wellbeing**

4. Members raised the removal of the balance updates for school dinner accounts in Secondary Schools and there no longer being a breakdown of what the money put into the pupils' accounts was spent on, which was important to help parents to support their children to make informed nutritional choices.

Officers advised that the introduction of the Universal Primary Free School meals had meant a fundamental change to systems and enabled reporting to Welsh Government (WG). Whilst the current system would remain, schools had the option of investing in systems such as pay parent that could be linked to their corporate financial systems, and schools were making progress in investing in 'reevaluation units/machines' and a written update on progress across the nine secondary schools could be provided.

**Following Discussions, the Committee requested a written update on progress across the secondary schools, be provided to Members of the Committee.**

<p><b>T8: Robust safeguarding procedures across all the directorate’s service areas</b></p> <p>5. Members referred to Schools across Wales and the UK undertaking lockdown risk assessments to demonstrate how they protect staff and pupils from security threats and asked what the plans were for proportionate and sensible procedures. Officers advised they had worked closely with schools over a number of years on emergency procedures and these were refreshed last summer whilst working closely with the Emergency Planning Team and Health and Safety Unit. Welsh Government had also produced guidance, in line with which the Authority’s Policy had been adopted.</p> <p><b>The Committee agreed on the importance of the procedures being as robust as possible and welcomed any feedback from Estyn inspections on those procedures once they had taken place.</b></p> <p><b>T5: Curriculum for Wales and assessment</b></p> <p>6. The Committee were pleased to see the new Curriculum for Wales being successfully rolled out across the Borough and asked given the focus being very much on hands on learning and access to play, how the Authority was ensuring that schools were adequately prepared to be able to deliver the new curriculum. Officers explained there was a significant amount of investment into new schools and upgrading schools across the local authority, in addition they worked closely with Welsh Government on the community focused schools grant and maintenance grant using those whenever possible to make the learning environment accessible and exciting for learners.</p> <p>Members queried how the grant funding was allocated between the schools. Officers responded that the overall figure of the Community focused school grant and maintenance grant was managed by the Communities Directorate and allocation figures could be provided to Members of the Committee.</p> <p><b>Following the discussions, the Committee requested a breakdown of the allocation of the Community Focused School Grant and Maintenance Grant be provided to Members of the Committee.</b></p>
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	<p><b>General</b></p> <p><b>7. The Committee welcomed the suggestion that the Directorate Strategic Plan be reported to Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 annually to benefit from the Committee’s ongoing monitoring and requested that it be added to the Forward Work Programme for the future year.</b></p>
Date Decision Made	16 September 2024

**54. Cabinet Response to Committee Recommendations on the Learner Travel Consultation Outcome**

Decision Made	<p>The Scrutiny Officer presented the report, the purpose of which was to present the Committee with the Cabinet response to the Recommendations made by the Committee on the Learner Travel Consultation on 18 July 2024.</p> <p>Following consideration of the response, it was</p> <p><u>Resolved:</u> The Committee noted the Cabinet response to the Committee’s recommendations made on the Learner Travel Consultation report.</p>
Date Decision Made	16 September 2024

**55. Information Report - 2023-24 Quarter 4 Performance**

Decision Made	<u>Resolved:</u> The Committee noted the publication of the information report on 2023-2024 Quarter 4 Performance report.
Date Decision Made	16 September 2024

**56. Forward Work Programme Update**

Decision Made	<u>Resolved:</u> The Committee considered and approved the Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appenidx A, Subject to inclusion of the items below, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in Appendix B and noted that the FWP, Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet and any updates from the
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	<p>Committee would be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, following consideration in this cycle of Committee Meetings.</p> <p>The Committee requested the following be included in the FWP:</p> <p>8. Members requested that when Attendance, Behaviour and Exclusions were to be scheduled to come to the Committee could Officers please ensure the following invitees were sent an invite:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Secondary school headteachers due to this being where the main exclusions were coming from.</li><li>- Invitation be sent to Ysgol Bryn Castell as a school that provides education for pupils with complex Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD).</li><li>- A member within the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision team that specifically deals with and supports children with behavioural difficulty.</li></ul>
Date Decision Made	16 September 2024

**57. Urgent Items**

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	16 September 2024

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#) for Part One and this [link](#) for Part Two.

The meeting closed at 14:09.

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<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>18 NOVEMBER 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>PUPIL ATTENDANCE</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>LINDSAY HARVEY CORPORATE DIRECTOR (EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE)</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>MARK LEWIS GROUP MANAGER (EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE)</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<b>Following the COVID-19 pandemic and the disruption to education for children in Bridgend, pupil attendance in Bridgend schools decreased. All local authorities in Wales have experienced similar challenges. School attendance is a priority for the directorate. While school attendance levels are starting to show a slow but steady increase since the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, they remain below pre-pandemic rates. The most common reason for absence is reported as illness and coded accordingly. Other reasons for pupil non-attendance include holidays and medical and dental appointments. The education welfare officers and schools have been working in close partnership to improve attendance levels within the context of the All-Wales Attendance Framework (2012).</b>

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 (SOSC1) with further detail as to how the Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate ('the directorate') is working with delivery partners and stakeholders to improve pupil attendance.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Following the COVID-19 pandemic and the disruption to education for children in Bridgend, pupil attendance in Bridgend schools decreased. All local authorities in Wales have experienced similar challenges.
- 2.2 Over the course of the past two school years, the number of challenges and pressures that schools have had to face has continued, demonstrating that, although the normal life of the school has resumed, the true impact of COVID-19 is now beginning to be seen in terms of pupil attendance.
- 2.3 The attendance data for pupils attending Bridgend primary and secondary schools during the period 2018-2019 to 2023-2024 is highlighted in the table below.

