

## Minute of Meeting

### Education and Children's Services Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 17 March 2022	13:00	Microsoft Teams Meeting,

**Present:** Ms Mary Jane Bird, Provost Lorraine Cameron, Councillor Karen Devine-Kennedy, Councillor Audrey Doig, Councillor Edward Grady, Councillor Neill Graham, Councillor John Hood, Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes, Councillor Scott Kerr, Councillor John McNaughtan, Councillor Will Mylet, Mr Jack Nellaney, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor Jim Paterson, Councillor Emma Rodden, Councillor John Shaw, Councillor Jane Strang

#### Chair

Councillor Paterson, Convener, presided.

#### In Attendance

S Quinn, Director of Children's Services, J Calder, Head of Service (Curriculum & Quality), T McGillivray, Head of Education, J Trainer, Head of Childcare & Criminal Justice (all Children's Services); J Connolly, Senior Communications Officer (Chief Executive's); and G McLachlan, Senior Finance Manager, R Conway, Finance Manager, G Dickie, Partnering & Commissioning Manager, E Gray and C MacDonald, Senior Democratic Services Officers, K O'Neill, Assistant Democratic Services Officer, D Cunningham, Assistant Committee Services Officer, and D Pole, End User Technician (all Finance & Resources).

#### Webcasting of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Convener intimated that this meeting of the Board would be webcast live on the Council's website.

#### Declarations of Interest

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

## **1 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring as at 7 January 2022**

There was submitted a joint revenue and capital budget monitoring report by the Directors of Children's Services and of Finance & Resources for the period to 7 January 2022.

The report projected a revenue overspend of £0.238 million and a breakeven position in respect of capital as at 31 March 2022 for Children's Services. It was noted that for financial year 2021/22 the projected outturn position was split into core and Covid-19 related variances.

### **DECIDED:**

(a) That the projected revenue outturn position for Children's Services detailed in Table 1 of the report be noted, and that it be further noted that the forecast position was based on best estimates and confirmed Government support at the time and that forecasts were likely to be subject to fluctuation as the year progressed. The service would continue to mitigate any overspend as far as possible;

(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 Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence Level (CfE) Level Return 2021**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the Curriculum for Excellence attainment for Primary 1, 4 and 7 pupils in Renfrewshire for the 2020/21 session.

The report set out that Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Level (ACEL) was recorded at an individual pupil level and reported to the Scottish Government annually. It was noted that, due to pandemic-related pressures, the data was not collected for the 2019/20 session. Due to pressures on secondary schools including implementation of the SQA National Qualifications Alternative Certification Model, the S3 data was not collected for the 2020/21 session.

The report provided data and recent trends relating to attainment by stage in listening and talking, reading, writing and numeracy and made comparisons to the national average. Information relating to the poverty-related attainment was provided along with the measures put in place to address the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **DECIDED:**

(a) That the content of the report be noted; and

(b) That the efforts of the children and young people and the significant commitment of teachers and support staff be noted.

### 3 **Attainment of 2020/21 School Leavers**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the performance of the 2020/21 leavers cohort in four key measures; attainment in literacy and numeracy; improving attainment for all; attainment versus deprivation; and leavers' destinations.

The Scottish Government's evaluation tool, INSIGHT, was used to benchmark the performance in each of the key measures. It was noted that due to the reporting period the results would have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The report set out the data for each key measure and made comparisons to previous years and the national average. Details on the poverty-related attainment gap were provided along with the impact of the work which had been undertaken around improving attainment for all.

#### **DECIDED:**

(a) That the report be noted; and

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

### 4 **Education Scotland visit to Riverbrae School and ELCC**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to a visit to Riverbrae School and Early Learning and Childcare Centre (ELCC) by Education Scotland.

The report set out that an inspection of Riverbrae School and ELCC was carried out by Education Scotland in January 2019 which determined that there were four areas which required improvement. A further inspection was due to be carried out within one year of publication of the findings however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all inspections were paused. In 2021 Education Scotland planned a series of engagement visits with the schools due to be inspected, recognising the recovery context all schools were working within.

A visit to Riverbrae School and ELCC took place in December 2021 and found that there were notable improvements regarding the four recommendations from the previous inspection and it was acknowledged that despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the school had made significant progress. The letter to parents following the visit, published by Education Scotland in March 2022 was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

**DECIDED:** That the positive progress in Riverbrae School and ELCC, highlighted in the Education Scotland letter of 1 March 2022, be noted.

## **5 Supporting the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children & Young People in Schools & Early Years Establishments**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the variety of different curricular programmes, approaches and projects which were currently in place to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in schools and early years establishments throughout Renfrewshire.

The report provided a background to the Scottish Government and COSLA's commitment to improving the mental health of children, young people and families and referenced a number of reports which had highlighted the significant need to provide opportunities for early intervention and prevention to avoid the unnecessary escalation of emotional distress in children and young people.

The Council's commitment to reach parity between emotional literacy and English literacy was noted, along with the need to focus on factors which most commonly affect mental health, including substance misuse, RSHP (relationships, sexual health and parenthood), consent, coercive control and LGBT issues.

### **DECIDED:**

- (a) That the content of the report be noted; and
- (b) That the ongoing commitment of Children's Services to improving the mental, emotional and social wellbeing of children, young people and staff be noted.

## **6 Joint Inspection of Children and Young People at Risk of Harm**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the scheduled Care Inspectorate inspection of the services to protect children and young people at risk of harm in Renfrewshire. The original programme for inspections was launched in 2019 however these were paused due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The programme resumed in July 2021.

The report set out the methodology under which the programme of inspections would take place along with a summary of the focus of the eight inspections which had taken place in other authority areas to date. It was stated that Renfrewshire was likely to be inspected within the following 12 months and the report detailed the self-evaluation and preparatory work, led by the Continuous Improvement Sub-Group of Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee, which had been undertaken.

### **DECIDED:**

- (a) That the information on the inspection approach being adopted by the Care Inspectorate in relation to children and young people at risk of harm be noted; and
- (b) That it be noted that self-evaluation work was being progressed to prepare for the involvement of Renfrewshire in future inspection programme.

## **7 Distribution of Funding to Support Services for Children and Families – Funding Allocation for 2022/23**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the allocation of funding to support a range of private and voluntary sector organisations which delivered services for families with young children.

The report provided information on the proposed allocation of funding during 2022/23 to out-of-school care groups in the private and voluntary sector and for early-years voluntary-sector organisations, playgroups and toddler groups. Appendix 1 to the report detailed the proposed allocation of funding to voluntary organisations, totalling £87,103; Appendix 2 detailed the proposed allocation to school-care sector, totalling £25,603; and Appendix 3 detailed the proposed allocation to the pre-five voluntary-sector playgroups and toddler groups, totalling £2,300.

### **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

(b) That the the proposed 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.