

Committee Minutes

Consultative Committee with Parents

Edinburgh, 10 May 2011

Elected Members Present:- Councillors MacLaren (Convener), Godzik and Rose.

Parent/School Members Present:- Jenny Shepherd (Leith Primary School), Andrea Bracher (Kaimes Special School), Arlene Mooney (Head Teacher, Braidburn School), Karen Traill (Liberton High School), Iain McGillivray (Firrhill High School), Hussein Ezzedine (Gracemount Primary School), Willie French (Head Teacher, Parson's Green Primary School), Rory MacKenzie (Head Teacher, Balerno High School), Kevin O'Donnell (Trinity Academy), Claire Murdoch (Dean Park Primary School), Tina Woolnough (Royal High School), Jeanna Brady (Bruntsfield Primary School), Paul Smart (Portobello High School) and Lesley Broadwood (Bonaly Primary School).

In Attendance:- Gillian Tee (Director of Children and Families), Mike Rosendale, Christina Burnett, Eilish Garland, Moyra Wilson, Sheila Paton, Frances Smith, Rosie Wilson, David Wright, John Hamilton, Graham Douglas (Children and Families Department) and Morris Smith (Committee Services).

Apologies:- Councillors Beckett and Johnstone; Donald Craigie (Dean Park Primary School), Eileen Prior (Scottish Parent Teacher Council), Mary Brownlee (Tynecastle High School) and Sue Edwards (Victoria Primary School).

1 Minute of Meeting

Decision

The minute of meeting of the Consultative Committee with Parents of 25 January 2011 was approved as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Rose and Tina Woolnough in the list of attendees.

2 Matters Arising from Minute

None.

3 Update by Convener and Director

The Committee considered a progress report on recent achievements of the Children and Families Department in meeting its outcomes for children and families in Edinburgh.

Gillian Tee (Director of Children and Families) gave a brief overview of the report and drew the Committee's attention to the following areas:-

- **Investors in People** – The Council had achieved Investors in People accreditation for all its services, including schools. A reassessment exercise would be carried out in October/November 2011 and the Council was aiming to progress to silver accreditation.
- **Educational Attainment** – The Council was continuing to make good progress in improving educational attainment in Edinburgh schools. Credit passes in Standard Grade had improved significantly and had moved the authority from 21st equal to 15th equal by comparison with the other 32 local authorities in Scotland. Performance at Higher Grade was even better moving the Council into the top 10 of Scottish local authorities.
- **Positive Destinations** – Reducing youth unemployment and securing positive destinations for young people in Edinburgh was a top priority for the Council. The number of young people moving into positive destinations was 82.5%, which was below the national average of 86.8%. The Council was committed to improving these figures and had met with business community and voluntary sector providers and the Scottish Government to enlist their support. The Council was also developing an Edinburgh apprenticeship scheme.
- **Financial Outturn 2010/11** – Despite the very challenging financial climate, the Children and Families Department was projecting a balanced budget for the 2010/11 financial year.

In response to questions from members, Gillian Tee advised as follows:-

- The roll-out of the GLOW project to schools was in the final phase and cluster mentors had been working closely with staff to support the smooth introduction of this project.
- The next phase of GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) would be to look at support for parents and carers across the city to build in more equitable access to activities and programmes. This would increase the skills, knowledge, confidence and capacity of parents and carers in their role of bringing up children.

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- With regard to Primary 1 admissions, there had been an increase in out of catchment refusals following the legislation passed by the Scottish Government, in October 2010, reducing class size limits from 30 to 25. However, it was important to emphasise that experience showed that the number of refusals would reduce before the start of the school year. The Children and Families Department would keep this under review and monitor the position closely.
- A report would be submitted to the next Education, Children and Families Committee highlighting the experiences of other local authorities who had employed team teaching arrangements.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) That a further update be provided for the next meeting on the roll-out of GLOW across Edinburgh schools.

(Reference – paper by the Director of Children and Families and the Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee 5 May 2011, submitted.)

4 Advice and Conciliation Service

Eilish Garland (Advice and Conciliation Manager) gave a presentation on the Advice and Conciliation Service and covered the following areas:-

- The aims and principles of an effective advice and conciliation complaints procedure
- The advice helpline
- Examples of the types of complaints received
- The early resolution procedure
- The outcomes from formal complaint investigations
- The benefits for staff and parents of an effective conciliation service

In response to questions from members, Eilish Garland advised as follows:-

- Information on the Advice and Conciliation Service was published on the Orb, the Council's website and was included in the handbook given to every school child.
- It was intended that an annual report would be submitted to the Education, Children and Families Committee on the work of the Advice and Conciliation Service.

Decision

To thank Eilish Garland for her presentation.

5 Parental Engagement

Moyra Wilson (Head of Inclusion and Pupil Support) provided an update on the Parental Engagement Development Group.