**Table 1** Attendance data for pupils attending Bridgend primary and secondary schools during the period 2018-2019 to 2023-2024

	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024
Primary	94.8%	Not available	Not available	90.1%	91.5%	92.3%
Secondary	94.1%	Not available	Not available	86.5%	87.9%	88.9%

- 2.4 As illustrated in the table above, school attendance levels across primary schools has decreased by 2.5 percentage points from 2018-2019 to 2023-2024. School attendance levels across secondary schools has decreased by 5.2 percentage points from 2018-2019 to 2023-2024. While these reductions are concerning, this reflects a national position which has clearly been influenced by the pandemic.
- 2.5 A revised [School Attendance Enforcement Policy](#) was endorsed in September 2023 to ensure all children within the county regularly attend education provision. Education welfare officers ensure the local authority meets its responsibilities and work with schools, parents/carers to ensure compliance. The policy outlines the legal framework, procedures and alternatives for addressing non-attendance issues.
- 2.6 The Education (Penalty Notice) Wales Regulations 2013 give local authorities powers to issue fixed penalty notices (FPNs). Education welfare officers issue FPNs in response to requests from headteachers, deputy headteachers or police officers. FPNs may be considered for a minimum of 10 unauthorised sessions in the current school term, persistent lateness of more than 10 sessions in the current term, unauthorised holidays and other specific circumstances where the parents/carers have not engaged with the education welfare officers.

2.7 The local authority is responsible for the administration of FPNs and for bringing prosecutions. The local authority needs to ensure that there is sufficient evidence available to proceed to a successful prosecution if a payment of notice is not made. There have been no formal prosecutions issued for the school year 2023-2024. Consideration is given when deciding to issue a penalty notice for truancy as to whether it can be effective in helping to get the pupil back into school or alternative provision. The FPN is £60 if paid within 28 working days, £120 if paid after 28 working days but before 42 working days and if it is not paid within 42 working days prosecution procedures are initiated or the offence withdrawn.

2.8 The FPN data for the school year 2023-2024 is shown in the table below.

**Table 2** FPNs issues in the school year 2023-2024.

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Number of primary school age children</b>	<b>Number of secondary school age children</b>	<b>Total number of children referred</b>
10+ unauthorised absences	6	8	14
10+ unauthorised absences and failure to engage	10	6	16
10+ unauthorised absences and persistent lateness	0	4	4
10+ unauthorised absences and term time holiday	0	4	4
10+ unauthorised absences, persistent lateness and failure to engage	2	0	2
Persistent lateness	0	2	2
Term-time holiday	10	6	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>58</b>

2.9 The comparative attendance data of pupils in maintained schools for the school year 2023-2024 is shown in the table below.

**Table 3** Attendance data for pupils in Bridgend compared to all-Wales attendance figures during the school year 2023-2024

	<b>Average percentage of sessions present</b>	<b>Average percentage of sessions of authorised absence</b>	<b>Average percentage of sessions of unauthorised absence</b>	<b>Average percentage of sessions of absence</b>
<b>All-Wales</b>	89.0%	7.3%	3.6%	11.0%
<b>Bridgend</b>	89.5%	7.6%	2.9%	10.5%

### **3. Current situation / proposal**

3.1 School attendance is a priority for the directorate. While school attendance levels are starting to show a slow but steady increase since the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, they remain below pre-pandemic rates. The most common reason for absence is reported as illness and coded accordingly. Other reasons for pupil non-attendance include authorised and unauthorised holidays and authorised medical and dental appointments. The education welfare officers and schools have been working in close partnership to improve attendance levels within the context of the All-Wales Attendance Framework (2012).

3.2 Education welfare officers support and advise schools on attendance including ensuring statutory legal functions are used consistently and appropriately.

3.3 A working group, convened to revise and develop the local authority's attendance strategy, has been in place for the last 18 months. The group's representation includes:

- Group Manager (Early Years and Young People) (as chairperson);
- headteachers;
- education welfare officers;
- Communications and Marketing Team officers; and
- Central South Consortium.

3.4 In addition, the local authority has developed truancy initiatives to support improved attendance. Marketing campaigns have been explored to ensure a consistent message is being relayed to parents/carers about the importance of school attendance. Schools have introduced the 'Attend to Achieve' approach to improving attendance. Additional detail of this scheme is outlined at paragraph 3.28. The local authority has developed an attendance audit tool for schools to complete alongside

the education welfare officer. The local authority wants to ensure that there is consistent support from the education welfare officers available in all schools. The attendance audit is a tool for schools to utilise as part of their self-evaluation. The audit tool will support data analysis, identify challenges to improving attendance, areas of good practice and attendance initiatives within the schools. Each primary and secondary school will complete a first draft of their attendance audit by 13 December 2024.

- 3.5 The local authority reviewed the early help arrangements which resulted in a recent restructure of the Education Welfare Service. Education welfare officers now form part of the Education Engagement Team.
- 3.6 The directorate aims to improve pupil attendance rates in primary and secondary school by two percentage points in 2025.
- 3.7 A large number of pupils have been affected by the pandemic due to lack of routine impacted by school closures and remote learning. Many pupils continue to present with anxiety and wellbeing issues. Addressing these issues is key in ensuring pupils reach their full potential in all aspects of life, including achieving a good education.
- 3.8 In addition to the requirement to improve general pupil attendance levels, Bridgend has identified the following three key issues which are affecting pupil attendance in Bridgend schools:
- significant gaps in attendance between our highest and lowest performing primary schools and similarly for secondary schools;
  - persistent absenteeism; and
  - poor attendance of some vulnerable groups.

### **Narrowing the gap**

- 3.9 The comparative attendance data of the highest performing and lowest performing primary and secondary schools in Bridgend in 2023-2024 is highlighted in Table 4 below.

