

## Minute of Meeting

### Education and Children's Services Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 16 January 2020	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

#### Present

Councillor Derek Bibby, Provost Lorraine Cameron, Councillor Carolann Davidson, Councillor Edward Grady, Councillor Neill Graham, Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes, Councillor Karen Kennedy, Councillor Paul Mack, Councillor John McNaughtan, Councillor Will Mylet, Mr Jack Nellaney, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor Jim Paterson, Councillor Emma Rodden, Councillor John Shaw, Councillor Jane Strang

#### Chair

Councillor Paterson, Convener, presided.

#### In Attendance

S Quinn, Director of Children's Services; J Calder, Head of Service (Curriculum and Quality); J Trainer, Head of Childcare & Criminal Justice and G McKinlay, Head of Schools (all Children's Services); and G McLachlan, Senior Finance Manager and T Slater, Senior Committee Services Officer (both Finance & Resources).

#### Apologies

Councillor Kerr and Mr Ravinder Singh.

#### Welcome

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Convener welcomed Julie Calder who had recently been appointed to the post of Head of Service (Curriculum and Quality) within Children's Services.

## **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Davidson declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of item 4 of the agenda - Proposal to Consult on Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy - as she was a member of Gleniffer High School Parent Council and intimated her intention to remain in the meeting and take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

### **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 to 8 November 2019.

**DECIDED:** That the report be noted.

### **2 Capital Budget Monitoring Report**

There was submitted a joint Capital Budget Monitoring report by the Directors of Finance & Resources and Children's Services for the Service to 8 November 2019.

**DECIDED:** That the report be noted.

### **3 Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Level Return 2019**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence Level (ACEL) return of data on all Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3 pupils in terms of their performance in literary and numeracy.

The report intimated that the ACEL return in 2018/19 demonstrated that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected CfE level for their stage had increased for all stages and curricular areas over three years. The patterns of performance by stage and curricular area was very similar to the 2017/18 return, however, many of the attainment gaps had decreased. Renfrewshire's pupils continued to perform consistently above the national average.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That the report be noted; and

(b) That the efforts of the children and young people and the significant commitment of teachers and support staff be noted.

## **Declaration of Interest**

Councillor Davidson having previously declared an interest in the following item, remained in the meeting.

#### **4 Proposal to Consult on Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy**

Under reference to Item 6 of the Minute of the meeting of this Board held on 23 May 2019, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services requesting approval, in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, to consult on an "Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy".

A timeline for the consultation process was outlined in the report and procedures for consultation, together with the consultation document were attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The proposed revised Policy, attached as Appendix 2 to the report, would include a change to primary one registration dates; revised primary one registration allocation of catchment places; revised transfer from primary to secondary allocation of catchment secondary places; and revised allocation of placing request places.

If approved, the proposed Policy would take effect for the August 2021/22 intake.

#### **DECIDED:**

- (a) That the Director of Children's Services be authorised to proceed with a consultation on a proposal for an "Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy"; and
- (b) That a report on the outcome of the consultation be submitted to the meeting of the Education and Children's Services Policy Board to be held on 20 August 2020.

#### **5 Response to Proposal to Consult on a Catchment Review Affecting Inchinnan Primary School and Rashielea Primary School**

Under reference to Item 7 of the Minute of the meeting of this Board held on 22 August 2019, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the response to the consultation on a catchment review affecting Inchinnan Primary School and Rashielea Primary School. A copy of the consultation document was attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

The issues raised during the consultation, which was undertaken between 2 September 2019 and 4 November 2019, were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report and indicated support for the recommendation to alter the catchment areas affecting Inchinnan Primary School and Rashielea Primary School. The response from Education Scotland, who had also been consulted on the proposals in accordance with legislative requirements, was attached as Appendix 6 to the report and was supportive of the educational benefits of the recommendation.

**DECIDED:**

- (a) That the issues raised during the formal consultation, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (b) That the comments made by Education Scotland in relation to the educational benefits of the recommendation, as detailed in Appendix 6 to the report, be noted;
- (c) That the revised catchment arrangements affecting Inchinnan Primary School and Rashielea Primary School be approved; and
- (d) That the implementation of the catchment changes from August 2021 be approved.

## **6 Inspection of Our Lady of Peace Primary School and Early Learning Class, Linwood**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the inspection, by Education Scotland, of Our Lady of Peace Primary School and Early Learning Class, Linwood.

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

The outcome of the inspection had been positive, with an evaluation of 'good' for leadership of change and raising attainment and achievement and an evaluation of 'satisfactory' for learning, teaching and assessment and ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion. The letter to parents, appended to the report, identified three key strengths and four areas for 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.

**DECIDED:** That the key strengths and the areas for improvement in the Education Scotland report on Our Lady of Peace Primary School and Early Learning Class, Linwood be noted.

