



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

To:
Councillor Jennifer Raynor
Cabinet member for Education

Please ask for: Scrutiny
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Date 21 April 2016
Dyddiad:

This is a letter from the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Education following the meeting of the Panel on the 14 April 2016. It highlights the Panel's discussion along any outcomes arising from the meeting.

Dear Cllr Raynor

Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel

Thank you for attending our Panel meeting on the 14 April when we completed pre-decision scrutiny on a report on the School Music Service Arrangements that is scheduled for decision at Cabinet on the 21 April 2016.

A representative from the Panel will attend Cabinet to feed our views into that meeting. We have also written this letter in order for you to be able to respond in writing to our views as outlined below:

1. We were pleased that the local authority is maintaining a music service and recognise that splitting the service may be the way to achieve this in Swansea.
2. People who were present in the public gallery felt that the information/report provided was not clear and that there had not been enough time to engage with it.
3. We were concerned that possible poor buyback from schools could seriously jeopardise the whole service.
4. We welcome the plan to consider alternative models of provision, for example, moving to a Trust but we do not feel that the work carried out into this has been communicated effectively as part of the report or the review process.
5. We hope that as part of the ongoing review, the manager and staff who have shown such commitment and enthusiasm for the service will continue to be fully engaged in the review process.
6. We were concerned that two Internal Audit Reports relating to the Music Service, both critical of some financial aspects of the service, were not acted upon and could not understand why this was the case.

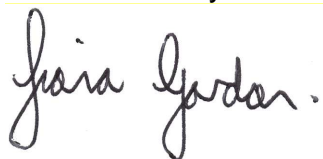
7. We felt that the response letter from the Cabinet Member in relation to our communication arising from 23 February meeting does not fully address our concerns, namely our recommendation:

The status quo is kept until the end of the next financial year 31 March 2017, thus giving more opportunity for the managers of the service to meet the challenge to decrease costs and increase income by:

- *Investing and implementing further efficiencies within the service*
 - *Investigating further income and funding opportunities including use of the service by Pupil Referral Unit, SEN provisions and Adult Education*
 - *Potential use of Pupil Deprivation Grant for free school meals pupils*
 - *Looking at different models of operation including for example the Trust model in Denbighshire.*
8. We did feel that some of the responses to those who submitted views in the consultation exercise could have been fuller and more tailored to the issues they raised, for example, in relation to respondent 14 and 18 on the consultation list, where they were given a stock answer and that actual questions were not answered.

We look forward to your response to our letter by 13 May 2016.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, enclosed in a thin yellow rectangular border. The signature appears to read 'Fiona Gordon'.

Fiona Gordon
Convener Schools Performance Scrutiny Panel
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