**Table 4** Attendance data for highest and lowest performing primary and secondary schools in Bridgend during the 2023-2024 school year

	<b>Highest performing attendance</b>	<b>Lowest performing attendance</b>	<b>Percentage point gap</b>
<b>Primary school</b>	95.2%	89.3%	5.9%
<b>Secondary school</b>	91.1%	85.7%	5.4%

## Persistent absenteeism

- 3.10 The definition of persistent absenteeism was changed nationally in 2023, reducing the threshold considered as persistent absence from 20% to 10% of sessions missed by a pupil, with the aim of encouraging 'earlier intervention'. Welsh Government statistics show that the percentage of persistently absent secondary school age pupils remained between 19% and 15.9% between 2013-2014 and 2018-2019.
- 3.11 Following the COVID-19 pandemic, persistent absence has more than doubled between 2018-2019 and 2023-2024 and the national percentage is now 37.1%, down from 40.1% in 2022-2023.
- 3.12 The persistent absenteeism data for the school year 2023-2024 is outlined in Table 5. The percentage points of persistent absence are that of the whole primary school and secondary school population.

**Table 5** Persistent absenteeism data for the school year 2023 – 2024 at three thresholds under 90% attendance, under 80% attendance and under 50% attendance.

Persistent absence level	Under 90% attendance	Under 80% attendance	Under 50% attendance
Primary school	23.95%	5.39%	0.72%
Secondary school	34.97%	15.38%	5.09%

- 3.13 The reasons for pupil absence are complex and multifaceted. There are a number of factors that influence non-attendance including parental attitudes, children's mental health, the cost of living crisis and the breakdown in the relationships between school and families.

## Education Welfare Service (Education Engagement Team)

- 3.14 In August 2024, the Education Welfare Service and part of the Education Engagement Team were subject to a consultation and staff restructuring. The restructuring resulted in the education welfare officers becoming part of the Education Engagement Team. The education welfare officers and the Education Engagement Team co-ordinators are now line managed by two lead education



engagement co-ordinators with the service overseen by the Education Engagement Team Manager.

3.15 The key functions of the Education Welfare Service are as follows:

- supporting school attendance;
- providing advice, guidance and support to schools, professionals and families;
- undertaking welfare checks to ensure the wellbeing of pupils;
- to follow and work within legislation, national and local guidance;
- to provide relevant documentation for court; and
- identify electively home educated children and children missing education and notify appropriately.

3.16 Since the restructure the team manager and leads are working to ensure there is consistency in the support provided to schools and families. The previous management structure had the education welfare officers managed across three locality hubs, which presented with consistency issues. Developments are ongoing to ensure equity and consistency across the service.

3.17 A number of policies and procedures required updating. This includes both the [Elective Home Education Policy](#) and the [Children Missing Education Policy](#) which have recently been endorsed by Cabinet.

3.18 An area of development across the team is the fixed penalty notice procedure and prosecution. Training will be provided and internal processes mapped to support staff with a more robust process.

3.19 As with any new management structure there is a requirement to fully understand the service area, needs, demands and for staff to feel confident and supported by their management team. A strong emphasis has been placed on relationship building, listening to issues and taking action to resolve any concerns raised. Data has been utilised to understand the current position, areas of demand and deployment of resources based on need.

3.20 The indicative medium-term financial strategy (MTFS) proposal for 2025-2026 included in SOSC1's consideration of the MTFS 2024-2025 to 2027-2028 on 18 January 2024 has an indicative budget saving proposal for 2025-2026 of £136k (proposal reference EDF510 – Reduction in Education Welfare Service). This saving of £136k has been made during the current financial year.

3.21 The challenges in school attendance rates as well as increased school exclusions, levels of persistent absence, offending rates, associated anti-social behaviour can have a negative impact on educational attainment. Education welfare officers act as a point of contact for vulnerable children and families, identifying and addressing safeguarding concerns. Additional financial pressures on the service would result in

a gap in safeguarding measures and a potential increase in unmet care and support needs putting further pressure on Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate services.

- 3.22 The first attendance drive this school year will focus on the non-attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals (eFSM). The data indicates that on average their attendance is lower than that of their peers. Welsh Government All-Wales data shows that eFSM pupils were absent for 13.6% of all school sessions in 2023-2024, compared to 7% for those not eligible for FSM. In 2023-2024, 5.5% of these absences were unauthorised for eFSM and 1.9% for those not eligible for FSM.
- 3.23 There is a multi-agency approach and visiting families will include officers from both the Education Engagement Team and Pupil Support Services (including education welfare officers, family engagement officers and lead workers). Including both services will provide a holistic approach for children and their families. Multi-agency working is key to ensuring families receive the support based on need.
- 3.24 Regular truancy patrols are undertaken, and the education welfare officers work closely with the local Police and conduct patrols once a school term. The youth justice service, children services, pupil support services and voluntary organisations are also actively involved in working with the Education Engagement Team in assisting to resolve non-school attendance of pupils and supporting families.

### **Marketing campaign**

- 3.25 Between July and October 2024, there was a drive to promote the importance of school attendance and support available for families. Social media was utilised to advertise back to school grant support to reach a wider audience who may not access such information via the website. Posters and leaflets were also sent out via schools.
- 3.26 The local authority launched a campaign to highlight the importance of school attendance. Backed by schools across the county borough, the campaign highlights the importance for children to attend school and return to the classroom following the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic. It focuses on the benefits of school beyond learning along with providing support and resources for parents of children who are struggling to attend.
- 3.27 The 'Miss School, Miss Out' short film is about attending school on time, every day, is not only important for a child's learning, but also for their wellbeing, achievement, and overall development. In the short film, the children discuss the reasons why regularly attending school is vital for their happiness and wellbeing, further education, and job opportunities.