## **7 Distribution of Funding to Support Services for Children and Families - Funding Allocation for 2019/20**

Under reference to Item 7 of the Minute of the meeting of this Board held on 14 March 2019, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the distribution of funding of £2,858 to Insafehands Childcare Limited, a private organisation which delivered services for families and young children.

The report advised that the level of funding awarded to this out of school care service had been pro-rata to reflect that the service had only been operational since August 2019. Information was also provided on the agreed criteria for the disbursement of resources to ensure equal and fair allocation. An outline of the resource allocation for this service was provided at Appendix 1 to the report.

**DECIDED:** That the resource allocation of £2,858 to Insafehands Childcare Limited to support the delivery of services for families and young children, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

## **8 Financial Redress for Historical Child Abuse in Care - Pre-legislative Consultation**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the establishment by the Scottish Government of a financial redress scheme for victims of historical abuse whilst they were children in care.

The report advised that a formal consultation on the nature of the financial redress scheme had been launched with a closing date of 25 November 2019. The scheme was one element of the response to victims of abuse as children in public care and aimed to acknowledge and respond to the harm that was done to those children who were abused in care in the past. One of the principles behind the scheme was that those agencies and organisations which were responsible for the institutions and care settings in which the abuse occurred should contribute to the redress scheme.

Due to the timescales involved, officers submitted the response, appended to the report, and homologation of this action was now requested.

**DECIDED:** That the response submitted to the Scottish Government consultation on the financial redress scheme for victims of historical abuse whilst they were children in care, appended to the report, be homologated.

## **9 Kinship Care Policy**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to a proposed Kinship Care Policy.

Renfrewshire Children's Services aimed to support children in the care of their own parent(s) where it was safe and appropriate to do so. It was recognised, however, that some children were not able to be cared for by their parent(s) and that alternative care arrangements were required.

In circumstances where a child could not remain with their own parent(s), Children's Services would ensure that the most appropriate alternative arrangements were made to meet the child's needs and, in these circumstances, extended family members would be considered as possible alternative carers. This was known as a Kinship Care arrangement.

Under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, local authorities had particular duties to Kinship Carers and children in Kinship Care arrangements. Under the Kinship Care Assistance (Scotland) Order 2016, local authorities were required to prepare and publish a policy in relation to the provision of Kinship Care assistance. The proposed Policy, attached as an appendix to the report, detailed how Children's Services would assess and support Kinship Carers in Renfrewshire.

Kinship Carers were able to apply for a Kinship Care Order which allowed the child to remain with them and removed the need for the child to attend an annual Children's Hearing. There could be a financial barrier to some Kinship Carers applying for Kinship Care Orders, particularly those not entitled to legal aid, and the draft Policy requested the approval for the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice to be authorised to agree a financial contribution to those costs of up to £1,500 in these circumstances.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That the proposed Kinship Care Policy, attached as an appendix to the report, be approved; and

(b) That the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice be authorised to approve financial support up to £1,500 to assist with a Kinship Carer's legal fees incurred in pursuing a Kinship Care Order, as outlined in the Policy.

## **10 Annual Report of the Fostering and Adoption Service 2018/19 - Update on Developments for Looked After Children and Fostering Service**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the annual report of Renfrewshire Council's Adoption and Fostering Service 2018/19.

The annual report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, detailed the work that had been dealt with by the Adoption and Fostering Panel and Fostering and Adoption Service between 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019 and set it in the context of the broader issues pertaining to looked after and accommodated children. The report advised that, at 30 September 2019, Renfrewshire had 83 active households of foster carers. In the period covered by the report, five households were registered as foster carers and six households left the service. Also in that period, five households had been approved as adopters. The report noted the ongoing need to recruit foster carers and adopters and the commitment to reducing the number of children being placed externally.

The report referred to the outcome of the inspection of the Fostering and Adoption Service by the Care Inspectorate in May 2017 which provided gradings of 'very good' to all domains inspected. The next inspection would take place in 2020.

The report also provided an update on the BeST Services Trial in Renfrewshire which had now started. The aim of the trial was to learn how to best support the development and wellbeing of young children (under 60 months) who came into local authority care. The trial would compare two approaches: service as usual (i.e. usual parenting capacity assessment undertaken by the Council's social work teams); and an evidence-based infant mental health intervention called Glasgow Infant and Family Team (GIFT) which was being delivered by the NSPCC. The GIFT approach used a multi-disciplinary team of psychiatrists, clinical psychologist and social workers to assess and treat infants and their birth families.

**DECIDED:**

- (a) That the contents of the Fostering and Adoption Annual Report 2018/19 be noted;
- (b) That the continuous effort to secure foster carers and adoptive parents for Renfrewshire's children who required an alternative family placement be noted; and
- (c) That the continued progress of the BeST Services Trial in Renfrewshire be noted.