

Committee Minutes

Consultative Committee with Parents

Edinburgh, 3 November 2009

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

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

Apologies:- Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Chris Marks, Lawrence Rea, Kevin O'Donnell, Judith Gillespie, Iain McGillivray, Julie-Ann Syme, Nigel Goddard, Donna McNeill and Susan Edwards.

1 Susan Weir

The Convener informed members that Susan Weir, Clerk to the Committee was moving to Clerk other meetings of the Council. She thanked Susan for her help and assistance over the past seven years.

Susan related that she had found this Committee particularly interesting from a personal point of view as she had two children being educated in Edinburgh. However, after seven years it was now time for her to bring her experience to other meetings.

2 Minute

The minute of meeting of the Consultative Committee with Parents of 15 September 2009 was approved as a correct record.

3 Matters Arising

3.1 Convener and Directors Update (item 3.1 of minute of 15 September 2009)

It was noted that;

- (i) a presentation on Getting it Right for Every Child in Edinburgh (GIRFEC) would be brought to a future meeting;

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10 September 2009, which was noted.

4 Welcome to new members

Councillor MacLaren welcomed new members to the Committee.

5 Update by Convener and Director

The Convener informed the Committee of a blog site set up on the Council's website charting the journey being taken by "Waverley the Bear". The teddy bear had joined the crew of Edinburgh's Inspiring Capital yacht on 13 September 2009 in the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race. The aim was that the blog site would educate and entertain school children on the environment of each destination reached.

The Committee was then updated on the school closure consultation completed on 5 October 2009. Meetings had been held with each school, in addition to public meetings. An officers workshop for elected ward members would be taking place on 24 November 2009, and a formal report on submissions from the consultation would be brought to the full council meeting on 17 December 2009.

The Convener reported that correspondence had been received from Fiona Hyslop, MSP, about legislation to be brought forward which would restrict primary 1 classes to 25.

Following discussion at a previous meeting, it was noted that attainment had not declined where team teaching operated. The Convener would be visiting two of these schools to view team teaching at first hand.

The Convener went on to inform the Committee that two new community buildings had been opened in South Edinburgh, these being Valley Park Community Centre and Holyrood High School. Further buildings to be opened included Broughton High School, Craigroyston, Tynecastle, St Augustines and Forester High Schools and Redhall special school.

With regard to James Gillespies High School, it was explained that two thirds of the cost of improvements were to be funded from Central government, with one third to be found by the Council.

Following on from this, Gillian Tee, Director endorsed the VSE (Validated Self Evaluation) approach which was to be discussed later in the Agenda. She felt that VSE provided an opportunity to secure wide engagement in evaluating how good education services were in Edinburgh. VSE would provide an opportunity to identify strengths and areas for development and an improvement plan for education services in Edinburgh over the next 3 – 5 years.

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were to ensure that action at all levels had a direct and measurable impact on the achievements of pupils and the overall quality of the education provided; monitor progress of the impact of the priorities in the school improvement plan; and provide a basis for reporting and planning.

She outlined the process, strategies involved, and the programme of engagement which would result in an Edinburgh Improvement Model (EIM).

Following the presentation, members divided into Groups and were asked to give suggestions on areas of Educational provision they felt was successful or which could be improved on. Any comments would be added to responses gathered as part of the consultation exercise.

Following a comment whereby Members felt that it would be particularly helpful for pupils to be aware of the relevance of their submission, Sheena confirmed that account would be taken of all submissions. Results from VSE would be widely disseminated.

Decision

To thank Sheena Liddell, Senior Quality Improvement Officer for her presentation.

8 Draft School Session Dates 2011/12

Decision

To note that dates provided would be widely circulated, including to Parent Councils. Any comments on proposed dates and the possibility of St Andrews Day being a school holiday should be emailed to the Parental Involvement Unit at graham.douglas@edinburgh.gov.uk by 22 January 2010.

9 Oracle e-Business Suite – Financial Savings

There was tabled paper on Oracle e-Business Suite – Financial Savings

Rory Mackenzie, CCWP Secondary Headteacher representative spoke to the paper. He reminded the Committee that at a report to a previous meeting from the Oracle team had not mentioned costs charged to schools, and also that a question of “legality” had been raised when schools opted out to go with the Oracle contract when procuring goods and services.

A meeting had consequently been arranged between the Oracle team and a group of secondary headteachers and business managers to discuss these issues.

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Decision

Noted that T Woolnough was the Edinburgh representative on the National Parent Forum.

11 Date of Next Meeting

The Revenue Budget Consultation would take place on Wednesday 16 December 2009 at 6.30 pm at a venue to be confirmed.