The 'Miss School, Miss Out' video may be accessed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1usZS0DHYqo>



### **Attend to Achieve**

3.28 Attend to achieve is a process which provides parents/carers with information on the links between attendance and attainment. This shows which category the child's attendance falls into when attendance is as follows:

- Green = 97% to 100%
- Amber = 93% to 96%
- Red = 92% and below

3.29 Each parent/carer will receive an 'Attend to Achieve' letter in the autumn and spring terms informing them of which category their child's attendance is currently in. This ensures that early intervention is received by pupils and families who are in need. However, headteachers have the discretion to exclude pupils from the circulation who may have extenuating circumstances.

### **Feedback from stakeholders and delivery partners**

3.30 Following the restructure, feedback has been gathered from working groups and individual schools that small positive steps have been recognised already and that a consistent approach is beneficial to ensure that all clusters are accessing the same advice and resource to improving attendance.

### **Impact of activity**

3.31 There has been an increase in pupil attendance as seen in the data (Table 3). The local authority is now above the all-Wales average. It is evident that schools who strategically implement and promote the activities highlighted above are likely to see

improved attendance rates. However, the directorate is acutely aware of the challenges ahead within the wider context of the challenging financial climate and challenging pupil behaviour.

## **Next steps**

3.32 The Education Engagement Team will continue to support schools to improve attendance. The team will work collaboratively with the attendance working group to ensure there is strategic direction to improve attendance across the local authority. The team will look at identifying key themes and trends from attendance data and identify areas of improvement and examples of best practice from the attendance audits. The team will continue to support schools to reduce the levels of persistent absence and fundamentally ensure that the safeguarding of pupils remains a priority. Through consistent approaches, monitoring and evaluation the team will continue to promote positive school attendance.

## **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

## **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

5.1 Summary on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment is listed below:

<b>Long-term</b>	Children and families are enabled to take control and responsibility for the care and protection without intervention from the local authority.
<b>Prevention</b>	Schools having robust, effective and efficient safeguarding procedures that are understood across the school will ensure children are protected from harm.
<b>Integration</b>	The service is a multi-agency partnership where integration is key to good service delivery arrangements.
<b>Collaboration</b>	Collaboration is a key approach to ensure the protection of children and families.

**Involvement** Participation and engagement arrangements will be strengthened to ensure everyone is aware of their responsibilities linked to safeguarding.

## **6. Climate Change Implications**

6.1 There are no climate change implications as a result of this report.

## **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 Safeguarding and corporate parenting are crucial when ensuring the wellbeing and educational attainment of children particularly in relation to school attendance. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Children Act 1989 provide the legal framework for safeguarding children. Schools have a duty to safeguard children which includes regular school attendance.

7.2 Poor school attendance could be a indication of underlying safeguarding issues. Schools must have mechanisms to identify attendance issues early and this includes the monitoring of attendance patterns and where necessary addressing potential safeguarding concerns.

7.3 The Education Engagement Team works in collaboration with schools, Children's Social Care, Health and the Police to ensure a multi-agency approach to supporting children who are at risk of abuse or neglect. Care-experienced children face challenges that can impact school attendance and it is crucial that the schools work in partnership with local authority officers to provide stability and support. Each care experienced child should have a personal educational plan (PEP) that addresses their educational needs including strategies to support attendance and engagement in school.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications related to this report.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 SOSOC1 is asked to:

- consider the contents of the report; and
- provide feedback and recommendations as required.

## **Background documents**

None

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# Agenda Item 6

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>18 November 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL &amp; REGULATORY SERVICES, HR &amp; CORPORATE POLICY</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>MERYL LAWRENCE SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER – SCRUTINY</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>The work of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committees relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Council’s 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.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p><b>The Council’s Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.</b></p> <p><b>The Council’s Constitution also provides for each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard for the Council’s Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework, for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to have oversight and refer any cross-cutting topics to a Committee or Research and Evaluation Panel.</b></p> <p><b>The Committee is asked to consider and agree its Forward Work Programme, identify any specific information it wishes to be included in and any invitees they wish to attend for the reports for the next two Committee meetings, identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the criteria set out in the report, consider the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet and note that the Forward Work Programmes for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be reported to the next meeting of COSC.</b></p>

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Present the Committee with the Forward Work Programme updated at the previous Committee meeting (**Appendix A**) for discussion and consideration;
- b) Request any specific information the Committee identifies to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Request the Committee to identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 3.6 of this report;
- d) Present the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet (**Appendix B**) to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings;
- e) Advise that the Committee's Forward Work Programme as updated by the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC), with those from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SOSC), following their consideration in this cycle of Committee meetings.

## 2. Background

2.1 The Council's Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.

2.2 The Council's Constitution also provides for each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard for the Council's Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework, for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to have oversight and refer any cross-cutting topics to a Committee or Research and Evaluation Panel.

### Best Practice / Guidance

2.3 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's (CfGS) Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the Forward Work Programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be coordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.

2.4 Forward Work Programmes need to be manageable to maximize the effective use of the limited time and resources of Scrutiny Committees. It is not possible to include every topic proposed. Successful Scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members need to be selective, while also being able to demonstrate clear arguments for including or excluding topics.



