

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24th April 2019

Education & Children Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group Final Report 2018/19:

*A review of the current provision for early years education, childcare
and play opportunities*

Recommendations / key decisions required:

- To endorse the report and recommendations for further consideration by the Executive Board.

Reasons:

- At its meeting on 14th March 2018, the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a task and finish group to undertake a review into provision for early years education, childcare and play opportunities
- The recommendations contained within the report have been formulated by the Group following the consideration of a range of evidence over a series of meetings held between May 2018 and February 2019.

To be referred to the Executive Board for decision: YES

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Glynog Davies (Education & Children)

Chair of the Task & Finish Group:

Cllr. Darren Price

Report Author:

Llinos Jenkins

Designations:

Chair of the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee

Democratic Services Officer

Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses:

daprice@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

01267 224088

lsjenkins@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**EDUCATION & CHILDREN
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

24th April 2019

**Education & Children Scrutiny Committee Task &
Finish Group Final Report 2018/19:**

***A review of the current provision for early years education, childcare
and play opportunities***

Recommendations (Detailed implementation plan at Appendix 1)

Recommendation One

The Council should make representations to Welsh Government to introduce the childcare offer to all 3-4 year old children.

Recommendation Two

The Council continues to promote the childcare offer widely and should look to develop systems to directly target parents using all available data.

Recommendation Three

The Council should develop closer working relationships with Mudiad Meithrin, Wales Pre-school Providers Association and all other relevant agencies when developing capital bids to Welsh Government, and ensure member involvement specifically in relation to early years education/childcare via the scrutiny function.

Recommendation Four

The Council work with its partners to move away from sessional care to delivering full day childcare, where possible, throughout the County.

Recommendation Five

The Council work with its partners to increase the number of settings which are able to provide Welsh medium childcare, as this would complement the council's corporate objective of increasing the number of Welsh speakers within the County. The Council should also identify and promote Welsh language training for childcare staff.

Recommendation Six

The Council work with Careers Wales and secondary schools to promote childcare as a career option in Carmarthenshire.

Recommendation Seven

The Council build on the current RAG rating system and protect the hardship fund which assists settings facing financial difficulties.

Recommendation Eight

The Council works with schools to develop after school clubs and wrap around care provision. Share the experiences of schools who provide successful after school clubs across the County.

Recommendation Nine

The Council undertake a formal review of its current admissions policy for full time education for 4 year olds (the rising 4s policy). Financial and service impact modelling should be undertaken to inform any change to the policy, which should be along similar lines to other authorities within the ERW consortium.

Recommendation Ten

The Council considers increasing its hourly rate paid to early years education providers, from £3.00 to £4.50, in line with the childcare offer payment.

Recommendation Eleven

The Council should review its current policy of having multiple admission dates for the start of full time education.

Recommendation Twelve

The Council set a corporate ambition to provide early years education and childcare provision on all school sites. This vision should be delivered in partnership with non-maintained providers, but in the absence of a local non-maintained provider, the Council should work with schools, or a cluster of schools, and aim to develop school-managed early years education and childcare provision.

Recommendation Thirteen

The Council works to ensure that every parent or carer receives an information booklet which outlines the benefits of Welsh medium education and bilingualism. The Council ensure that Welsh medium early years education capacity increases across the County, and that strategic planning is undertaken in conjunction with Mudiad Meithrin, WPPA and other partners.

Recommendation Fourteen

The Council reviews its online school admission process, and look to simplify the process for parents and carers, particularly in light of the roll out of the childcare offer.

Recommendation Fifteen

The Council look to further developing work with early years providers to ensure consistent and effective mechanisms for sharing pupil information between non-maintained early years providers and schools during the transitional phase. Effective practice to be shared.

Recommendation Sixteen

The Council develop consistency in terms of the number of hours of early years education being delivered by schools and other providers.

Recommendation Seventeen

The Council review the process by which gaps in play provision are identified throughout the county.

Recommendation Eighteen

The Council provides clarity and focus on areas of the County where play opportunities are deemed to be insufficient.

Recommendation Nineteen

The Council work with schools and local partners to develop a model which would enable community use of school play facilities outside of school hours.

Recommendation Twenty

To lobby the Welsh Government to provide direction to allow community use of school grounds and facilities within school regulations.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	YES
----------------------------------	------------

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones Head of Administration & Law

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones Head of Administration & Law

1. Local Member(s) – N/A

2. Community / Town Council – N/A

3. Relevant Partners – Mudiad Meithrin, Wales Pre-school Providers Association and Play Wales all addressed the Task & Finish Group during its review.

4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – Officers from the Education & Children and Chief Executive's departments contributed to and supported the work of the Task & Finish Group.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

NONE