

Committee Minutes

Consultative Committee with Parents

Edinburgh, 12 May 2009

Elected Members Present:- Councillors MacLaren (Convener), Beckett and Henderson.

Parent/ School Members Present:- As detailed on the appendix to this minute.

Apologies:- Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Johnstone, Susan Edwards, David Martin, Julie-Ann Sime and Karen Traill.

1 Minute

The minute of meeting of the Consultative Committee with Parents of 10 March 2009 was approved as a correct record.

2 Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

Karen Prophet, Acting Neighbourhood Manager, presented details of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). The aim of CfE was to provide a relevant, inspiring and engaging education for every child and young person in Scotland. Through development of the four capacities, young people would be enabled to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Entitlements for learners would include:-

- a coherent curriculum from 3 to 18.
- A broad, general education, including the experiences and outcomes well planned across the curriculum areas, from early years through to S3.
- A senior phase of education after S3 which provided opportunity to obtain qualifications as well as to continue to develop the four capacities.

Consultative Committee with Parents
12 May 2009

- Opportunities for developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, with a continuous focus on literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing.
- Personal support to enable children and young people to gain as much as possible from the opportunities which Curriculum for Excellence could provide.
- Support in moving into positive and sustained destinations beyond school.

City of Edinburgh Council developments so far, included - all schools engaging with delivering the four capacities; staff working on delivering outcomes and experiences (curriculum areas); learning and teaching approaches; inter-disciplinary learning; and literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing across learning.

Priorities for 2009/10 were to deliver high quality learning and teaching; further develop work on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across learning; devise curriculum structures which reflect the design principles of Curriculum for Excellence; and the introduction of Glow.

Work to engage with partners was outlined. This included parents, community learning and development, and other learning partners and educational partners.

Decision

- 1) To note details of the national conference being held on 13 June 2009 in Glasgow, to give the opportunity for parents to come together to discuss and exchange views on supporting children's learning and finding out how schools and Parent Councils could take forward Curriculum for Excellence.
- 2) To note that an event would be held in September for Parent Council Chairs, and that in this connection three volunteers were sought to sit on the Parents' Conference Working Group and one volunteer for the CfE Communication Strategy Group.

Tina Woolnough and Donna McNeill had volunteered. Other parents who wanted to volunteer could e-mail karen.prophet@edinburgh.gov.uk.

- 3) To note that copies of the Scottish Government leaflet "Curriculum for Excellence – A Guide for Parents and Carers" would be issued to all Parent Councils.
- 4) To thank Karen Prophet for her presentation.

3 Early Intervention

The Committee had previously requested information on out-of-authority placements and what was being done to prevent the rise in the number of children needing this level of support, and in particular, a presentation on the work of early intervention to prevent the extreme stage of children being taken into care.

Andy Jeffries, Senior Manager, Children's Social Work, explained that out of authority placements were defined as the placement of young people in residential schools outwith the City of Edinburgh. A departmental embargo had been made on placements since mid-2008 and a reduction therefore in numbers of young people placed in schools outwith Edinburgh. Overall however, numbers of Looked After Children were increasing, with a higher proportion of children being looked after and accommodated away from home.

Early Intervention Teams (former Working Together service) had integrated with Children's Practice Teams since December 2008 to provide a service to Children, Young People and their families, regardless of age, who required support to remain in their homes, schools and communities. Priority areas of work were outlined. The Intensive Community Support Service (ICSS) offered alternatives to secure care, residential schools, and other accommodation of young people aged 11 to 17. The intensive service operating 24/7, included crisis, assessment and supervision service. The Intensive support service was for individual and group care programmes for young people at risk of being accommodated, and for those accommodated to be returned safely to their families or carers. This included evenings and weekends if necessary.

Decision

- 1) To note the presentation and that further information would be presented in the future on early intervention work if required.
- 2) To thank Andy Jeffries for his presentation.

4 CCWP Review of Arrangements

The Committee had previously agreed to review the current arrangements for the CCWP and noted that Parent Councils and Forums would provide feedback on the suggested new format.

Feedback from Parent Councils reviewing CCWP arrangements were presented.

The membership, terms of office, remit and purpose, support needs, meeting content, and format and frequency of meetings were outlined.

Consultative Committee with Parents
12 May 2009

Decision

- 1) To approve the revised arrangements for the Consultative Committee with Parents as detailed in the report.
- 2) To include in the revised arrangements, that where a CCWP representative was unable to attend a meeting, another representative could substitute from the cluster Parent Councils.
- 3) To note that a Focus Group would be established to address the requirements of reporting to the Authority on the information as per the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006.
- 4) To note that future circulation of papers was proposed for all Parent Councils.

