

Minute of Meeting

Education and Children's Services Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 12 March 2020	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present

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, Mr Ravinder Singh, 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); G McKinlay, Head of Schools; and J Trainer, Head of Childcare & Criminal Justice (all Children's Services); and G McLachlan, Senior Finance Manager; M Conaghan, Legal and Democratic Services Manager and T Slater, Senior Committee Services Officer (all Finance & Resources).

Apologies

Councillors Bibby and Don and Ms M J Bird.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Paterson declared an interest in Item 7 of the agenda – Distribution of Funding to Support Services for Children and Families – Funding Allocation for 2020/21 as his child attended one of the support services recommended for funding in the report. He intimated that he would remain in the meeting and would take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor Shaw declared an interest in Item 7 of the agenda – Distribution of Funding to Support Services for Children and Families – Funding Allocation for 2020/21 as his child attended one of the support services recommended for funding in the report. He intimated that he would remain in the meeting and would 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 3 January 2020.

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 3 January 2020.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3 Inspection of Mary Russell School

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the inspection, by Education Scotland, of Mary Russell School.

The report intimated that the purpose of the inspection was to evaluate the quality of education, focussing on two quality indicators: learning, teaching and assessment; and raising attainment and achievement. The outcome of the inspection had been positive, with evaluations of 'good' for learning, teaching and assessment and raising attainment and achievement. The letter to parents, appended to the report, identified four key strengths and two 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 Mary Russell School be noted.

4 Inspection of Heriot Primary School and Early Learning Class, Paisley

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

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 very positive, with an evaluation of 'very good' for leadership of change; learning, teaching and assessment and ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion, and an evaluation of 'good' for raising attainment and achievement. The letter to parents, appended to the report, identified five key strengths and two 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 Heriot Primary School and Early Learning Class, Paisley be noted.

5 Pupil Intake to Gryffe High School Session 2020/21

Under reference to Item 12 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 relative to a request to increase the intake of S1 to Gryffe High School for session 2020/21, for one year only.

The report advised that Gryffe High School accommodation allowed for the intake to be increased every six years to a maximum of 180. At the meeting of this Board on 23 May 2019, it had been agreed to increase the intake to 180 for session 2019/20, however, pupil numbers were in line with the normal intake of 165 and the increase was not required for that session. The 2020/21 intake was likely to exceed 165 and it was, therefore, requested that the increase be applied to session 2020/21.

The report proposed that the intake be set at 180 less 3 places reserved for children moving into the catchment during the school session. The proposed increase of intake in 2020/21 could not be repeated in 2021/22 nor in subsequent years without the need for an increase in accommodation and the significant financial expenditure associated with any such proposals.

DECIDED:

(a) That it be agreed to set the S1 intake for Gryffe High School for session 2020/21, at 180 with 3 places within this intake reserved for children moving into the catchment during the school session; and

(b) That it be noted that the S1 intake for Gryffe High School could be set cyclically at a maximum of 180 every 6 years from 2021/22 and the increased intake for S1 may be utilised in future years where required, only when there would be no need for an increase in accommodation and any significant financial expenditure associated with any such proposal.

6 Early Learning and Childcare Entitlement - 1140 Expansion Update

Under reference to Item 3 of the Minute of the meeting of this Board held on 31 October 2019, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the progress of the 1140 expansion in early learning and childcare.

The report advised that councils regularly reported on their progress to the Scottish Government and, in December 2019, the Scottish Government issued the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Delivery Progress Report which indicated that good progress was being made across Scotland. Renfrewshire's progress was in line with the progress being made nationally.

Information was provided on: the phased implementation with 1,774 (41%) of children in Renfrewshire already receiving the expanded provision; securing the required workforce, with Children's Services being 63% towards the workforce target for August 2020 and funded providers being supported to address workforce challenges; and the infrastructure programme, which consisted of 16 refurbishments, six extensions and four new builds.

The report also outlined the risks in delivering the 1140 expansion, together with the action being taken to mitigate those risks including information on recruitment and training and a revised infrastructure timeline.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the progress, to date, in implementing the 1140 expansion of early learning and childcare be noted; and
- (b) That the revised infrastructure timeline and contingency arrangements for ensuring the required spaces for all eligible children from August 2020 in areas where there was a delay in the completion of a construction project, as detailed in the report, be noted.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Paterson and Shaw having previously declared an interest in the following item of business remained in the meeting.

