

CABINET

MONDAY 25TH MARCH 2024

PRESENT: Councillor D. Price (Chair) (In Person)

Councillors (In Person):

C.A. Davies H.A.L. Evans L.D. Evans E.G. Thomas
J. Tremlett

Councillors (Remotely):

G. Davies

Also in attendance as an observer (Remotely):

Councillor D.M. Cundy

Also Present (In Person):

W. Walters - Chief Executive
C. Moore - Director of Corporate Services
G. Morgans - Director of Education & Children's Services
A. Williams - Director of Place & Infrastructure
S. Davies - Head of Access to Education
L. Rees-Jones - Head of Administration & Law
D. Hockenhill - Media & Marketing Manager
L. Jenkins - Cabinet Support Officer
E. Bryer - Democratic Services Officer
D. Hall-Jones - Member Support Officer
S. Rees - Simultaneous Translator

Also Present (Remotely):

M. Evans Thomas - Principal Democratic Services Officer [Note Taker]
M. Runeckles - Member Support Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen and remotely : 2.00 pm - 2.15 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.M. Hughes, A. Lenny and A. Vaughan-Owen.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
Councillor C.A. Davies	5 – School Admissions – Primary School Admissions Review (Rising 4s)	Runs a children’s nursery

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

3. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS

The Chair advised that no questions on notice had been submitted by members.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

5. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS - PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS REVIEW (RISING 4s)

[NOTE: Councillor C.A. Davies, having earlier declared an interest in this item, left the meeting prior to the consideration and determination thereof.]

Cabinet considered a report on the review of Primary School Admissions.

In 2018/19 the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee completed a Task & Finish Review of the current provision for early years education, childcare and play opportunities. One of the conclusions identified in the report was that the Authority's 'Rising 4s' policy is markedly different to other neighbouring Local Authorities' and that the Council undertake a formal review of its current admissions policy for full time education for 4 year olds (the Rising 4s Policy).

At its meeting held on 11th December, 2023 Cabinet considered a report into the rationale for potential removal of the policy and an assessment of the implications of removal of the Rising 4s Policy in individual schools in the form of a gap analysis. As a result, Cabinet resolved to consult on the removal of the Rising 4s Policy during the annual admissions consultation exercise in January 2024, for potential implementation in September 2025. An extensive consultation exercise took place between 19th January 2024 and 1st March 2024.

The review of the full-time education admissions policy formed only part of an overall review of early years education and childcare provision across the county. The Cabinet's Vision statement outlines a desire to 'improve the availability of early years education and childcare settings across the county, particularly in rural areas; with a particular focus on providing and strengthening Welsh-medium childcare in all areas'. Via a thorough analysis of gaps in the provision of the early years' education and childcare offer across Carmarthenshire, officers have identified communities where there is currently a limited offer i.e. a lack of early years education and/or childcare provision. As part of implementing a revised Admissions Policy officers will develop proposals to address those gaps and present these to Cabinet for their consideration. This will include working with partners on the delivery of early years education or creating 3-11 schools to provide the education offer across the county. Officers will also work on enhancing the childcare offer in those communities to ensure that families are able to access the Welsh Government's 30-hour free Childcare Offer locally.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Carmarthenshire, as the Admissions Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled primary schools,

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proceeds to remove the Rising 4s Policy and implement Option B (as detailed in the report) from 1st September 2025 i.e. to admit full time learners to primary schools in the school term following their fourth birthday.

6. LABOUR GROUP CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF THE CABINET ADVISORY PANELS

Cabinet considered the following nominations submitted by the Labour Group to fill vacant seats on Cabinet Advisory Panels:-

- (1) Councillor Tina Higgins to take the vacant seat on the Rural Working Group Advisory Panel;
- (2) Councillor Michael Thomas to take the vacant seat on the Development of the Local Development Plan Advisory Panel;
- (3) Councillor Edward Skinner to take the vacant seat on the Corporate Parenting & Safeguarding Advisory Panel;
- (4) Councillors Crish Davies and Edward Skinner to take the vacant seats on the Climate Change & Nature Emergency Cross Party Advisory Panel.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the proposed changes to membership of Cabinet Advisory Panels, as detailed above, be approved.

7. PLAID CYMRU GROUP CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF THE CABINET ADVISORY PANELS

Cabinet considered the following changes to membership of Cabinet Advisory Panels submitted by the Plaid Cymru Group:-

- (1) Councillor Russell Sparks to replace Councillor Hefin Jones on the Climate Change Advisory Panel;
- (2) Councillor Meinir James to replace Councillor Liam Bowen on the Climate Change Advisory Panel.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the proposed changes to membership of Cabinet Advisory Panels, as detailed above, be approved.

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 100B(4)(B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972

The Chair advised that there were no urgent items of business.

CHAIR

DATE

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