5 Oracle e-Business Suite – Financial Savings

A new Financial Accounting System called the Oracle e-Business Suite was introduced in 2005 to provide the Council with the opportunity to streamline and rationalise its chart of accounts while providing a more integrated solution for the future and to enable the Council to fully engage in electronic procurement.

Updated information on the Benefits Realisation for Children and Families, and in particular schools, for the financial year 2008/09 as part of the Enterprise Finance Project, was presented.

The ways in which benefits arising from Procure to Pay processes within the Oracle EF Systems were calculated were outlined. At present the Benefits Realisation Methodology was based on the contractual saving achieved on each individual tendered contract as it was tendered. No account was taken of old savings when a contract was re-let, only the savings achieved on the new contract. Therefore, the methodology calculated savings on an annual basis and the savings achieved in any year were based on current contract prices, not including any saving applicable to previous years or previous contracts. The 2008/09 savings target for Schools for Oracle Enterprise Finance was £554,000 and savings, split by Benefit type and Educational establishments delivered at £371,134.

Procurement currently used various methods to ensure contract usage. Renewed support from the Department of Children and Families and Schools was required to ensure that the maximum potential savings were achieved.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

Consultative Committee with Parents
12 May 2009

- The suggestion that schools did not see or feel benefits and felt forced to spend on things they did not require. There was some concern regarding the restricted Library Service.
- Concern that schools were being charged more than they were benefiting and that there was no discretion.
- The suggestion that schools needed to be able to source resources to meet pupils needs.
- Goods and services were subject to regulation to tender. This meant not only cost was involved, but Best Value service included (e.g. quality and health and safety).

The Director noted that a provision had been made in this year's budget of £250k for schools which would protect schools against the benefit shortfall, if benefits remained at the same level. Feedback from schools was that Oracle was not always the best system for purchasing. The Director noted that examples from schools would be required to be able to investigate problems. If it was the case that some purchases could be obtained at a cheaper cost with the same quality, then this could be considered to build into the Oracle System as it progressed in the future.

Decision

- 1) To agree that a group of Head Teachers meet with the Oracle Team to hear more about their reasons for purchasing outwith approved suppliers and if any examples of savings/better ways of working could be identified. Business Managers would be asked to present information suggesting more flexible options for schools.
- 2) To note the content of the report by Payments and Procurement Services, including savings for schools, non-contracted spend for schools, and the potential savings and support required to achieve these.

6 Supporting Edinburgh's Parents and Carers – A Framework for Action 2009-2012

Supporting Edinburgh's Parents and Carers: A Framework for Action 2009-2012 was developed as part of Edinburgh's approach to involving and engaging with parents and carers to better support in meeting the daily demands of the parenting role. This new plan, jointly developed by the City of Edinburgh Council's Children and Families Department and NHS Lothian, set out the importance of staff providing parents and carers with the kind of information, advice and support which developed and promoted their confidence in the parenting role. It was based on the premise that most parents and carers do a

Consultative Committee with Parents
12 May 2009

very good job of raising children but that many people needed extra support at some point. Copies of the framework document were circulated.

Decision

To note details of the framework for action.

7 Future Business

It was noted that the following business would be brought to a future meeting of the CCWP:-

- School lets: janitorial services and accessibility (after October 2009)
- Reduction of class sizes
- ICT and support for learning, including city-wide approach
- Advanced Higher Strategy across the city.

8 Dates of Future Meetings

The following dates for future meetings were noted (all at 6.30 pm).

15 September 2009
3 November 2009
12 January 2010
9 March 2010
11 May 2010

Consultative Committee with Parents
12 May 2009

Appendix

Parent/ School Members Present

Patricia Aitchison	Balerno High School
Andrea Bracher	Kaimes School
Jeanna Brady	Bruntsfield Primary School
Gordon Chrumka	Broughton Primary School
Claire Cowell	Stockbridge Primary School
Donald Craigie	Dean Park Primary School
Norma Devlin	St Thomas of Aquins High School
Meg Donaldson	Head Teacher, Prospect Bank School
Derek Ferguson	Craigentinny Primary School
Lynda Flex	Drummond Community High School
Willie French	Head Teacher, Parsons Green Primary School
Judith Gillespie	Observer, Scottish Parent Teacher Council
Ruth Gebbie	Craiglockhart Primary School
Carolyn Girvan	Currie Community High School
Paul Iannetta	Holyrood High School
Rory MacKenzie	Head Teacher, Balerno High School
Chris Marks	Leith Primary School
Iain McGillivray	Firrhill High School
Lesley McGoohan	Wester Hailes Education Centre
Anne McGowan	St Peter's Primary School
Donna McNeill	Gylemuir Primary School
Raymond Simpson	Teacher Representative, Queensferry High School
Martin Southern	Bonaly Primary School
John Walker	Juniper Green Primary School
Jane Watson	Green Gables Nursery School
Tina Woolnough	Royal High School/ Blackhall Primary School