

Minute of Meeting

Education and Children Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 09 March 2017	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present: Councillor Bill Brown, Councillor Lorraine Cameron, Councillor Roy Glen, Councillor Jacqueline Henry, Councillor John Hood, Mr Iain Keith, Councillor Brian Lawson, Councillor Paul Mack, Councillor Kenny MacLaren, Councillor Mark Macmillan, Councillor Iain McMillan, Councillor Alexander Murrin, Councillor Will Mylet, Councillor Bill Perrie, Councillor Jim Sharkey, Councillor Maureen Sharkey, Councillor Tommy Williams

Chair

Councillor Henry, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

P Macleod, Director of Children's Services; P Quinn, Assistant Director – Schools, D Hawthorn, Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice, G McKinlay, Head of Schools, A Conboy, Education Manager and A Hall, Education Manager (all Children's Services); and G McLachlan, Senior Finance Manager and D Low, Senior Committee Services Officer (both Finance & Resources).

Apologies

Councillor McQuade, Reverend Clark and Mr Nellaney.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Cameron declared a non-financial interest in item 8 of the agenda as she was a volunteer with Home-start Renfrewshire and indicated her intention to remain in the meeting during consideration of the item and to take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

Additional Item

The Convener intimated that there was an additional item of business in relation to a presentation on the Mother Tongue Other Tongue multilingual poetry project which had not been included in the notice calling the meeting. The Convener, being of the opinion that the item, which was dealt with at item 13 below was urgent in view of the need to acknowledge the pupil contributors to the competition, authorised its consideration.

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 for the period 1 April 2016 to 6 January 2017.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the budget position be noted; and
- (b) That it be noted that since the last report there had been a number of budget adjustments resulting in a net decrease of £83,000, partly due to the transfer of budget to the Corporate Landlord for property repairs and a transfer of Grounds Maintenance budget to Community Resources.

2 Capital Budget Monitoring Report

There was submitted a capital budget monitoring report by the Director of Finance & Resources for the service for the period 1 April 2016 to 6 January 2017.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3 Community Justice Renfrewshire Draft Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017/18

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the requirement in terms of the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 that statutory partners work together to prepare a Community Justice Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (the Plan) for their local authority area for submission to Community Justice Scotland by 31 March 2017.

The report intimated that Community Justice Renfrewshire had produced the Plan, appended to the report, which set out Community Justice Renfrewshire's assessment against national outcomes and identified local priorities for action along with a participation statement detailing actions taken to involve community bodies and third sector bodies in community justice and the preparation of the Plan. The draft Plan had been sent for consultation to Community Justice Scotland and wider community consultation had also taken place.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the Plan, as appended to the report, be approved;
- (b) That the Lead Officer, Community Justice Renfrewshire be authorised to make such minor changes to the Plan that may arise through consultation; and

(c) That it be noted that the Plan required to be submitted to Community Justice Scotland by 31 March 2017.

4 Education (Scotland) Act 2016 - Commencement of Gaelic Provisions

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to several provisions contained in the Education (Scotland) Act relative to Gaelic medium education. These included placing a duty on education authorities to promote and support Gaelic medium education (GME) and Gaelic learner education (GLE) in their area and the establishment of a process by which parents could request GME from their education authority.

The report outlined the key properties of GME and GLE and advised that the Council had developed an action plan to address the requirements of the provisions which commenced on 1 February 2017. A copy of the action plan was appended to the report.

DECIDED: That the changes to the legislation be noted and that the local authority action plan appended to the report be approved.

5 Consultation on Draft Head Teacher and Training Standards (Scotland) Regulations

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the publication of the Draft Head Teacher and Training Standards (Scotland) Regulations by the Scottish Government and the launch of a consultation on the need for all new head teachers to hold the standard for headship by August 2019. A copy of the proposed Council response to the consultation was appended to the report.

DECIDED: That Renfrewshire Council's response to the consultation to the consultation on Draft Head Teacher and Training Standards (Scotland) Regulations, as appended to the report, be approved.

6 Presentation - Developing the Young Workforce

A Hall, Education Manager, gave a presentation on the provision of support in schools to help develop the young workforce and promote positive destinations for school leavers.

DECIDED: That the presentation be noted.

7 Early Learning and Child Care to Primary Transfer of Information

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the development of revised guidelines to provide a consistent format for use by all early learning and childcare establishments for the transfer of information as children transitioned from early learning and childcare services to primary school. A copy of the Transfer of Information Guidelines Early Learning and Childcare to Primary 2017 was appended to the report.

DECIDED: That the revised early learning and childcare to primary transfer of information guidelines as appended to the report be approved.

