

Minute of Meeting Education and Children Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 20 August 2015	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

PRESENT

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

CHAIR

Councillor Henry, Convener, presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

P Macleod, Director of Children's Services; G McKinlay, Head of Service, M Dewar, Acting Head of Service, A Conboy, Acting Education Manager, T McEwan, Education Manager (Planning & Performance), L McAllister, Education Manager (Curriculum & Early Years), A Ewan, Youth Services Manager and L Mair, Head Teacher, St Paul's Primary School (all Children's Services); and M Conaghan, Legal & Democratic Services Manager, F Johnstone, Senior Accountant and E Currie, Senior Committee Services Officer (all Finance & Resources).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

In terms of Standing Order 16, the Convener intimated that she proposed to alter the order of business to facilitate the conduct of the meeting by considering item 3 of the agenda before item 13.

Prior to consideration of the following item the Convener welcomed Mr Barry Fisher, Duke of Edinburgh's Award together with Gold Award Duke of Edinburgh's Award winners and their parents to the meeting.

1 **DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to plans for the future development of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (the Award) in Renfrewshire. The report intimated that ambitious targets had been set for Renfrewshire to become sector leading in terms of the number of young people participating and gaining the Award. A new five-year operating licence for the Award had been agreed in July 2015.

The development of the Award and its impact was aligned to the aims of the Renfrewshire Tackling Poverty Commission. The Award improved young people's physical and mental well-being, provided an alternative route to attainment and enhanced young people's employability skills.

The Award operated in all Renfrewshire secondary schools, Kersland and Mary Russell Schools, and two open award groups. Compared to other local authorities, Renfrewshire met the Scottish average in terms of the number of young people taking part in and completing the award. To date in 2015, 20 young people from Park Mains, Gleniffer, Castlehead and Johnstone High Schools had completed the Gold Award. Several of the young people who had gained their Gold Award were in attendance and the Convener presented them with their awards.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the renewal of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award licence for Renfrewshire Council for a further five years be noted;
- (b) That the achievement of the 20 young people who completed the Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award in 2015 be noted; and
- (c) That the proposed development targets set out in the report be approved.

2 **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING**

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 26 June, 2015.

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 £13,452 primarily relating to adjustments for additional funding releases from the Scottish Government partially offset by a number of minor transfers in relation to previously agreed savings and the reallocation of business support funding to corporate landlord maintenance.

3 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

There was submitted a capital budget monitoring report by the Director of Finance & Resources for the service for the period 1 April to 26 June, 2015.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

4 PROPOSAL TO CONSULT ON THE RELOCATION OF SPATESTON PRE-FIVE CENTRE TO A REFURBISHED ST ANTHONY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL BUILDING

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to a proposal to consult on the relocation of Spateston pre-5 Centre to a refurbished St Anthony's Primary School building, in line with legislative requirements detailed in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, amended through the enactment of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

The Council continually reviewed the performance of the school estate and had identified that the existing St Anthony's Primary School building was performing satisfactorily (rated 'B') for the school community. The process had also identified that the condition of Spateston Pre-5 was 'C' (poor) and that by integrating the Centre into the surplus accommodation within St Anthony's Primary School the Council could improve the efficiency of the school and the condition challenges facing the Pre-5 Centre.

DECIDED:

(a) That the consultation procedures for the relocation of Spateston Pre-5 Centre to a refurbished St Anthony's Primary School building, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;

(b) That the consultation document, which formed Appendix 2 to the report, "The relocation of Spateston Pre-5 Centre to a refurbished St Anthony's Primary School building" be approved; and

(c) That it be agreed that a report on the outcome of the consultation be submitted to the meeting of this Board to be held on 21 January, 2016.

5 EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION OF ST PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, PAISLEY

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the inspection by Education Scotland of St Paul's Primary School, Paisley.

The inspection report and quality indicator evaluations, published by Education Scotland on 12 May, 2015, were appended to the report. The inspection report had identified four key strengths and four areas for further improvement. Education Scotland had concluded that the school would be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings and as a result would make no further visits in connection with this inspection. An improvement action plan would be developed indicating how the main findings of the inspection report would be addressed. In addition the school would be supported in its improvement by Children's Services.

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

6 **EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION OF LINWOOD HIGH SCHOOL**

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

The inspection report and quality indicator evaluations, published by Education Scotland on 29 April, 2015, were appended to the report. The inspection report had identified four key strengths and four areas for further improvement. Education Scotland had concluded that the school would be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings and as a result would make no further visits in connection with this inspection.