A number of parental engagement road shows had been held and the following issues had been captured from discussions at these meetings:-

- The views of pupils on the appropriate level of parental involvement
- The importance of including early year's pupils
- School interaction and engagement with the Community Learning and Development Service
- The possibility of allowing Parent Council Chairs access to GLOW
- Parental involvement with career meetings

Special school parents had met as a separate group. Further road shows were planned for the St Augustine's/Forrester cluster and the Royal High School prior to the end of session. The Council was developing examples of good practice in this area and it was hoped that this could be circulated to chairs of Parent Councils.

Decision

- 1) To thank Moyra Wilson for her update.
- 2) To note the request for a road show for the Portobello School cluster.

6 National Parent Forum

Tina Woolnough gave an update on the National Parent Forum of Scotland.

The Forum was formed in November 2009 to work in partnership with national and local government and with other organisations involved in education and wellbeing issues.

The Forum meets three times a year, rotating between Edinburgh and Glasgow, and there was a Parent Forum area on GLOW. The Forum had representatives from most local authorities and received administrative support from Learning and Teaching Scotland.

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The key challenges being faced by the Forum were outlined, together with the progress achieved so far and the next steps for the Forum, including the need to elect a depute representative for the Edinburgh area. The next meeting of the Forum would be held at the beginning of June 2011 and she was happy to feed-in any views/comments from this meeting.

During discussion on this issue, the following points were made:-

- Members would welcome a regular update on the work of the Parent Forum
- It would be useful to have parental views from across Scotland on the issue of team teaching

Decision

- 1) To thank Tina Woolnough for her presentation.
- 2) To note that anyone interested in applying for the depute representative post for Edinburgh should contact Tina Woolnough direct.

7 Secondary School Management Structures

David Wright (Head of Schools) gave an update on secondary school management structures.

The Council had agreed, as part of the budget process, to rationalise the management and business support arrangements for secondary schools. Head Teachers were fully engaged in the implementation process and their engagement had helped to shape the proposals that were being taken forward in each area. Jack Hamilton (Head Teacher at Boroughmuir High School) had been seconded to support the development of these plans with schools.

Jack Hamilton then advised the Committee as follows:-

- His main role was to support the 23 secondary Head Teachers in the implementation of the revised management structure.
- Consultation was currently being undertaken with Head Teachers which would be followed by consulting staff and Parent Councils. It was envisaged that Head Teachers would be able to consult with Parent Councils by summer 2011.
- He had been impressed by the way the proposals had been embraced by many Head Teachers.

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- The Council was also liaising with other local authorities who had implemented revised management structures with a view to determining best practice in this area.
- The Council was keen to put in place a structure that was welcomed by all but he accepted that this would be a challenge.

In response to questions from members, David Wright, Jack Hamilton and Gillian Tee advised as follows:-

- The Council was trying to de-layer management structures that had evolved over many years. All secondary schools currently had a Head Teacher and three deputies, irrespective of the size of the school or roll.
- The Council was committed to protecting frontline service delivery and the new management structure was a key component in that process.
- The Council was working very closely with the teacher trade unions and an away day had been arranged for Monday 16 May 2011. The proposals would be discussed through existing local negotiating processes and the Council was confident that any outcomes would not contravene local or national agreements.
- The Council would introduce the new structure over the next two years and this would be monitored on the basis of attainment levels, attendance and a range of other measures.
- If it turned out that the new structure was not working, the Council would re-evaluate and would not impose budget reductions on all schools but would manage any savings, if necessary, centrally.
- The new points system would be reflected in school budgets from August 2011 onwards.
- The breadth of the curriculum would not be affected by these proposals in the short, medium or longer term.

Decision

- 1) To note the update given.
- 2) That a further update be given at the next meeting on management and curricular structures.

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8 Chair

At this point in the proceedings, Councillor MacLaren vacated the Chair and Gillian Tee assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

9 Learning Festival

Sheila Paton (Development Officer, Curriculum) gave an update on the 2011 Edinburgh Learning Festival.

This year's event was entitled "Curriculum for Excellence: Our Future" and would celebrate and share all the positive things that were happening from early years through senior secondary.

The Festival would be held in Craigroyston Community High School on 13 and 14 May 2011. Friday 13 May would be for education practitioners and Saturday 14 May was aimed at parents and carers. The session on 14 May would include drop-in sessions on ICT and GLOW, Curriculum for Excellence as well as choirs and other performances.

There would be an education village with 33 stalls which would showcase good practice from all the Council schools and partners. Parents and carers were encouraged to come along to the Saturday session and a leaflet publicising the event had been sent out to all primary and secondary school children.

Decision

- 1) To note the update given and to thank Sheila Paton for all her work in organising the 2011 Learning Festival.
- 2) To encourage as many people as possible to attend the event on 13 and 14 May 2011.

10 Any Other Business – Parent Council Raised Issues

Recruitment for Secondary School Senior Posts

Decision

To note that the Children and Families Department was revising its protocols to ensure that anyone who acted as a referee for a candidate did not participate in any recruitment panel.

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11 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 14 June 2011 at 6.30 pm

G: Corp/CMT_SRV/Common/Education etc Committee/CCWP/Minutes/CCWP100511