- 2.5 The CfGS's guide to effective work programming 'A Cunning Plan?' makes the following reference to the importance of good work programming:

*'Effective work programming is the bedrock of an effective scrutiny function. Done well it can help lay the foundations for targeted, incisive and timely work on issues of local importance, where scrutiny can add value. Done badly, scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal.'*

### **3. Current situation / proposal**

#### Forward Work Programme

- 3.1 Following the approval of the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meeting dates at the Annual Meeting of Council on 15 May 2024, the standing statutory reports to Scrutiny Committees of: the Corporate Plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Budget, Performance and Budget Monitoring, etc. have been mapped to the appropriate timely meeting dates into a Forward Work Programme.
- 3.2 The Forward Work Programmes for each Scrutiny Committee have been prepared using a number of difference sources, including:
- Corporate Risk Assessment;
  - Directorate Business Plans;
  - Previous Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme report topics / minutes;
  - Committee / Member proposed topics;
  - Policy Framework;
  - Cabinet Work Programme;
  - Discussions with Corporate Directors;
  - Performance Team regarding the timing of performance information.
- 3.3 There are items where there is a statutory duty for Policy Framework documents to be considered by Scrutiny, e.g., the MTFS including draft budget proposals scheduled for consideration in January 2025, following which COSC will coordinate the conclusions and recommendations from each of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees in a report on the overall strategic overview of Cabinet's draft Budget proposals to the meeting of Cabinet in February 2025.
- 3.4 An effective Forward Work Programme will identify the issues that the Committee wishes to focus on during the year and provide a clear plan. However, at each meeting the Committee will have an opportunity to review this as the Forward Work Programme Update will be a standing item on the Agenda, detailing which items are scheduled for future meetings and be requested to clarify any information to be included in reports and the list of invitees. The Forward Work Programme will remain flexible and will be revisited at each COSC meeting with input from each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee reported and any updated information gathered from Forward Work Programme meetings with Corporate Directors.
- 3.5 The Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programmes will be reported to the next meeting of COSC, with the comments from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee for coordination and oversight of the

overall Forward Work Programme. The SOSC Forward Work Programmes will be included in the standing Forward Work Programme Update report from then on with any feedback from each SOSC meeting included.

### Identification of Further Items

- 3.6 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 maximise the impact scrutiny can have on a topic and the outcomes for people. Criteria which can help the Committee come to a decision on whether to include a referred topic, are set out below:

#### Recommended Criteria for Selecting Scrutiny Topics:

PUBLIC INTEREST:	The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny;
ABILITY TO CHANGE:	Priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence, and add value to;
PERFORMANCE:	Priority should be given to the areas in which the Council is not performing well;
EXTENT:	Priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or large parts of the County Borough, or a large number of the Authority's service users or its population;
REPLICATION:	Work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.

#### Reasons to Reject Scrutiny Topics:

- The issue is already being addressed / being examined elsewhere and change is imminent.
- The topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and can be referred there).
- Scrutiny involvement would have limited / no impact upon outcomes.
- The topic may be sub-judice or prejudicial.
- The topic is too broad to make a review realistic and needs refining / scoping.
- New legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected within the next year.
- The topic area is currently subject to inspection or has recently undergone substantial change / reconfiguration.

### Corporate Parenting

- 3.7 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a local authority towards care experienced 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 care experienced children and young people in Bridgend.

- 3.8 In this role, it is suggested that Members consider how each item they consider affects care experienced children and young people, and in what way can the Committee assist in these areas.
- 3.9 Scrutiny Champions can greatly support the Committee in this by advising them of the ongoing work of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.
- 3.10 The Forward Work Programme for the Committee is attached as **Appendix A** for the Committee's consideration.
- 3.11 The Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings is attached as **Appendix B**.

#### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

- 4.1 The Protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

#### **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

- 5.1 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 and Elected Members.

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

5.2 When setting its Forward Work Programme, the Committee should consider how each item they propose to scrutinise assists in the achievement of the Council's 7 Wellbeing Objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** as follows :-

1. A County Borough where we protect our most vulnerable
2. A County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns
3. A County Borough with thriving valleys communities
4. A County Borough where we help people meet their potential
5. A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency
6. A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community
7. A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives

## 6. **Climate Change Implications**

6.1 The Committee should consider how each item they scrutinise affects climate change, the Council's Net Zero Carbon 2030 target and how it meets the Council's commitments to protect and sustain the environment over the long term. There are no Climate Change Implications arising from this report.

## 7. **Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 The Committee should consider how each item they scrutinise affects care experienced children and young people, and in what way the Committee can assist in these areas. Safeguarding is everyone's business and means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications arising from this report.

## 8. **Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## 9. **Recommendation**

9.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Consider and approve the Forward Work Programme for the Committee in **Appendix A**.
- b) Identify any specific information the Committee wishes to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;

- c) Identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 3.6 of this report.
- d) Note the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in **Appendix B** to track outstanding responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings;
- e) Note that the Committee's Forward Work Programme as approved by the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC), with those from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SOSC), following their consideration in this cycle of Committee meetings.

### **Background documents**

None.

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**2024-25 Forward Work Programme**  
**Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1**

18 July 2024 at 11.00am		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Home-to-School/College Transport Policy	<p>Outcome of the HTST policy public consultation.            To include aspects relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe routes to schools</li> <li>• Implications of revised LDP</li> <li>• School catchment areas</li> <li>• Pupils' admission numbers</li> <li>• New school builds</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Cabinet Members</u></b>            Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b>            Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People.            Head of Education and Family Support            Group Manager (Strategy, Performance and Support)</p> <p><b><u>Headteacher Nominees</u></b>            Headteacher Maesteg Comprehensive            Headteacher Nottage Primary</p>

Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 11.00am –		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023-26 Update	<p>To include update on ALN and Budget implications from 2024-25</p>	<p><b><u>Cabinet Members</u></b>            Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b>            Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People.</p> <p><b><u>Headteacher Nominees</u></b>            Headteacher Brackla Primary School and Chair of Primary Federation            Headteacher Pil Primary School            Headteacher Brynteg Comprehensive</p>

