

Minute of Meeting

Education and Children's Services Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 15 March 2018	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present: Councillor Derek Bibby, Councillor Bill Binks, Provost Lorraine Cameron, Councillor Carolann Davidson, Councillor Natalie Don, Councillor Neill Graham, Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes, Councillor Karen Kennedy, Councillor Scott Kerr, Councillor John McNaughtan, Councillor Will Mylet, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor Jim Paterson, Councillor John Shaw

Chair

Councillor Paterson, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

P MacLeod, Director of Children's Services, S Quinn, Assistant Director – Schools, D Hawthorn, Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice, G McKinlay, Head of Schools and J Trainer, Head of Early Years and Inclusion (all Children's Services); and G McLachlan, Senior Finance Manager and D Low, Senior Committee Services Officer (both Finance & Resources).

Apologies

Councillors Grady and Rodden and Mr J Nellaney.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Paterson declared an interest in Item 6 of the agenda – Distribution of Funding to Support Services for Children and Families – Funding Allocation for 2018/19 as his child attended one of the support services recommended for funding in the report. He intimated that he would remain in the meeting but would not take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor Shaw declared an interest in Item 6 of the agenda – Distribution of Funding to Support Services for Children and Families – Funding Allocation for 2018/19 as his child attended one of the support services recommended for funding in the report. He intimated that he would remain in the meeting but would not take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

1 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report

There was submitted a joint report by the Directors of Finance & Resources and Children's Services for the service for the period 1 April 2017 to 5 January 2018.

DECIDED:

(a) That the report be noted; and

(b) That it be noted that since the last report, there had been budget adjustments arising from interdepartmental transfers which had resulted in a net increase in the budget of £5,000.

2 Capital Budget Monitoring Report

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources for the service for the period 1 April 2017 to 5 January 2018.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3 Children's Services Service Improvement Plan 2018/21

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the Children's Services Service Improvement Plan (SIP) 2018/21 which outlined what Children's Services intended to achieve over the next three years based on available financial and employee resources.

The plan set out the priorities being addressed, the key tasks to be implemented and the implementation timetable together with measures of success. A mid-year progress update on the SIP would be submitted to the Education & Children's Services Policy Board in November 2018.

DECIDED:

(a) That the elements of the SIP which fell within the remit of this Policy Board be approved;

(b) That it be agreed that progress on the SIP be reported to this Policy Board in November 2018; and

(c) That it be noted that the report and the attached SIP would also be presented to the Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board to approve the elements covered within that Board's remit.

Sederunt

Councillor Binks entered the meeting during consideration of the following item of business.

4 The Attainment of School Leavers in 2017, Including Looked After Children

Under reference to item 5 of the Minute of meeting of this Policy Board held on 2 November 2017, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the attainment of Renfrewshire school leavers in 2017 in terms of four key measures: literacy and numeracy; improving attainment for the lowest achieving 20%, middle 60% and top 20% of achievers; attainment versus deprivation; and leavers' destinations.

The Convener intimated that the attainment of looked-after children school leavers had not been included in the report and would be reported separately to a future meeting of this Policy Board.

DECIDED:

(a) That the content of the report be noted;

(b) That the efforts of our young people and the school communities in bringing about these results be noted; and

(c) That it be noted that the attainment of looked-after children school leavers in 2017 had not been included in the report and would be reported separately to a future meeting of this Policy Board.

5 Voluntary Sector Grants 2018/19

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to applications received for grant support to voluntary and independent organisations for 2018/19. Recommendations for grant support allocations to specific voluntary sector organisations totalling £67,600 were detailed in the appendices to the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That the recommendations for grant support to voluntary organisations, as detailed in the appendices to the report, be agreed; and

(b) That it be noted that all grants would be subject to the Council's conditions of grant.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Paterson and Shaw, having declared an interest in the following item, remained in the meeting but took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

6 Distribution of Funding to Support Services for Children and Families - Funding Allocation for 2018/19

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the distribution of funding to a range of private and voluntary sector organisations which delivered services for families and young children.

Appendix 1 to the report provided an overview of the proposed allocations for payments to support the delivery of services for children and young people for 2018/19; Appendix 2 to the report detailed allocations to out-of-school care groups for 2018/19 on the basis of the criteria and related points applied to each group; and Appendix 3 to the report detailed the allocation to pre-five voluntary sector playgroups and toddler groups.