7 Distribution of Funding to Support Services for Children and Families - Funding Allocation for 2020/21

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 2020/21; Appendix 2 to the report detailed allocations to out-of-school care groups for 2020/21 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.

Councillor Nicolson, seconded by Councillor McNaughtan, moved that the existing paragraph 2.1.i of the report be replaced with

“2.1.i approve the resource allocation to support the delivery of services for children and young people as outlined in appendix 1 to this report and note the decision of the Full Council on Monday 9th March 2020 to provide up to £150k to support Rainbow Nursery, Shortroods. Officers to engage with Childcare First management in working in partnership to ensure a long-term sustainable future for the nursery.”

That the existing paragraph 4.8 be replaced with

“4.8 “The Board of Childcare First has intimated its intention to close Rainbow nursery on 30 June 2020. The Council at its meeting on 9 March 2020 agreed to provide up to £0.150 million to support Rainbow Nursery, Shortroods and instructed officers to engage with Childcare First management in working in partnership to ensure a longterm sustainable future for the nursery”.

That in Appendix 1 the entry in the “Outcome” column of the entry relating to Childcare First Limited be replaced to read:

“Support to Rainbow Nursery, Shortroods to support work to ensure a longterm future for the nursery.”

That in Appendix 1 the entry in the “Funding proposed 2020/21” column of the entry relating to Childcare First Limited be replaced with “Up to £150,000”; and

That the report as amended be approved.”

Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Grady moved an amendment which the Convener ruled was not competent in terms of Standing Order 28 – rescinding of decisions – as it was contrary to the decision which had been taken at item 2 of the Minute of the meeting of the Council held on 9 March 2020 and there had been no material change in circumstances justifying the matter being reconsidered.

Motion to suspend Standing Orders

Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Grady, moved in terms of Standing Order 44 that Standing Order 28 – rescinding of decisions - be suspended to allow the Board to consider the amendment by Councillors Kennedy and Grady.

On the roll being called, the following members voted to suspend Standing Order 28: Councillors Davidson, Grady, Graham, Kennedy and Strang.

The following members voted against the motion to suspend Standing Order 28: Provost Cameron, Councillors Hughes, Mack, McNaughtan, Mylet, Nicolson, Paterson, Rodden, Shaw and Mr Singh.

The following member abstained: Mr Nellaney.

5 members having voted for the motion to suspend Standing Order 28, 10 members having voted against the motion to suspend Standing Order 28, and 1 member having abstained, the necessary two-thirds of members present and voting at the meeting was not achieved as required for the suspension of Standing Orders and, accordingly, the motion to suspend Standing Order 28 was defeated.

The Convener then proposed that the report, as amended in terms of Councillor Nicolson's motion, be approved. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

(a) That the resource allocation to support the delivery of services for children and young people as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report be approved and the decision of the full Council on Monday 9 March 2020, to provide up to £150k to support Rainbow Nursery, Shortroods and that officers would engage with Childcare First management to work in partnership to ensure a long-term sustainable future for the nursery be noted; and

(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, subject to the completion of satisfactory checks and assessments.

8 Mid-year Attainment Challenge Report

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to progress on the Renfrewshire Attainment Challenge. Renfrewshire was one of the nine challenge authorities in 2016.

The report advised that there were five main work-stream areas of data analysis; learning and teaching; families and communities; leadership and care-experienced children and young people. As part of the grant requirements, the Council was required to report to the Scottish Government on a quarterly basis and bi-annually detailing progress towards local and national outcomes.

The Director of Children's Services intimated that the wrong appendix had been attached to the report and proposed that the report, with the correct appendix attached, be submitted to the next meeting of the Board. This was agreed.

DECIDED: That the Mid-year Attainment Challenge Report be continued to the next meeting of the Board.

9 Attainment of 2018/2019 School Leavers

Under reference to Item 4 of the Minute of the meeting of this Board held on 31 October 2019, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services regarding the attainment of school leavers 2018/19.

The report advised that the Scottish Government provided a performance evaluation tool (INSIGHT) which provided data and commentary on the performance of 2018/19 leavers in four key measures and made statistically valid comparisons between how young people performed against young people nationally who shared four similar characteristics.

