

Minute of Meeting

Education and Children's Services Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 20 August 2020	13:00	Teams Meeting,

Present

Councillor Derek Bibby, Ms Mary Jane Bird, Provost Lorraine Cameron, Councillor Carolann Davidson, Councillor Natalie Don, Councillor Edward Grady, Councillor Neill Graham, Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes, Councillor Karen Kennedy, Councillor Scott Kerr, 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); C Dalrymple, Communities & Regulatory Manager (Communities, Housing & Planning Services); and K Graham, Head of Corporate Governance, M Conaghan, Legal & Democratic Services Manager, D Low, Democratic Services Manager, G McLachlan, Senior Finance Manager, R Devine, Senior Committee Services Officer and T Slater, Senior Committee Services Officer (all Finance & Resources).

Recording of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Convener intimated that this meeting of the Board would be recorded and that the recording would be available to watch on the Council's website.

Welcome

The Convener welcomed Ms Mary Jane Bird, who was the new Church of Scotland representative to her first meeting of the Policy Board.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bibby declared a non-financial interest in respect of Item 9 of the agenda – Changes in Residential Children’s Houses - as he had previously been the External Manager for both Roneil and Longcroft Children’s Houses. He intimated that he would remain in the meeting and would take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor Davidson declared a non-financial interest in Item 9 of the agenda – Changes in Residential Children’s Houses – as she had a family member who worked for one of the services. She intimated that she would remain in the meeting and would take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

1 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring

There was submitted a joint Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring report by the Directors of Finance & Resources and Children's Services for the Service to 26 June 2020.

DECIDED:

(a) That the projected Revenue outturn position for Children’s Services, detailed in Table 1 of the report be noted; that it be noted that the further forecast position was based on best estimates and confirmed government support at this point in time; and that it be noted that forecasts were likely to be subject to considerable fluctuation as the full service implications and associated cost of the pandemic became clear;

(b) That the projected Capital outturn position for Children’s services, detailed in Table 2 of the report, be noted; and

(c) That the budget adjustments, detailed in sections 4 and 6 of the report, be noted.

2 Covid-19 - Service Update

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children’s Services providing an update on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the service areas within the Policy Board’s remit.

The report commended colleagues within Children’s Services and across the Council who had shown great commitment and resilience in delivering essential services, volunteering to support frontline services and helping others to remain safe at home during this time. The report also acknowledged the impact of the pandemic on our communities. These sentiments were echoed by the Convener and members of the Policy Board.

The report outlined the actions taken to support school closures and re-opening, including provision for home-based learning, additional support for key workers and vulnerable children and families through childcare hubs, more individualised support through services such as Home Link and the measures in place to ensure a safe return to school.

The report also highlighted the work undertaken by Children and Families Social Work and Criminal Justice Social Work to support service users with the highest levels of needs and risks.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3 Amendment to Agreed School Holiday Arrangements School Session 2020/2021

Under reference to Item 7 of the Minute of the meeting of this Policy Board held on 31 October 2019, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the requirement to amend school holiday arrangements for school session 2020/2021.

The report advised that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Scottish Government Guidance Document entitled "The Strategic Framework for the Reopening of School and ELC Provision", confirmed that the start date of the new term would be standardised to 11 August 2020, across all councils in Scotland on an exceptional basis for the purposes of managing Covid-19.

The report further advised that, following consultation with staff, parent councils, pupil councils, teaching and other trade unions, arrangements were made that required teachers to return to work on Monday, 10 August 2020 and pupils returning to school on Wednesday, 12 August 2020. The additional two days worked in August would be moved to the Christmas break. The amended school holiday arrangements were attached as Appendix 1 to the report and a summary of consultation responses attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

DECIDED: That the revised school holiday arrangements for academic year 2020/2021, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

4 School Holiday Arrangements School Session 2021/2022

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 2021.

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 and 3 outlining the proposals less favoured and Appendix 4 providing a summary of the consultation responses.

DECIDED: That the Director of Children’s Services be authorised to set local school holiday arrangements for academic year 2021/2022, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Sederunt

Mr Singh joined the meeting prior to consideration of the following item of business.

5 Naming of New Non-Denominational Primary School in Dargavel Village, Bishopton

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children’s Services relative to the naming of a new non-denominational primary school in Dargavel Village, Bishopton.

The report intimated that parents, pupils and staff from Bishopton Primary School had been asked to make suggestions for the name of the new school. They had been requested to consider their suggestions in the context of a Council provision to educate non-denominational primary school children within the new Dargavel Village estate. The responses made advised of the reasons for and relevance of the suggested name.

A total of 321 ballot forms had been returned and the report detailed the scoring model used. The name Dargavel Primary School received the highest cumulative score of 828 votes. This option related to Dargavel House, which was a large 16th Century mansion close to the school. The housing development within which the school would be situated was named after the house.

Names of the runners-up were Barrangary Primary School, which received a cumulative score of 575 votes and Antonine Primary School, which received a cumulative score of 523 votes.

