

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 10TH OCTOBER, 2024

REFERENCE FROM LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
19TH SEPTEMBER, 2024

“ DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT
2023/24 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 5th September, 2024 as contained within the agenda was presented by the Director of Learning and Skills.

Councillor S. Haines referred to issues in relation to Pencoedre High School and he stated that that should have had a reflection on the assessments within the Council's report. In addition, Councillor Haines referred to a lot of schools that were running a budget deficit and so those two areas required listing within the report and also to be highlighted for continued focus and monitoring. In reply, the Director stated that school budget deficits had been recognised under financial challenges and the use of Council resources, and it was noted that was a continued pressure. Councillor R. Birch (Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and the Welsh Language), with permission to speak, stated that she had been in a meeting with other Council Cabinet Members for Education, and all Councils in Wales were in the same position with schools running into budget deficits. The reasons for the deficits were varied, but an important element was an increase in Additional Learning Needs.

Councillor N. Marshallsea stated that within the Annual Self-Assessment there was a section in relation to where the Council spent its money. The Councillor stated that that section should be shared with members of the public in order to help people understand where their Council Tax money was going. The Director agreed and stated that that was something for discussion with the Council's Communication Manager.

Councillor H. Payne highlighted the many positives within the Council's Self-Assessment report but also referred to significant pressures in Safeguarding and Additional Learning Needs. It was also important for the Council to let members of the public know the good work the Council had been undertaking. The good work included some very good inspection reports as well as the additional work teachers undertook outside of school time.

The Chair referred to Well-being Objective 2, point 4, in relation to maximise inclusion and improve attendance and he highlighted the importance around improving the school attendance rate. In reply, the Cabinet Member referred to work being undertaken by the Inclusion Service to support children with low attendance.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the comments made by the Committee be referred to Cabinet for their consideration, which included the following:

- To ensure a continued focus on monitoring and tackling school deficits and other issues impacting upon teaching staff.
- The importance of highlighting to residents, through the use of public communications, the data on expenditure, etc. contained within the infographics used in the 'What our budget was spent on' section of the Annual Self-Assessment.
- The importance of highlighting what the Council had achieved in areas such as school inspection reports and what additional work teachers undertook outside of school time. As well spending on education, it was important to show what teaching staff undertook in terms of work and these details should be combined.
- The ongoing importance of improving school attendance figures.

Reason for recommendation

In order for Cabinet to consider the comments made at the Scrutiny meeting.”