<b>Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 11.00am</b>		
<b>Report Topics</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
Pupil Attendance	To include the consistent themes / concerns regarding pupil non-attendance in schools and the support in place.	<p><b><u>Cabinet Members</u></b> Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People. Head of Education and Family Support Group Manager, Early Years and Young People Interim Manager of Education Engagement Team Group Manager, Learner Support</p> <p><b><u>Central South Consortium</u></b> Principal Improvement Manager</p> <p><b><u>Headteacher Nominees</u></b> Headteacher Coety Primary School Assistant Headteacher Ysgol Gyfun Llangynwyd</p>

<b>Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 11.00am</b>		
<b>Report Topics</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2028-29</p> <p>And</p> <p>Draft Terms of Reference for School Improvement Research Evaluation Panel</p>	Pre Decision	<p><b><u>Cabinet Members</u></b> Leader of Council Deputy Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Chief Executive Chief Officer, Legal &amp; Regulatory Services, HR &amp; Corporate Policy Chief Officer, Finance, Housing &amp; Change Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People.</p>



## APPENDIX A

		<b><u>Headteacher Nominees</u></b> Chair and Vice Chair of the Schools Budget Forum
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### Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025 at 11.00am –

<b>Report Topics</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
Future School Improvement Arrangements	Pre-Decision	<b><u>Cabinet Members</u></b> Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.  <b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People.  <b><u>Headteacher Nominees – TBA</u></b>

### Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 11.00am

<b>Report Topics</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
Behaviour and Exclusions	Committee requested the following invitees be invited:  - Secondary school headteachers - Invitation be sent to Ysgol Bryn Castell  A member within the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision team that specifically deals with and supports children with behavioural difficulty.	<b><u>Cabinet Members</u></b> Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services.  <b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People.  <b><u>CSC</u></b>  <b><u>Headteacher Nominees - TBA</u></b>  <b><u>External</u></b>

### **Members briefing sessions.**

- New Estyn Inspection Framework / Local Government Education Services (LGES)
- Reporting of learner and pupil attainment outcomes - Session to be held to update Members on recommencing of reporting exam results.
- School Safeguarding Audits – Summary

- Update on Effective School Governing Bodies – Support and funding. Invitation to be extended to Governors Association.

**Information reports to be provided.**

- English Language School's catchment areas / capacity
- Appointment of Local Education Authority (LEA) governors – Policy and rules - Criteria and procedure for the appointment and removal of local authority school governors'
- Corporate performance

**Potential Items to be scheduled.**

- ALN Provision and Implementation Update
- Review of school improvement services
- Review of post inspection plan
- School mergers
- School Modernisation update
- Nursery Provision
- Safeguarding

**Proposed Panel**

- School Improvement Research and Evaluation Panel (REP)

**Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1**

**RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING ACTION SHEET 2024-2025**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Response</b>
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	The Committee highlighted that as Corporate Parents, all Councillors have a responsibility to Care Experienced Children and young people and recommended that consideration of how they might be affected by the HTST proposals be explored as part of the Cabinet's decision.	Cabinet	<p><b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p> <p>Reponses requested 13 August 2024.</p> <p>Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.</p>	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a>
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	Evidence at the meeting suggested that the proposals could have a potential impact on attendance and educational outcomes of pupils, particularly in areas of higher social deprivation. Members recommended that if possible, prior to the decision of Cabinet, information and analysis be sought from other Local Authorities to understand the level of this impact in order to inform Cabinet's decision.		<p><b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p> <p>Reponses requested 13 August 2024.</p>	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a>

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
				Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.	
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	The Committee highlighted the importance of communication with parents as well as children and young people regarding any potential changes or ways in which they may be affected and recommended that this be a priority following any decision, in order to ensure they are aware at the earliest opportunity.		<p><b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p> <p>Reponses requested 13 August 2024.</p> <p>Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.</p>	<p><a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a></p>
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	The Committee highlighted various concerns regarding some of the routes to school currently regarded as safe, such as some areas having no pedestrian crossings, routes not being maintained and the lighting along them insufficient for dark winter evenings. The Committee therefore recommended:		<p><b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p>	<p><a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a></p>

**APPENDIX B**

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That all safe routes to schools be reviewed termly;</li> <li>• That a mechanism be provided for parents to provide feedback on any issues with the routes so that they can be rectified quickly.</li> </ul>		<p>Reponses requested 13 August 2024.</p> <p>Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.</p>	<p><a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a></p>
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	<p>Members discussed the issue surrounding children and young people having to walk to school, potentially 3 miles under the new proposals, in various bad weather conditions, and then some pupils also potentially being wet all day resulting from continued crossing of the school site in bad weather to access their classes. The Committee expressed concern over the potential for this to affect pupil attendance on days where the weather was bad. Members also expressed concern over reports that pupils were at times having to wait significant lengths of time for BCBC contracted buses to pick them up from school which meant that pupils and teachers were often waiting outside in awful weather.</p> <p>a. The Committee recommended that the Local Authority work closely with schools and teachers to try and ensure provision is made for pupils to either dry their</p>		<p><b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p> <p>Reponses requested 13 August 2024.</p> <p>Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.</p>	<p><a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a></p>

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		<p>clothing or possibly change when arriving at school.</p> <p>b. Likewise, that provision is made to keep pupils safe and warm after school should they have to wait a while for either a public bus or a BCBC contracted bus to get home.</p> <p>c. Members further recommended that the Authority explore with contractors the times that they are arriving at schools to pick pupils up to minimise waiting times for both pupils and teachers.</p>			
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	Whilst appreciating that the LA's strategy is to grow Welsh Medium education and the number of placements, the Committee expressed concern over the capacity of Welsh Medium schools as well as Faith Schools to account for the potential increase in applications for these schools given that their nursery and post-16 transport provision will be protected under these proposals.		<p><b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p> <p>Reponses requested 13 August 2024.</p> <p>Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1</p>	<p><a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LLL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LLL=0</a></p>