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Cameron, having declared an interest in the following item of business, remained in the meeting.

8 Distribution of Funding to Support Services for Children and Families 2017/18

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 other bodies and grants for out-of-school care and voluntary sector playgroups for 2016/17; Appendix 2 to the report detailed allocations to out-of-school care groups for 2016/17 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.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the resource allocation of £575,997 to support the delivery of services for children and young people, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
- (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; and
- (c) That the current points value of £200 for awarding grant assistance to out-of-school care providers be retained.

9 Pupil Equity Fund

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the distribution of funding directly to schools, targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap, in terms of the Pupil Equity Fund. A table showing the amount of funding awarded to each school was appended to the report.

The report intimated that schools in Renfrewshire would receive £1,200 in 2017/18 for each child in Primary 1 to S3 who was eligible and registered for free school meals. The funding would be focused on activities and interventions that would lead to improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Schools were developing proposals and plans which met the national criteria and council priorities and would identify the issues to be addressed and the target group of pupils most in need of additional support based on an analysis of local evidence and data.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the money being distributed to each school through the Pupil Equity Fund be noted; and
- (b) That it be noted that schools were working in partnership with the directorate to develop plans which met the national criteria and council priorities.

10 Removal of Roll Caps at Houston Primary School and Rashielea Primary School

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the removal of roll caps at Houston Primary School and Rashielea Primary School.

The report intimated that the Council had previously agreed a roll cap of 66 at all stages in Houston Primary School and a roll cap of 60 to the Primary 1 intake of Rashielea Primary School. Following the implementation of Standard Circular 60 "The Capacity of Primary Schools" it became evident that the roll caps were redundant and that a fuller investigation of limiting the class sizes in Houston and Rashielea Primary Schools was required. The investigation found that the physical size of the classroom spaces could accommodate larger numbers than the caps were allowing and it was recommended that the caps in these schools be permanently removed.

DECIDED: That it be agreed that the roll caps at Houston and Rashielea Primary Schools be removed.

11 Voluntary Sector Grants

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to applications received for grant support to voluntary and independent organisations for 2017/18. Recommendations for grant support allocations to specific voluntary sector organisations totalling £82,600 were detailed in the appendices to the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That the recommendations for grant support to voluntary organisations, as detailed in the appendices to the report, be agreed; and

(b) That it be noted that all grants would be subject to the Council's conditions of grant.

12 Church Representatives on Committees Appointed by Education Authorities

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to the requirement that where an education authority appointed a committee whose purposes included advising the authority on any matter related to the discharge of their functions as education authority or discharge of any of those functions of the authority on their behalf, three of the members to be appointed (who should not be members of the education authority) should be church representatives.

In accordance with the Act one of the three places required to be filled by a nomination from the Church of Scotland and one by the Roman Catholic Church. The existing church members' appointments to the Education & Children Policy Board would not continue beyond the local government election to be held on 4 May 2017. It was anticipated, however, that the new Council would appoint a committee or board with a remit relating to education functions and it was proposed therefore that the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church be invited to nominate their respective representatives in order that these may be reported to the statutory meeting of the new Council.

The report noted that in relation to the selection of the third person, the Act specified that the authority should have regard, taking account of the representation of the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Scotland to the comparative strength within the area of all the churches and denominational bodies having duly constituted charges or other appointed places of worship therein. It was proposed that, as had been the practice previously, to place an advertisement in the local and the national press to seek nominations for the third representative and, in addition, to draw the advertisement to the attention of major denominations throughout Renfrewshire, which would include ethnic minority organisations.

DECIDED:

- (a) That it be noted that the existing church members' appointments to the Education & Children Policy Board would not continue beyond the local government election to be held on 4 May 2017;
- (b) That it be agreed that the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church be invited to nominate their respective representatives to the committee or board which may be established by the new Council to deal with education functions, and that these would be reported to the statutory meeting of the new Council; and
- (c) That an advertisement be placed in the local and national press to seek nominations for the third church representative and that this advertisement be drawn to the attention of major denominations throughout Renfrewshire, which would include ethnic minority organisations, and that a report on the responses to the advertisement be submitted to the statutory meeting of the new Council.

13 Mother Tongue, Other Tongue

The Head of Schools introduced a video relative to the Mother Tongue, Other Tongue competition which encouraged children, who did not speak English as a first language, to create a lullaby, poem, rap or song from their mother tongue accompanied by a short commentary in English detailing the inspiration behind their writing. He advised that a number of pupils from Renfrewshire schools had been successful in their submissions to the competition.

DECIDED: That the video be noted.