DECIDED:

(a) That the resource allocation of £510,885 to support the delivery of services for children and young people, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;

(b) That the proposals for the allocation of grant funding for out-of-school care and pre-five voluntary sector, as detailed in Appendices 2 and 3 to the report, be approved; and

(c) That a points value of £100 for awarding grant assistance to out-of school care providers be agreed.

7 Inspection of Gallowhill Primary School and Nursery Class, Paisley

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the inspection of Gallowhill Primary School and Nursery Class, Paisley by Education Scotland.

The report intimated that the purpose of the inspection was to evaluate the quality of education, with the assessment focussing on four quality indicators: leadership of change; learning, teaching and assessment; raising attainment and achievement; and ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion.

The letter to parents, appended to the report, identified three key strengths and four areas for further improvement. Children's Services would continue to monitor the improvement in the school and the inspection report would be used by the school and service to support and develop the quality of educational provision. Education Scotland would return to the school before March 2019 to carry out a further inspection.

DECIDED: That the key strengths and the areas for improvement in the Education Scotland report on Gallowhill Primary School and Nursery Class, Paisley be noted.

8 Carers (Scotland) Act 2016: Progress Update - Completion of Young Carers' Strategy 2018/21

Under reference to item 6 of the Minute of meeting of this Policy Board held on 18 January 2018, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the production of a Young Carers' Strategy, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The report intimated that Part 5 of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 placed a duty on local authorities and health boards to produce a three-year local strategy for adult and young carers. Renfrewshire had produced a dedicated young carer strategy to reflect the different approach taken to supporting young carers and to align it with the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIFREC) strategy. The Children's Services Partnership and young carers' groups had been consulted on the draft strategy and their feedback included in the final version.

DECIDED: That the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Young Carers' Strategy appended to the report be approved.

9 Early Learning and Childcare Entitlement-1140 Expansion Plan

Under reference to item 7 of the Minute of meeting of this Policy Board held on 2 November 2017, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the development and submission of a revised draft early learning and childcare expansion plan to the Scottish Government.

The report intimated that following the submission of the original draft early learning and childcare expansion plan to the Scottish Government in September, the Scottish Government had written to Councils to request that a formal resubmission of the plans be made on a refreshed financial template by 2 March 2018. The revised draft plan included a reduction in the proposed number of new build facilities and capital projects and an increase in the number of places being offered on a doubling basis, such as morning and afternoon. The revised plan had been submitted by the Director to meet the deadline.

The report detailed the infrastructure developments which had been set out in the revised plan and advised that the Council would continue to engage with its existing partners and with providers who were not currently in partnership with the Council to progress future commissioning arrangements.

Councillor Paterson, seconded by Councillor Mylet moved (a) that the submission of Renfrewshire's revised draft early learning and childcare expansion plan via the financial template to the Scottish Government on 9 March 2018, as outlined in section 4 of the report, be homologated; and (b) that it be agreed that the Director of Children's Services continue to engage with partner providers to explore their ability to support the expansion programme and to negotiate a new rate from August 2018

Councillor Bibby, seconded by Councillor Kennedy, moved as an amendment that the Education and Children's Services Policy Board notes the findings of the Audit Scotland report of 15 February 2018, highlighting the financial risks to councils in delivering the Early Learning and Child Care Entitlement expansion plan.

Board mandates its Convener to write to the Education and Finance Cabinet Secretaries seeking an immediate guarantee that the Scottish Government will fully fund the expansion plan in its entirety.

Further the Director of the Education and Children's Services will bring forward a report to the next meeting of the Board with further detail of the specific risks to the Council's finances.

On the roll being called the following members voted for the amendment: Councillors Bibby, Binks, Davidson, Graham, Kennedy and Kerr.

The following members voted for the motion: Provost Cameron and Councillors Don, Hughes, McNaughtan, Mylet, Nicolson, Paterson and Shaw

Six members having voted for the amendment and eight members having voted for the motion, the motion was accordingly declared carried.

DECIDED:

(a) That the submission of Renfrewshire's revised draft early learning and childcare expansion plan to the Scottish Government via the financial template on 9 March 2018, as outlined in section 4 of the report, be homologated; and

(b) That it be agreed that the Director of Children's Services continue to engage with partner providers to explore their ability to support the expansion programme and to negotiate a new rate from August 2018.