DECIDED: That Dargavel Primary School be approved as the name of the new non-denominational primary school in Dargavel Village, Bishopton.

6 Response to Proposal to Consult on Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy

Under reference to Item 4 of the Minute of the meeting of this Board held on 16 January 2020, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children’s Services relative to the response to the consultation on the Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy.

The issues raised during the consultation, which was undertaken between 27 January 2020 and 31 March 2020, were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report and demonstrated support for the proposed Admissions to School and Placing Request Policy, which was attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

The response from Education Scotland, which had also been consulted on the proposals in accordance with legislative requirements, was attached as Appendix 3 to the report and was supportive of the educational benefits of the recommendation.

Councillor Davidson wished it to be noted that her concerns raised at the meeting of the Board held on 16 January 2020 in relation to the inclusion of single parents as a priority had not been included in the minute of the meeting or as part of the consultation and requested a meeting with the Convener and officers at a future date to determine the impact on single parents. The Convener apologised that the comments had not been captured as part of the consultation process and agreed to the meeting requested.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the issues raised through 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 proposals, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, be noted;
- (c) That the revised Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy, attached as Appendix 2 to the report, be approved;
- (d) That the Policy be implemented for requests for August 2021 intakes onwards; and
- (e) That it be agreed that the Convener and officers from Children's Services would meet with Councillor Davidson to determine the impact of the Policy on single parents.

7 Response to Proposal to Consult on Catchment Reviews Affecting: Kilbarchan and East Fulton Primary Schools; Kilbarchan and Woodlands Primary Schools; St Margaret's and Our Lady of Peace Primary Schools; and Johnstone and Linwood High Schools

Under reference to Item 8 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 relative to the response to the consultation on a catchment review affecting Kilbarchan and East Fulton Primary Schools; Kilbarchan and Woodlands Primary Schools; St Margaret's and Our Lady of Peace Primary Schools; and Johnstone and Linwood High Schools.

Copies of the consultation documents were attached as Appendix 2 to the report. The issues raised during the consultation, which was undertaken between 18 November 2019 and 21 January 2020, were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report and indicated support for the recommendation to alter the catchment areas, which would assist in managing the school rolls in all affected schools.

The response from Education Scotland, which had also been consulted on the proposals in accordance with legislative requirements, was attached as Appendix 4 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 4 to the report, be noted;
- (c) That the revised catchment arrangements for Kilbarchan and East Fulton Primary Schools, Kilbarchan and Woodlands Primary Schools, St Margaret's and Our Lady of Peace Primary Schools, and Johnstone and Linwood High Schools be approved; and
- (d) That the implementation of the catchment changes, from August 2021, be approved.

8 Revised Consultation Arrangements Regarding the Proposal to Relocate Paisley Grammar School to a New Build Community Campus at Renfrew Road in Paisley

Under reference to Item 10 of the Minute of the meeting of this Board held on 12 March 2020, there was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to revised consultation arrangements for the proposal to relocate Paisley Grammar School to a new build community campus at Renfrew Road in Paisley.

The report advised that, in terms of Standing Order 28 – rescinding of decisions – that the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions represented a material change of circumstances and it was not possible to progress the consultation arrangements previously agreed.

A revised timetable to take forward the consultation was detailed in the report, together with changes to the public consultation arrangements to comply with current physical distancing measures.

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' had been updated and were attached to the report as appendices 1 and 2, respectively.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the revised timetable for the consultation and alternative arrangements for the public consultation meeting be approved;
- (b) That the revised consultation procedures document, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
- (c) That the revised consultation document, attached as Appendix 2 to the report, be approved; and
- (d) 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 21 January 2021.

Declarations of Interest

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

9 Changes in Residential Children's Houses

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to proposed changes to residential children's houses.

The report intimated that Renfrewshire had reviewed and upgraded its residential estate over the last 15 years by reducing the number of registered placements provided from 58 to 28, investing in three purpose-designed and built houses and had launched the 'Philosophy of Care', which was a relationship and trauma-informed approach to supporting the young people in children's houses.

The report advised that through the development of alternative supports, the demand for residential childcare beds had reduced each year since 2014. Renfrewshire currently had five children's houses and capacity to accommodate 28 children, with 18 children and young people accommodated across four of those establishments. The fifth establishment, Longcroft Children's House, had been temporarily closed since December 2019. The report further advised that Roneil Children's House had been closed and its registration with the Care Inspectorate cancelled, in accordance with a decision made at a previous meeting of the Board.

The report, therefore, proposed that Longcroft Children's House be closed on a permanent basis, its registration with the Care Inspectorate cancelled and the property declared surplus to requirements. It was further proposed that Roneil Children's House also be declared surplus to requirements.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the improvements made within residential childcare in Renfrewshire be noted;
- (b) That the progress made to reduce numbers of accommodated children within Renfrewshire's children's houses be noted;
- (c) That the closure of Longcroft Children's House and cancellation of its registration with the Care Inspectorate be approved; and
- (d) That both Longcroft and Roneil Children's House properties be declared surplus to requirements.