

Minute of Meeting

Education and Children's Services Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 09 March 2023	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present: Councillor Jennifer Adam, Councillor Fiona Airlie-Nicolson, Ms Mary Jane Bird, Provost Lorraine Cameron, Councillor Carolann Davidson, Councillor Audrey Doig, Councillor Edward Grady, Councillor Gillian Graham, Councillor John Gray, Councillor Anne Hannigan, Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes, Councillor Robert Innes, Councillor David McGonigle, Councillor Iain McMillan, Councillor Will Mylet, Mr Jack Nellaney, Councillor Jim Paterson, Councillor Emma Rodden, Mr Ravinder Singh, Councillor Ben Smith

Chair

Councillor Rodden, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

S Quinn, Director of Children's Services; J Calder, Head of Service (Early Years & Broad General Education), T McGillivray, Head of Schools (Senior Phase & Inclusion), J Trainer, Head of Childcare & Criminal Justice and L Johnston, Service Improvement Manager (all Children's Services); J Connolly and C Orr, both Senior Communications Officers (both Chief Executive's); M Conaghan, Head of Corporate Governance, R Conway, Finance Manager, E Gray and R Devine, both Senior Committee Services Officers, D Cunningham, Assistant Committee Services Officer and G Dickie, Partnering & Commissioning Manager (all Finance & Resources).

Webcasting of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Convener intimated that this meeting of the Board would be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Paterson declared an interest in item 9 of the agenda, - Distribution of Funding to Support Services for Children and Families – Funding Allocation for 2023/24, as he was the parent of a child who attended one of the facilities which was recommended to receive funding. He indicated that as he had declared an interest, he would leave the meeting during any discussion and voting on the item.

Transparency Statements

Councillor Davidson indicated that she had a connection to item 4, The Promise: Progress on delivering on Renfrewshire's Promise, by way of having signed up to undertake the role of Promise Keeper. However, she indicated that she had applied the objective test and did not consider she had an interest to declare.

Councillor Airlie-Nicolson indicated that she had a connection to item 4, The Promise: Progress on delivering on Renfrewshire's Promise, by way of having signed up to undertake the role of Promise Keeper. However, she indicated that she had applied the objective test and did not consider she had an interest to declare.

1 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring as at 6 January 2023

There was submitted a joint Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring report by the Directors of Children's Services and Finance & Resources for the period to 6 January 2023.

The projected Revenue outturn at 31 March 2023 for Children's Services was an overspend of £4.139 million (1.8 percent) against the revised budget for the year. The projected Capital outturn at 31 March 2023 for Children's Services was an underspend of £0.100 million (1.9 percent).

DECIDED:

(a) That the projected Revenue outturn position for Children's Services detailed in Table 1 of the report be noted, and that it be further noted that the forecast position was based on best estimates and confirmed government support at this point in time; forecasts were likely to be subject to fluctuation as the year progressed;

(b) That the projected Capital outturn position for Children's Services detailed in Table 2 of the report be noted; and

(c) That the budget adjustments detailed in sections 4 and 6 of the report be noted.

2 Dargavel Education Provision

Under reference to item 1 of the Minute of the special meeting of this Board held on 7 November 2022 there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the outcome of a further school roll projection exercise in respect of primary education needs, relating to the Dargavel housing development.

The report provided a background to the initial school roll projection for Dargavel Primary School which estimated that the school roll would not exceed 430 pupils. As reported to the special meeting of this Policy Board on 7 November 2022, it had been discovered that this figure had been significantly underestimated. A further roll projection had since been carried out which estimated a peak pupil roll of 1,100. Following the meeting on 7 November 2022 an external roll projection was undertaken to provide additional rigour and assurance and was carried out by the specialist data analytics company, Edge Analytics and projected a peak school roll of 1,131.

Details were provided on the action being taken to meet the immediate capacity needs of the school including the installation of six modular classrooms which would meet the demand for the 2023/24 school session. It was noted that the footprint of the school and requirements for outdoor space meant that it would not be possible to install further modular classrooms if required in 2024. In the event of the school exceeding its capacity for catchment area children the Council's Admissions Policy, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, would be applied.