An improvement action plan would be developed indicating how the main findings of the inspection report would be addressed. In addition the school would be supported in its improvement by Children's Services.

DECIDED: That the key strengths and the areas for improvement in the Education Scotland report on Linwood High School be noted.

7 **REVISED STANDARD CIRCULAR 60: DETERMINING PRIMARY SCHOOL CAPACITY**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to a revision of the existing standard circular 60: 'The Capacity of Primary Schools'.

The report intimated that this standard circular was last updated in March 2001. Over time, local authorities had determined their own school capacity modelling policies and this had resulted in variations across the country in how school capacity was calculated.

In April 2013 the Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education recommended that 'a consistent approach to school capacity modelling should be agreed between the Scottish Government and local authorities'. Responding to this, the Scottish Government and other agencies worked together to develop an approach which could be applied to school capacity modelling. This process led to the production of guidance on determining primary school capacity. An analysis of this updated guidance had shown that there were no implications for decisions previously made in relation to school estate management planning.

DECIDED: That the revision of the existing standard circular 60: 'The Capacity of Primary Schools', which formed the appendix to the report, through the adoption of Scottish Government guidance 'Determining Primary School Capacity' be approved.

8 **CONSULTATION "EQUALLY SAFE - REFORMING THE CRIMINAL LAW TO ADDRESS DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL OFFENCES**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the Scottish Government consultation exercise 'Equally Safe – Reforming the criminal law to address domestic abuse and sexual offences' undertaken between 26 March and 19 June, 2015.

The consultation sought views on: creating a specific criminal offence concerning domestic abuse; if any specific offence of 'domestic abuse' should be restricted to people who were partners or ex-partners, or if it should cover other familial relationships; creating a specific criminal offence to share private, intimate images of another person without their consent; if there should be statutory jury directions which required the trial judge to make the jury aware that there may be good reasons why a victim of a sexual offence may not report that offence until sometime after it had been committed and that this did not, in and of itself, indicate that the allegation was more likely to be false; and if non-harassment orders should be available to the court after examination of the facts that the person did carry out the offence for which they were charged even when a perpetrator was not found criminally responsible for the offence or was unfit for trial.

Due to the timing of the consultation, Renfrewshire's multi-agency Gender Based Violence Strategy Group submitted a draft response, which formed the appendix to the report.

DECIDED: That the draft response, which formed the appendix to the report, be homologated as the Council's response to the Scottish Government consultation exercise 'Equally Safe – Reforming the criminal law to address domestic abuse and sexual offences'.

9 **ADOPTION REGISTER CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the Scottish Government consultation on Scotland's Adoption Register Regulations 2016.

The report intimated that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 became law on 27 March, 2014 and introduced a number of changes to the way children and young people in Scotland were cared for. One of these changes placed a duty on all local authorities to use Scotland's Adoption Register, a project funded by the Scottish Government and operated by the British Association of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) Scotland, the remit of which was to facilitate family finding across Scotland with the aim of increasing the number of children that were placed for adoption.

The register would be placed on statute in 2016 and would have implications for how children were matched with potential adopters. Renfrewshire Council currently used the Adoption Register for some children when seeking an adoptive family but from August 2016 all children who were being considered for adoption would be required to be included on the register.

The closing date for responses to the consultation was 22 June, 2015. Due to the timing of the consultation, the Council's response, a copy of which formed the appendix to the report, had been submitted.

DECIDED: That the draft response, which formed the appendix to the report, be homologated as the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the remit of the Scottish Adoption Register.

10 **IMPLEMENTING EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMES IN RENFREWSHIRE**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the implementation of evidence-based programmes to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The report intimated that the evidence-based programmes identified were the Positive Parenting Programme (Triple P); the Family Nurse Partnership; Incredible Years; Functional Family Therapy; Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care; Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS); Life Skills Training; Families and Schools Together; and CEDAR.

The report provided an update on the outcome of the investigation of the appropriateness and progress made on the delivery of the programmes for implementation in Renfrewshire. In line with the work of the Tackling Poverty Commission a further study of need would be conducted in partnership with the Social Research Unit early in 2016.

The Council was the first authority in Scotland to make use of the epidemiological study to inform the development of a children's services strategic approach across all partner agencies working to support children, young people and their families. Carrying out the second study of need would continue to have Renfrewshire at the forefront of innovation. The second study would show the distance travelled in terms of improving children's outcomes and assist in prioritising support to children, young people and their families over the next three years. As part of the second phase of work, the Council was exploring an innovative approach to reducing child neglect with the Wave Trust.

