

Minute of Meeting

Education and Children's Services Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 18 January 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, Mr Iain Keith, Councillor Karen Kennedy, Councillor John McNaughtan, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor Jim Paterson, Councillor Emma Rodden, 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 M McCargo, Children's Services Manager (all Children's Services); and G McLachlan, Senior Finance Manager and D Low, Senior Committee Services Officer (both Finance & Resources).

Apologies

Councillors Grady, Kerr and Mylet and Mr J Nellaney.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report

There was submitted a joint revenue budget monitoring report by the Directors of Finance & Resources and Children's Services for the service for the period 1 April to 10 November 2017.

DECIDED:

(a) That the report be noted; and

(b) That it be noted that since the budget was approved, there had been a number of budget adjustments resulting in a net decrease of £202,000. This was in the main due to the transfer of budget relating to tackling poverty (£75,000), reduction in the charge to Criminal Justice Service (£100,000) and the allocation of an overtime saving (£35,000).

2 Capital Budget Monitoring Report

There was submitted a capital budget monitoring report by the Director of Finance & Resources for the service for the period 1 April to 10 November 2017.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3 Renfrewshire Youth Voice: Youth Commission Update

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the formation and development of a Youth Commission.

The report intimated that the Council's Youth Services had supported the formation and development of a Youth Commission focussing on young people and mental health. The report provided a summary of the work and achievements of the Youth Commission since its establishment and identified the next stage of its work, on mental health issues for young people, before it submitted its findings and recommendations to the Council and key partners in May/June 2018.

DECIDED:

(a) That the progress made by the Renfrewshire Youth Commission be noted; and

(b) That it be noted that a report would be provided to a future meeting of the Board containing draft recommendations from the Youth Commissioners on how young people's mental health could be safeguarded and improved in Renfrewshire.

4 Renfrewshire: Year of Young People 2018

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the Scottish Government's designation of 2018 as the Year of Young People.

The report intimated that throughout 2018 the Scottish Government, local authorities and other partners were planning to deliver a range of activities and events which would address the six themes identified by young people as most important to them: participation; education; health and wellbeing; equality and discrimination; enterprise and regeneration; and culture.

DECIDED:

(a) That it be noted that 2018 had been designated by the Scottish Government as the Year of Young People;

(b) That it be noted that Renfrewshire Youth Services would be leading and facilitating a year of celebrating young people across the authority in partnership with young people and local youth work agencies and services across a range of sectors and locations; and

(c) That a Renfrewshire Year of Young People 2018 activity calendar be created on the Young Scot Young Renfrewshire portal and council social media, showcasing local talent and contributions made by young people, emphasising their role as creators and curators of their stories and achievements and not just passive consumers of services.

5 Consultation on Education (Scotland) Bill

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the most recent consultation issued by the Scottish Government on the draft Education (Scotland) Bill.

The report advised that the Bill intended to give greater power to head teachers in regard to curriculum, the improvement agenda, staffing and funding. It also intended to refresh arrangements for parental involvement and pupil participation in the school decision-making process, establish regional improvement collaboratives and introduce a new body which would replace the General Teaching Council and the Community Learning and Development Standards Council with one organisation which registered all education professions. The Council's proposed response to the consultation was appended to the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Council's response to the consultation as appended to the report be approved; and

(b) That the changes proposed to education governance and the implications for local authorities and for schools be noted.

6 Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 - Progress Update - Implementation of Young Carer Requirements

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the implementation of young carer requirements in terms of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.

The report intimated that the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 recognised the role of young carers and placed a number of duties on local authorities and health boards to support them. A Young Carers Working Group had been established in Renfrewshire in May 2017 to prepare for implementation of the Act from 1 April 2018.

A post of Young Carer Social Worker had been created to support the delivery of new duties introduced by the Act. In terms of Section 21 of the Act the Council had a duty to set local eligibility criteria, having first consulted such persons and bodies representative of carers as it considered appropriate and having taken such steps as it considered appropriate to involve carers. The eligibility criteria, which were appended to the report, had been considered at the meeting of the Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Integration Joint Board held on 24 November 2017 and now required the approval of this Board.

DECIDED: That the eligibility criteria for young carers services as detailed in the appendix to the report be approved.

7 Strategic Review of Educational Services and Support for Children with Additional Support Needs in Mainstream Education

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to a proposed review of educational services and the support provided for children in Renfrewshire with additional support needs in mainstream education.

The report intimated that there had been an increase in the number of children assessed as having additional support needs since the Council's Getting it Right for Every Learner strategy was implemented in 2013. As a result of this increase, the report advised that a strategic review of educational services and support for children with additional support needs was required. The review would focus on ensuring that additional support needs were identified as early in a child's education as possible, that supports were provided in the child's mainstream school where possible and that where a child needed support from outwith their mainstream school this was provided as close to home as possible. Children's Services had established the Inclusion Planning and Support Group to undertake this review.

DECIDED:

(a) That it be noted that a strategic review of additional support needs provision to support children in mainstream schools was underway: and

(b) That it be noted that a revised strategy for meeting the educational needs of children in Renfrewshire with additional support needs would be brought to a future meeting of this Policy Board by September 2018.

8 Inspection of St Fillan's Primary School, Houston

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the inspection of St Fillan's Primary School, Houston 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 four key strengths and three areas for further improvement. Children's Services would continue to monitor 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.

DECIDED: That the key strengths and the areas for improvement in the Education Scotland report on St Fillan's Primary School, Houston be noted.

9 Inspection of St John Ogilvie School, Paisley

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the inspection of St John Ogilvie Primary School, 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 five key strengths and two areas for further improvement. Children's Services would continue to monitor 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.

DECIDED: That the key strengths and the areas for improvement in the Education Scotland report on St John Ogilvie Primary School, Paisley be noted.

10 Annual Report of the Adoption and Fostering Panels 2016/17 - Update on Developments for Looked After Children

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the annual report of Renfrewshire Council's Adoption and Fostering Panels 2016/17.

The annual report, attached as an appendix to the report, set out the work that had been dealt with by the Adoption and Fostering Panels between 1 October 2016 to 31 September 2017 and set it in the context of the broader issues pertaining to looked after and accommodated children. The report made reference to the progress being made regarding Renfrewshire's own foster carers with two new carer households being approved in 2016/17.

The report also detailed the future work of the panels, the continued work on improving timescales for adoptive placements, the outcome of the inspection of the Fostering and Adoption Service by the Care Inspectorate and provided details of the ongoing project being undertaken in partnership with Who Cares? Scotland relative to building relationships with looked after young people before starting to engage in awareness-raising work with the wider school community, pupils, teachers and parents.

The Children's Services Manager gave a presentation on the work of the Panels in ensuring that the work undertaken to assess children's long term care needs and the assessment of potential carers was carried out to the highest standard.

DECIDED:

(a) That the contents of the Fostering and Adoption Annual Report 2016/17 be noted; and

(b) That the continuing partnership with Who Cares? Scotland on issues relating to care-experienced young people be noted.

11 School Holiday Arrangements School Session 2019/20

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the proposed local school holiday arrangements for the school session commencing in August, 2019.

The report intimated that in line with the normal consultation arrangements, three potential options had been circulated to staff, parent councils, pupil councils, teaching and other trade unions for consideration. These proposals were detailed in appendices to the report. The school holiday proposal preferred by the majority of those who had submitted responses to the consultation was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report with Appendices 2, 3 and 4 showing the holiday patterns less favoured and Appendix 5 providing an analysis of the responses.

DECIDED: That the Director of Children's Services be authorised to set local school holiday arrangements for academic year 2019/20 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.