The report recommended that plans for a new school with the capacity to accommodate a minimum of 700 pupils be progressed and that a further report be submitted to the meeting of this Policy Board to be held on 18 May 2023.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the outcome of the detailed external roll projection exercise be noted;
- (b) That initial planning with a focus on a projected roll of 1,131 be approved;
- (c) That planning for an additional school, with a minimum capacity of 700, be approved for immediate progress;
- (d) That additional options also be developed to consider how to address potential additional capacity demands, up to the maximum planning scenario, should the current high rate of admissions continue; and
- (e) That it be noted that a further report would be submitted to the meeting of this Policy Board to be held on 18 May 2023.

3 Renfrewshire – Getting it Right for Every Child – Inclusion Update

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to progress which had been made towards delivering improvements to support the wellbeing and learning of all children and young people with additional support needs in mainstream school and early year's establishments.

The report provided a background to the Scottish Government's September 2022 refresh of their Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) policy and practice materials and the refresh of Renfrewshire's GIRFEC policy and procedures by Children's Services and Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership which followed.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the progress made within the inclusion strategy be noted; and
- (b) That it be noted that an invite had been extended to members of this Policy Board to meet with the Head of Service for Inclusion and the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) Lead Officer to learn more about the GIRFEC refresh.

4 The Promise: Progress on delivering on Renfrewshire's Promise

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the progress made on delivering The Promise in Renfrewshire.

The report provided a background to The Promise which was a commitment made to the care experienced community in Scotland that by 2030 Scotland would be "the best place in the world to grow up in" and that all children would be "loved, safe, and respected and realise their full potential". A motion was approved at the meeting of Council held on 4 September 2020 to develop a plan on how The Promise would be delivered in Renfrewshire and at the meeting of this Policy Board held on 21 January 2021 a delivery plan had been approved.

An update on the progress made was provided and a number of areas were highlighted including the appointment of a Promise Lead Officer in October 2022; the work undertaken by the Renfrewshire Promise Strategic Oversight Group which involved all key strategic partners, frontline staff and individuals with lived experience of the care system; a refresh of the policy and governance structure and how this tied in with the Renfrewshire Children's Services Plan; the significant progress made in terms of expanding the network of Promise Keepers; and the successful application for grant funding to progress three projects with a view to driving forward the Promise ambitions.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the progress made towards keeping the Promise in Renfrewshire be noted; and
- (b) That it be noted that regular update reports would continue to be submitted to future meetings of this Policy Board.

5 Education Scotland Inspection of Park Mains High School

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the results of an inspection of Park Mains High School carried out by Education Scotland. A letter sent by Education Scotland to the parents and carers of pupils detailing the outcome of the inspection was appended to the report.

An inspection of Park Mains High School was carried out by Education Scotland in November 2022 with a focus on two quality indicators, learning, teaching and assessment and raising attainment and achievement. The inspection report was appended to the report and detailed three areas of strength and three areas for improvement.

DECIDED: That the key strengths and areas for further improvement identified in the Education Scotland inspection be noted.

6 Education Scotland Inspection of Auchenlodment Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare Class

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the results of an inspection of Auchenlodment Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare Class carried out by Education Scotland. A letter sent by Education Scotland to the parents and carers of pupils detailing the outcome of the inspection was appended to the report.

An inspection of Auchenlodment Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare Class was carried out by Education Scotland over a period of five days in October 2022 with a focus on four quality indicators, leadership of change; learning, teaching and assessment; ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion and raising attainment and achievement. The inspection report was appended to the report and detailed four areas of strength and three areas for improvement.

DECIDED: That the key strengths and areas for further improvement identified in the Education Scotland inspection be noted.

7 Care Inspectorate Inspection of Brediland Residential House

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to an inspection which had been carried out by the Care Inspectorate at Brediland Children's Residential House. The inspection report was appended to the report.