DECIDED:

(a) That the progress on the implementation of Triple P; Incredible Years; Functional Family Therapy; Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATH); Families and Schools Together; CEDAR and Family Nurse Partnership in Renfrewshire be noted;

(b) That it be noted that there was insufficient need for Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care in Renfrewshire and therefore this approach would not be pursued at this time;

(c) That it be noted that further work was being undertaken to conclude the investigation of funding to allow the introduction of Life Skills Training;

(d) That it be noted that a negotiated contract was being concluded with the Social Research Unit at Dartington to allow the second epidemiological study of need to be carried out in the early part of 2016; and

(e) That it be noted that exploratory work was being undertaken with the Wave Trust to explore an innovative approach to reducing child neglect.

11 **REVISED SCHEME FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY TEACHERS TO PERMANENT POSTS**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the revised scheme for the appointment of temporary teachers to permanent posts.

The report intimated that Renfrewshire Council Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff (JNC) dealt with matters related to teachers' conditions of service which were devolved for local consideration and agreement from the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers.

A JNC sub-group had met throughout session 2014/15 to review the scheme for the appointment of temporary teachers to permanent posts and to agree a way forward which would balance the interests of temporary teachers whilst safeguarding the future staffing needs of the Council.

The JNC had approved the revised scheme for the appointment of temporary teachers to permanent posts, a copy of which formed the appendix to the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That the revised scheme of appointment of temporary teachers to permanent posts which formed the appendix to the report and which had been approved by the JNC on 16 June, 2015, be noted; and

(b) That the revised Principles of Operation be implemented at the start of school session 2015/16.

12 **MEMBERSHIP OF EUROPEAN SOCIAL NETWORK**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to membership of the European Social Network.

The report intimated that the social work service became a member of the European Social Network in 2014. Membership had supported social care staff to benchmark and learn from the experience of other organisations in order to ensure that social care services continued to modernise and improve to meet the evolving needs of local people. It had also allowed the work being progressed in Renfrewshire to be showcased on an international stage.

The European Social Network operated as an independent network for local public social services in Europe with the key aim of bringing people together who designed, managed and delivered social services in public authorities across Europe. The network supported the development of effective social policy and social care practice through the exchange of knowledge and expertise.

DECIDED: That membership of the European Social Network at an annual cost of £750 be approved subject to annual review by the Director of Children's Services.

13 TOWN TWINNING VISIT TO FÜRTH - OCTOBER 2015

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to an invitation, received from Dr Thomas Jung, the Oberbürgermeister of the Council's twin town of Furth, for a small delegation from Renfrewshire to visit Furth between 8 and 13 October, 2015 to strengthen town twinning links.

The report intimated that after discussion with the Provost and the Director of Children's Services, the Board was asked to approve a delegation comprising the Provost, Convener of the Education & Children Policy Board and two senior Education Officers to visit Furth to study their educational practices, in particular the steps being taken to tackle the adverse impact that living in poverty could have on educational attainment. The travel costs estimated at £3,000 would be met from the current international links budget.

Councillor Henry, seconded by Councillor Clark, moved that the travel arrangements in respect of the Furth educational visit be approved and that the Director of Finance & Resources be authorised to make the necessary arrangements in consultation with the Provost.

Councillor Cameron, seconded by Councillor Lawson, moved as an amendment that the Board acknowledges the position of the previous SNP/Lib Dem administration which stopped supporting Councillor delegations to twin towns. It was judged, at the time, that the visits did not produce results significant enough to justify the cost – given the increasing financial savings that the council had to make. They continued to support educational visits by schoolchildren to Furth, accompanied by teachers and officers of the council.

The Board does not support a Councillor delegation to Furth, Germany.

The Board approves a delegation comprising two senior Education Officers to visit Furth to study their educational practices, the costs to be met from the current International Links Budget.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1.55 pm and reconvened at 2.00 pm.

On the roll being called, the following members voted for the amendment: Councillors Cameron, Mack, Perrie, Lawson and McQuade.

The following members voted for the motion: Councillors B Brown, Clark, Glen, Henry, M Macmillan, I McMillan, Murrin, J Sharkey, M Sharkey and Williams.

The following members abstained: I Keith and J Nellaney.

5 members having voted for the amendment, 10 members having voted for the motion, and 2 members having abstained, the motion was accordingly declared carried.

DECIDED: That the travel arrangements in respect of the Furth educational visit be approved and that the Director of Finance & Resources be authorised to make the necessary arrangements in consultation with the Provost.