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
				meeting on 16 September 2024.	
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	Should this proposal be agreed, Members highlighted that there will inevitably be an increased reliance on public buses by post-16 pupils to enable them to get to school or college. The Committee therefore recommended that prior to any decision being made on post-16, the LA explore whether there are public buses going near or past each school that offers post-16 education and where there is not, the potential impact of this on pupils then opting out of post-16 education be fully understood. There was particular concern amongst the Committee of the significant impact these changes could potentially have for post-16 pupils living in the Llynfi, Ogmere and Garw Valleys, and the removal of transport for them leading to a potential removal of access to post-16 education.		<p><b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p> <p>Reponses requested 13 August 2024.</p> <p>Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSOC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.</p>	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LLL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LLL=0</a>
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	Members recommended that the LA work with local bus companies as soon as possible to consider how they could assist with post-16 transport provision to schools and colleges across the Borough. Furthermore, that the LA also explore any opportunities with the current contracted bus companies to consider if there is anything that they would possibly be willing to provide in terms of a		<p><b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p> <p>Reponses requested 13 August 2024.</p>	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LLL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LLL=0</a>

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		local bus service which would assist pupils accessing schools and colleges. Members also requested that the LA ensure all bus routes and timetables are communicated to post-16 pupils affected by this change.		Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.	
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	The Committee recommended that the LA explore with Bridgend and Pencoed Colleges whether they would be willing to support their learners in providing free bus passes to eligible pupils, similar to schemes that are provided in colleges in other Welsh LAs.		<p><b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p> <p>Reponses requested 13 August 2024.</p> <p>Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.</p>	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a>
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	Members queried whether the proposed changes to Post-16 transport would be in line with the LA’s commitments under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. Whilst acknowledging that the report summarises the implications relating to the five ways of working under the Act, the Committee felt		<p><b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p>	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a>



**APPENDIX B**

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		that the response does not capture the impact of children no longer being able to attend post-16 education. The Committee therefore recommend that this be fully considered and the impact under the Act be made clearer.		Reponses requested 13 August 2024.  Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a>
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	The Committee expressed concern over potential vulnerable pupils who might be disadvantaged by these proposals, such as those who would not be able to afford a bus pass to access post-16 education and were then at a higher risk of becoming NEET. The Committee recommended that consideration be given to this, and the potential of a means tested scheme for pupils considered as vulnerable.		<b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.  Reponses requested 13 August 2024.  Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a>
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	The Committee recommended that clarification be sought on whether the mileage allowance of 45 pence per mile is sufficient to		<b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the	<a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a>

**APPENDIX B**

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		<p>cover any extra costs parents/carers might incur such as any insurance costs if this was seen as a business mileage allowance. Similarly further clarification be considered as to whether this allowance would have any potential tax or benefit implications for parents/carers.</p>		<p>meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p> <p>Reponses requested 13 August 2024.</p> <p>Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.</p>	<p><a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">E=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a></p>
18 July 2024	Learner Travel Consultation Outcome	<p>During their consideration of the proposals, it was acknowledged by the Cabinet Member that if the proposals were agreed it would inevitably lead to some individual issues and problems and that this was unfortunately unavoidable when looking to reduce certain areas to the statutory minimum. In order to try and respond to these issues, he reported that he would be looking to set up and chair a monitoring group that would consider the impact of any changes to HTST and respond to these as necessary. He explained that this group would engage with Officers across the various directorates when required to try and see how problems could be overcome.</p> <p>a) The Committee welcomed the establishment of this Group and</p>		<p><b>ACTIONED –</b> Recommendations presented to the meeting of Cabinet on 23 July 2024.</p> <p>Reponses requested 13 August 2024.</p> <p>Reponses presented to Members at the next SOSC 1 meeting on 16 September 2024.</p>	<p><a href="https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0">https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD955&amp;ID=955&amp;RPID=22066892&amp;sch=doc&amp;cat=13525&amp;path=13490%2c13492%2c13498%2c13525&amp;LLL=0&amp;LL=0</a></p>

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		<p>recommended that it specifically look to consider some of the aspects mentioned in the above comments and recommendations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular review, maintenance and issues relating to Safe Routes to School;</li> <li>• How schools are responding to pupils walking to school in bad weather conditions such as suitable facilities to dry or change clothes;</li> </ul> <p>As well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on NEETs figure, pupil attendance, absenteeism, vehicle traffic outside schools;</li> <li>• Ensuring that the LA is still meeting its requirements of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act, particularly in relation to post-16 pupils;</li> <li>• Consideration of disabled access and parking at schools and colleges to assist families and young people with getting to and from school safely, particularly as these proposals could potentially result in an increase in traffic outside schools;</li> <li>• How schools are using timetabling to potentially assist its post-16 pupils in</li> </ul>			

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		<p>reducing the impact from these proposals, for example reducing the need of a pupil to have to attend school for only one class on a specific day;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How schools were sharing best practices in the ways they were responding to these proposals and supporting their pupils with accessing education safely.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee recommended that it was essential that school leaders were involved with any monitoring of impact from the proposed changes to HTST as well as any resulting actions.</p>			
<p>16 September 2024</p>	<p>Education, Early Years &amp; Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026 Update</p>	<p><b>T1: Pupil and staff wellbeing</b></p> <p>Members expressed concern about Learning Support staff leaving schools for employment in other sectors to potentially earn more and in more flexible or hybrid roles. Discussions with Invited Headteachers included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Losing staff at key times with four weeks’ notice;</li> <li>- The length of time taken for the recruitment process;</li> </ul>	<p>Corporate Director Education, Early Years and Young People</p>	<p>Recommendations circulated 4 November 2024 requested response to be provided.</p>	

