

Minute of Meeting Education and Children Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 18 August 2016	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

PRESENT

Councillors B Brown, Cameron, Glen, Henry, Lawson, Mack, M Macmillan, I McMillan, Murrin, Mylet, Perrie, J Sharkey, M Sharkey, Williams, Reverend Clark, I Keith and J Nellaney.

CHAIR

Councillor Henry, Convener, presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

P Macleod, Director of Children's Services, G McKinlay, Head of Schools, D Hawthorn, Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice, J Trainer, Acting Head of Early Years and Inclusion, L McAllister, Education Manager (Curriculum & Early Years), T McEwan, Education Manager (Planning and Performance) and C Briggs, Educational Psychologist (all Children's Services); and G McLachlan, Senior Finance Manager and E Currie, Senior Committee Services Officer (both Finance & Resources).

APOLOGY

Councillor Clark.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

1 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

There was submitted a joint report by the Directors of Finance & Resources and Children's Services for the service for the period 1 April to 24 June 2016.

DECIDED:

(a) That the budget position be noted; and

(b) That it be noted that since the budget had been approved there had been a number of budget adjustments resulting in a net increase of £102,271 primarily related to adjustments for additional funding releases for Early Years, Education Property and Tackling Poverty and the transfer of Childcare and Criminal Justice budgets from Social Work Resources. The budget increases were partially offset by a number of minor transfers in relation to previous agreed savings, the reallocation of Business Support funding and Corporate Landlord maintenance and the transfer of Leisure Budgets.

2 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources for the service for the period 1 April to 24 June 2016.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3 CRIMINAL JUSTICE GRANT 2016/17 AND SERVICE UPDATE

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the criminal justice social work grant 2016/17 for Renfrewshire Council. The Community Justice Services Division of the Scottish Government allocated the grant funding for criminal justice social work to the Community Justice Authorities (CJAs) across Scotland. The grant was ring-fenced funding, in accordance with Section 3 of the Management of Offenders (Scotland) Act 2005.

The report intimated that the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 received Royal Assent on 21 March 2016 with CJAs being disestablished on 31 March 2017. Criminal justice social work would continue to be delivered by local authorities with funding being awarded to local authorities directly as of 1 April 2017.

The indicative grant allowance for criminal justice social work for Renfrewshire for 2016/17 was £3,354,876, representing an increase of £49,950, and a breakdown of the allocation was detailed in the appendix to the report.

The report provided updates in relation to the extension of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) to include 'other' offenders; Up2U Building Health Relationships, the evidence based individual programme for criminal justice social workers working with those subject to criminal justice statutory orders who committed domestic abuse; the North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority (NSCJA) Bail Supervision Service for female offenders; the Penal Policy Improvement Project; the criminal justice funding formula and the new model for community justice.

DECIDED:

(a) That the indicative budget allocation of £3,354,876 for criminal justice social work services in Renfrewshire for 2016/17, as detailed in the appendix to the report, be noted; and

(b) That the updates in relation to the extension of MAPPA to include 'other' offenders; Up2U Building Health Relationships, the evidence based individual programme for criminal justice social workers working with those subject to criminal justice statutory orders who committed domestic abuse; the North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority (NSCJA) Bail Supervision Service for female offenders; the Penal Policy Improvement Project, the criminal justice funding formula; and the new model for community justice be noted.

4 SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the Scottish Attainment Challenge announced by the Scottish Government in February 2015, the focus of which was to raise attainment for all children and young people and to close the attainment gap between those in the most affluent of backgrounds and those living in the most deprived.

Seven local authorities had been identified in the first phase of the Scottish Government's £100 million fund over a four-year period. Renfrewshire Council was not included in this first phase of funding. In October 2015 this fund was extended to 57 primary schools across Scotland where more than 70% of children were living in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 1 and 2. Five schools in Renfrewshire had been included in this phase of funding and each school had an agreed action plan and was making very good progress towards meeting their short-term targets.

In June 2016 a further announcement was made which increased the fund to a total of £750 million over the next five years and extending the scope to include secondary schools and two further local authorities, East Ayrshire and Renfrewshire Councils. A draft action plan was currently being developed, involving a broad range of stakeholders, for submission to the Scottish Government for review in September 2016.

In addition, an innovation fund had been established and Renfrewshire Council had been successful in securing a total of £275,000 in order to further develop literacy in schools in the 2016/17 academic session.

The report provided an update on the early work undertaken by the five challenge schools in Renfrewshire and the proposals being developed on the key themes of ensuring the quality of learning and teaching was central to improvement and professional learning in relation to pedagogy as a key component of these proposals; extending the scope and pace of the literacy development programme in partnership with the University of Strathclyde; developing effective approaches to improving outcomes in numeracy; further improving health and wellbeing through the extension of evidence-based programmes in resilience and emotional intelligence; extending approaches to recognising the importance of the family and community in learning; and highlighting the key role played by school leadership in implementing cultural change in education.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the early progress made by the five challenge schools be noted;
- (b) That the proposals being developed based on the key themes of ensuring the quality of learning and teaching was central to improvement and professional learning in relation to pedagogy as a key component of these proposals; extending the scope and pace of the literacy development programme in partnership with the University of Strathclyde; developing effective approaches to improving outcomes in numeracy; further improving health and wellbeing through the extension of evidence-based programmes in resilience and emotional intelligence; extending approaches to recognising the importance of the family and community in learning; and highlighting the key role played by school leadership in implementing cultural change in education be noted; and
- (c) That a report be submitted to a future meeting of this Board following review of proposals by the Scottish Government.

5 VALIDATED SELF-EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the validated self-evaluation of educational psychology undertaken in April 2016 in partnership with Education Scotland.