An inspection of Brediland Children's Residential House was carried out by the Care Inspectorate on 15 December 2022 with a view to ensuring that all statutory duties were being undertaken and that care and support was being provided to vulnerable individuals. The inspection resulted in the facility being graded as 'Very Good' with the findings detailed in full in the inspection report.

DECIDED: That the positive evidence of very good care being delivered at Brediland Residential Children's House be noted.

8 Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Plan 2023/2026

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the proposed Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Plan for the period 2023/26. The proposed plan was set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

The report provided detail on the Council's statutory requirement to produce a Children's Services Partnership Plan and how the plan would be used to shape children's services planning over the coming years and guide associated reporting activity. It was noted that the Plan would also be submitted to a meeting of the Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board for approval as Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership was jointly responsible for the plan under delegated authority from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board. It was further noted that, following approval, the Plan would be shared with the Scottish Government.

The Plan set out a single partnership vision - "Renfrewshire's children are happy, healthy, safe and thriving" along with four outcomes which the partners wished to achieve - "Our children and young people will enjoy good physical and mental health; Our children and young people will be safe and loved; Our children and young people will have rights protected and their voices heard; and Our children and young people will achieve and make positive contributions to their community." It was noted that a detailed action plan and associated measures of success would be developed in the coming months.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Plan 2023/26 be approved;
- (b) That it be noted the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Plan would be submitted to the Scottish Government by June 2023; and
- (c) That it be noted that Renfrewshire HSCP were jointly responsible for the Plan, under delegated authority from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board, and that the plan would be submitted to the meeting of the Integration Joint Board to be held on 31 March 2023.

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Paterson having previously declared an interest in item 9, left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

9 Distribution of Funding to Support Services for Children and Families – Funding Allocation for 2023/24

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the proposed allocation of funding during 2023/24 to out of school care groups in the private and voluntary sector and for early years voluntary sector organisations, playgroups and toddler groups.

The report set out the Council's commitment to support voluntary sector organisations through the distribution of funding for the delivery of services for families with young children and recommended that £45,200 be awarded to Home-Start Renfrewshire and Inverclyde; £14,000 to Moorpark Community Association Cherrie Children's Day-care; £29,225 to out of school care service providers; and £2,000 to pre-five voluntary sector providers. A detailed summary of the proposed amount to be awarded to each provider was set out within Appendices 1 to 3 of the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That the resource allocation to support the delivery of services for children and young people, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved; and

(b) That the proposed allocation of grant funding for out of school care and pre-five voluntary sector organisations, as detailed in Appendices 2 and 3 to the report, subject to the completion of satisfactory checks and assessments, be approved.

10 Addendum - Standard Circular 3a - Early Learning and Childcare Admission Policy

Under reference to item 6 of the Minute of the meeting of this Board held on 27 October 2022, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to an addendum to the Early Year's Admissions Policy and Guidance. The updated policy was detailed in full at Appendix 1 of the report.

The report advised that Standard Circular 3a which detailed the Early Year's Admissions Policy and Guidance had been approved at the meeting of this Policy Board held on 27 October 2022. Subsequently, a change to the criteria for eligible two-year-olds was made by the Scottish Government. Previously, funded early learning and childcare was available for two-year-olds who were care experienced from the point of their second birthday. Following the criteria change, children who had the experience of care from an earlier stage in their life were also eligible for funding.

DECIDED: That the addendum to Standard Circular 3a: Early Learning and Childcare Admissions Policy, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

11 Children's Services Standard Circular 33 Update

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to an update to the Council's policy around Educational Excursions. The updated policy was detailed in full at Appendix 1 of the report.

The report advised that the Council's travel insurance policy no longer covered the cancellation of school excursions and residential trips due to a pandemic. Accordingly, an update was required to Section 17 of Standard Circular 33 to reflect the revised position.

DECIDED: That the update to Standard Circular 33: Educational Excursions, as set out within Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.