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		<p>- A significant reduction in the quality and number of applications for such vacancies creating a challenge for schools.</p> <p><b>Following discussions and given concerns about the challenging impact of the above on schools, the Committee recommended that the situation be monitored and kept under review to provide assurance.</b></p>			
16 September 2024	Education, Early Years & Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026 Update	<p><b>T2: Support for Pupil behaviour, attendance and exclusions</b></p> <p>Members asked what was being done to increase capacity in the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) in the Bridge Alternative Provision and in Heronsbridge School, as there was concern at the number of children placed in other schools, which may not be the most suitable environment for them. Officers responded assuring the Committee that a lot of work had been carried out to review available provision. Heronsbridge had been over capacity for a while and there were plans to look at the possibility of an available building which could potentially be used for additional</p>	Corporate Director Education, Early Years and Young People	Recommendations circulated 4 November 2024 requested response to be provided.	

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		<p>classrooms depending on grants available and taking into consideration any financial implications on the school. Over the coming term a longer-term plan for capacity would be developed aiming to meet developing needs and increased demand in the service.</p> <p><b>The Committee felt it was important to ensure that all was being examined to extend provision in the special schools and recommended that the longer term plan for capacity be reported to a future meeting of the Committee and added to the Forward Work Programme.</b></p>			
16 September 2024	Education, Early Years & Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026 Update	<p><b>T11: Effective Childcare and early years offer.</b></p> <p>Members referred to the proposal made as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2024-25 regarding the removal of nursery provision in primary schools and asked what progress had been made on ensuring there was enough childcare provision. Officers advised a full childcare sufficiency assessment would be carried out to look at the potential demand for childcare a prior to consideration of nursery provision. That information would</p>	Corporate Director Education, Early Years and Young People	Recommendations circulated 4 November 2024 requested response to be provided.	

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		<p>be gathered in the next 6-8 weeks and would give people the opportunity to have their say, and to obtain the best information possible, before a future decision is considered. Prior to submitting a consultation report, a plan for any shortfall in childcare places would be prepared.</p> <p><b>The Committee recommended that a further report be provided to SOSC 1 on the outcome of the review of the sufficiency of childcare places, prior to Cabinet consideration of Nursery provision.</b></p>			
16 September 2024	Education, Early Years & Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026 Update	<p><b>T1: Pupil and staff wellbeing</b></p> <p>Members raised the removal of the balance updates for school dinner accounts in Secondary Schools and there no longer being a breakdown of what the money put into the pupils’ accounts was spent on, which was important to help parents to support their children to make informed nutritional choices.</p> <p>Officers advised that the introduction of the Universal Primary Free School meals had meant a fundamental change to</p>	Corporate Director Education, Early Years and Young People	Recommendations circulated 4 November 2024 requested response to be provided.	

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		<p>systems and enabled reporting to Welsh Government (WG). Whilst the current system would remain, schools had the option of investing in systems such as pay parent that could be linked to their corporate financial systems, and schools were making progress in investing in 'revaluation units/machines' and a written update on progress across the nine secondary schools could be provided.</p> <p><b>Following Discussions, the Committee requested a written update on progress across the secondary schools, be provided to Members of the Committee.</b></p>			
16 September 2024	Education, Early Years & Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026 Update	<p><b>T8: Robust safeguarding procedures across all the directorate's service areas</b></p> <p>Members referred to Schools across Wales and the UK undertaking lockdown risk assessments to demonstrate how they protect staff and pupils from security threats and asked what the plans were for proportionate and sensible procedures. Officers advised they had worked closely with schools over a number of years on emergency procedures and these were refreshed last summer whilst working</p>	Corporate Director Education, Early Years and Young People	Recommendations circulated 4 November 2024 requested response to be provided.	



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		<p>closely with the Emergency Planning Team and Health and Safety Unit. Welsh Government had also produced guidance, in line with which the Authority's Policy had been adopted.</p> <p><b>The Committee agreed on the importance of the procedures being as robust as possible and welcomed any feedback from Estyn inspections on those procedures once they had taken place.</b></p>			
16 September 2024	Education, Early Years & Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026 Update	<p><b>T5: Curriculum for Wales and assessment</b></p> <p>The Committee were pleased to see the new Curriculum for Wales being successfully rolled out across the Borough and asked given the focus being very much on hands on learning and access to play, how the Authority was ensuring that schools were adequately prepared to be able to deliver the new curriculum. Officers explained there was a significant amount of investment into new schools and upgrading schools across the local authority, in addition they worked closely with Welsh Government on the community focused schools grant and maintenance</p>	Corporate Director Education, Early Years and Young People / Corporate Director of Communities	Recommendations circulated 4 November 2024 requested response to be provided.	

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		<p>grant using those whenever possible to make the learning environment accessible and exciting for learners.</p> <p>Members queried how the grant funding was allocated between the schools. Officers responded that the overall figure of the Community focused school grant and maintenance grant was managed by the Communities Directorate and allocation figures could be provided to Members of the Committee.</p> <p><b>Following the discussions, the Committee requested a breakdown of the allocation of the Community Focussed School Grant and Maintenance Grant be provided to Members of the Committee.</b></p>			
16 September 2024	Education, Early Years & Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026 Update	The Committee welcomed the suggestion that the Directorate Strategic Plan be reported to Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 annually to benefit from the Committee’s ongoing monitoring and requested that it be added to the Forward Work Programme for the future year.	Corporate Director Education, Early Years and Young People / Scrutiny	Recommendations circulated 4 November 2024 requested response to be provided.	