The report intimated that validated self-assessment was a process where Education Scotland supported and validated an individual service's processes for self-evaluation and improvement and assessed its capacity for further improvement for the benefit of learners. This was not an inspection, however Education Scotland published its findings following completion.

A copy of Education Scotland's report on Renfrewshire Council's education psychology services validated self-evaluation, published on 8 July 2016, formed the appendix to the report.

It was proposed that the Director of Children's Services provide details of the areas for further development identified by Education Scotland and the work undertaken to address these to members of the Board. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the positive report by Education Scotland on the education psychology service in Renfrewshire be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that the Principal Psychologist would address the areas for further development identified by Education Scotland as part of the service's improvement plan; and
- (c) That the Director of Children's Services provide details of the areas for further development identified by Education Scotland and the work undertaken to address these to members of the Board.

6 EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CONSULTATION - WINTER 2015

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the duty placed on local authorities by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 to consult representative populations of parents and carers on how any mandatory early learning and childcare, day-care and out-of-school care and discretionary services should be made available.

The report intimated that there was a requirement to consult every two years and to publish plans in response to these consultations. The findings of the early learning and childcare consultation carried out during Winter 2015 were detailed in the report and the consultation report formed the appendix to the report.

DECIDED: That the findings of the early years and childcare consultation be noted.

7 EDUCATIONAL EXCURSIONS

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to a proposed new policy on Educational Excursions, a copy of Standard Circular 33: Educational Excursions formed the appendix to the report.

The report intimated that the new policy followed the Scottish Government 'Going Out There' guidance, developed in partnership by the Scottish Government, the Health and Safety Executive, the Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education, Education Scotland and the Association of the Directors of Education, with input from other partners including voluntary organisations and providers.

The report provided information on the management of risk inherent in educational excursions. It was noted that while organisers of activities could not give guarantees of safety, it was essential that all possible precautions were taken to ensure the welfare of those involved. The Council expected excursion leaders and organisers to take the same degree of care which would be expected of any competent professional or prudent parent.

DECIDED:

(a) That the previous policies, Standard Circular 33: Educational Outdoor Activities and Standard Circular 48: Advice for Organising Excursions and Educational Excursions be withdrawn; and

(b) That the new policy, Standard Circular 33: Educational Excursions, which formed the appendix to the report, be approved with effect for excursions due to take place from August 2016.

8 RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL'S ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to Renfrewshire Council's Accessibility Strategy 2016/19, a copy of which formed the appendix to the report.

The report intimated that the accessibility strategy was in place so that the planning and implementation processes of the local authority and children's services met the requirements of sections 1 to 3 of the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) Act 2002 and the Equality Act 2010.

It was noted that Renfrewshire Council was committed to greater inclusion of learners with disabilities and was dedicated to ensuring that the curriculum, estate and buildings as well as communication with learners with disabilities and their families were accessible to all.

The updated accessibility strategy 2016/19 was designed to ensure that improvements would continue to be made and that the strategy remained in line with current legislation and national guidance. A range of stakeholders had been involved in reviewing and updating the strategy, including representatives from children's services, corporate landlord, Renfrewshire Access Panel, as well as staff within establishments, learners and their families.

The accessibility strategy contained a three-year action plan which would be monitored on an annual basis through the service's equalities steering group.

DECIDED: That the Renfrewshire Council Accessibility Strategy 2016/19 and action plan, which formed the appendix to the report, be approved.

9 CHILDREN'S SERVICES HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the Children's Services Health and Safety Policy.

The report intimated that the policy, a copy of which was appended to the report, had been revised to reflect standard health and safety industry guidance on effective policies which set a clear direction for the service to follow. The policy contributed to business performance and showed a demonstrable commitment to continuous improvement.

DECIDED: That the Children's Services Health and Safety Policy be approved.

10 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2014: SUPREME COURT JUDGEMENT

Under reference to item 10 of the Minute of the meeting of this Board held on 12 May 2016 there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the Named Person Scheme in terms of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

The report intimated that four charities and three individual parents had challenged aspects of the legislation in relation to the Named Person Scheme focusing on two main areas, the lawfulness of the named person sharing and retaining information in relation to individual children and their families, and that the compulsory appointment of a named person was a breach of the rights of the parents of children under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

The initial challenge was rejected in the Court of Session and the appellants appealed to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court announced its judgement on 28 July 2016 and had held that Part 4 of the Act was incompatible with Article 8 of the ECHR. The Supreme Court had proposed that an Order be made to allow the Scottish Government an opportunity to correct this and had given them 42 days to make written submissions on what the terms of this Order should be.

The Scottish Government were assessing what this meant for the timescale of implementation and would continue to progress its preparations for implementation of the Names Person Scheme and related provisions. However, as the Supreme Court found that the aspects of the Act were outwith the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament, they could not be brought into force.

The named person duties in the Act were due to be effective from 31st August 2016. The work being undertaken to implement these duties has been suspended pending the outcome of the Scottish Government response to the Supreme Court.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

11 THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER - GUIDANCE ISSUED BY SCOTTISH MINISTERS

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to updated statutory guidance issued by Scottish Ministers on the role of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) in terms of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.

The report intimated that the updated guidance, which formed the appendix to the report, reflected the changes to the manner in which social work services were delivered in terms of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 which allowed the delegation of certain social work functions from the local authority to an integration body. In Renfrewshire the adult social work functions had been delegated to the Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board and were delivered by the Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (RHSCP).

The CSWO in Renfrewshire was the Director of Children's Services and he covered both children's services and the adult social work functions now delivered by the RHSCP.

DECIDED: That the publication and content of the guidance issued by Scottish Ministers on the role of the Chief Social Work Officer be noted.