It was noted that the 2018/19 school leavers' data demonstrated substantial improvement in the percentage of leavers that were entering a positive destination. Attainment in literacy and numeracy remained high, particularly at SCQF level 5 where Renfrewshire was above both the virtual comparator and the national figures. It was recognised, however, that there was scope for further improvement, particularly in relation to the total tariff points young people living in the most deprived areas were achieving by the time they left school, and this would continue to be a priority.

DECIDED:

(a) That the report be noted; and

(b) That the efforts of Renfrewshire's young people and the school communities in bringing about these results be noted.

10 Proposal to Consult on the Relocation of Paisley Grammar School to a New Build Community Campus at Renfrew Road in Paisley

Under reference to Item 3 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 relative to the proposal to consult on the relocation of Paisley Grammar School to a new build community campus at Renfrew Road in Paisley.

The proposed consultation, which was being requested in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, was required following assessment which, in terms of building performance and future need, provided an evidence base which supported the proposal to invest in the relocation of Paisley Grammar School to a new build Paisley Grammar Community Campus. It was also important that the Council consulted with affected communities now to ensure that the proposal was fully developed in advance of the Scottish Government School Estate Investment Programme funding release, which was anticipated in September 2020. Securing this funding would be central to the development of this proposal.

The 'procedures for consultation' and the consultation document entitled 'The relocation of Paisley Grammar School to a new build Community Campus at Renfrew Road in Paisley' were attached to the report as appendices 1 and 2, respectively.

DECIDED:

(a) That the consultation procedures, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;

(b) That the consultation document entitled 'The relocation of Paisley Grammar School to a new build Community Campus at Renfrew Road in Paisley', attached as Appendix 2 to the report, be approved; and

(c) 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 29 October 2020.

11 Children's Services Service Improvement Plan 2020-23

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the Service Improvement Plan 2020-23 for Children's Services, which outlined what Children's Services intended to achieve over the next three years based on available financial and employee resources.

The Service Improvement Plan, attached as an appendix to the report, set out the priorities being addressed, the key tasks to be implemented and the implementation timetable, together with the measures of success. A mid-year progress update would be submitted to this Policy Board in October 2020.

DECIDED:

(a) That the elements of the Service Improvement Plan 2020-23 for Children's Services which fell within the remit of this Policy Board be approved;

(b) That it be agreed that mid-year progress with the Service Improvement Plan 2020-23 for Children's Services be reported to this Policy Board in October 2020; and

(c) That it be noted that the Service Improvement Plan 2020-23 for Children's Services had also been submitted to the meeting of the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board held on 10 March 2020, to approve those elements covered within that Policy Board's remit.

12 Publication of Scotland's Independent Care Review Findings

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the publication of Scotland's Independent Care Review findings.

The report advised that the Independent Care Review, established in February 2017, was an independent root and branch review of the care system, covering legislation, practice, culture and ethos. The Review gathered evidence from a wide range of sources, with the voices of care experienced people being central to the evidence gathering.

Information was provided on the five main reports of the Review which were: The Promise; The Plan; The Money; The Rules and Thank You.

The Promise, which presented the main findings of the Review had been published on 5 February 2020 and was framed around five foundations of voice – the key principles about the child's voice in decision making; families – the importance of families in caring; care – the services which form the care system; people – the workforce; and scaffolding – the legislative and policy guidance which governs the system. The Review would now move on to the production of The Plan, which would establish models of service and measures of progress over a ten-year period.

Children's Services would further analyse the recommendations and provide an update report to a future meeting of this Policy Board on the implications for policy and practice in Renfrewshire.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the publication of the reports produced by the Independent Care Review be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that Children's Services would further analyse the recommendations to understand what it meant for current practice in Renfrewshire; and
- (c) That an update report be submitted to a future meeting of the Education and Children's Services Policy Board.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Board resolved that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 2 and 4 of part I of schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

13 Provision of Support to an Individual Family

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the provision of support to an individual family.

The report intimated that, following consultation with the Conveners of this Policy Board and the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board, it was agreed that the Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice, on behalf of the Council, would act as a guarantor for a private tenancy for a specific family. Homologation of this action was now requested.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the decision that Renfrewshire Council act as a guarantor for a private tenancy for a specific family be homologated; and
- (b) That it be agreed that the Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice undertake that role on behalf of the Council.