

Minutes

Consultative Committee with Parents

Item no.

Edinburgh, 19 March 2013

Present

Councillors Fullerton (Chair), Corbett and Dixon
Diane Anderson, Parent Representative, North Neighbourhood
Jeanna Brady, Parent Representative, South Neighbourhood
Mary Brownlee, Parent Representative, West Neighbourhood
Colin Burrow, Parent Representative, City Wide Special Schools
Jonathan Gibbs, Parent Representative, South West Neighbourhood
Lindsay Law, Parent Representative, North Neighbourhood
Aileen Macleod, Parent Representative, South West Neighbourhood
Ellen Muir, Head Teacher, Pilrig Park School
Norma Prentice, Head Teacher, Drummond Community High School
Sarah Ross, Parent Representative, East Neighbourhood
Josephine Samuel, Parent Representative, City Wide Special Schools
Paul Smart, Parent Representative, East Neighbourhood
Lorraine Spalding, Parent Representative, West Neighbourhood
John Swinburne, Teacher Representative
Tina Woolnough, National Parent Forum Scotland

Officers in Attendance

David Bruce, Senior Education Manager Schools and Community Services, Children and Families
Willie Crosbie, PFM Programme Director, Corporate Property, Services for Communities
Gillian Tee, Director, Children and Families
Mark Steed, Head of Corporate Property, Services for Communities
Moyra Wilson, Senior Education Manager Inclusion and Pupil/Parent Support, Children and Families
Rosie Wilson, Service Manager Special Schools and Specialist Provision, Children and Families
Susan Weir, Committee Services, Corporate Governance

Apologies:- Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Alistair Gaw, Councillor Godzik, Lesley Gibson-Eaglesham, Willie French, Iain MacGillivray, Eileen Prior and Alex Ramage.

1. Welcome

Councillor Fullerton welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced herself to parents as the new Vice Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee.

2. Minute

Decision

1) To approve the minute of meeting of the Consultative Committee with Parents of 26 February 2012 as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

- Page 2 – under the heading “Agenda Planning”, replace Lindsay Glasgow with Lindsay Law.

2) To note the following updates:

School Placements (item 4) – the Educational Psychologist team had been asked to carry out some research into the reasons why parents in Edinburgh chose non-catchment schools for their children.

Parental Engagement Strategy (item 5) – feedback from both Head Teachers and/or Parent Councils on the Parental Engagement Strategy 2013-16 would be forwarded to Moyra Wilson.

Role and Remit of Neighbourhood Groups (item 6) – the Director sought feedback on the paper which had been circulated to parent representatives on the role and remit of the Neighbourhood Groups.

Date of Next CCWP (item 9) – to ensure that reports being presented to the Education, Children and Families Committee were fully accessible to parents at meetings of the CCWP, the date for the next CCWP had been changed to 15 May 2013.

3. Community Access to Schools (CATS)

A project team had been established to review community access to schools. David Bruce (chair of the Review Group) presented details of the work undertaken by the group to date. A report with proposals for the review, and a timeline for implementation, would be presented to the Education, Children and Families Committee in May 2013.

Key points noted from the presentation included:

- Consistency would be required across the school estate.
- Head Teachers would retain priority access.
- Increased use of some schools would be sought, but not all schools.

- Better partnership working would be sought, for example with Edinburgh Leisure.
- Schools would open more at weekends.
- There would be more engagement with communities on the use of schools.
- A number of issues would be considered in regard to costing and pricing.
- Management arrangements would be brought into a single system.

During discussion, a number of points were raised as follows:

- It was confirmed that Special Schools would be included in the review.
- In terms of the potential increase in use and upkeep of schools, the issue of re-investment in quality of services would be addressed.
- In terms of priority use of schools, it was confirmed that the needs of Head Teachers would come first, with other Council priorities second, before other user requests.
- All schools were viewed as community facilities. Ideas for use of schools by local people would be scrutinised.
- PPP school contracts were complex and required further exploration.
- A central booking system would require to be phased in over a period of time.
- It was hoped that some key areas of the CATS review would be introduced in approximately one year's time with phasing of the review thereafter.
- Consideration would be given to small businesses which might be affected by the introduction of CATS.
- Charges for use by after school care providers would need to be carefully examined.
- There was an opportunity to increase awareness among parents of their children's local catchment schools.

Decision

- 1) To thank David Bruce for his presentation on Community Access to Schools.
- 2) To note the points raised by parents, and that any further comments should be forwarded to david.bruce2@edinburgh.gov.uk.

4. Service Support Officers (SSO) in Schools – Integrated Property and Facilities Management (iPFM)

As part of the plan to modernise the way the Council managed buildings and property, Integrated Property and Facilities Management (iPFM) had been formed to bring together services, staff and operations, creating a more coherent approach to funding, resourcing and delivery.

Mark Steed, Head of Corporate Property and Willie Crosbie, PFM Programme Director, presented details of Schools Facilities Management within iPFM.

iPFM targeted outcomes included:

1. Cost efficiency of £56m over a 7 year programme.
2. A smaller but better quality estate.
3. Significantly reduced property liability.
4. Reduced carbon emissions –20%.
5. Consistent delivery of high levels of customer satisfaction from P&FM services +20%.
6. Capital projects consistently delivered on time and to budget.
7. Generation of £70m of capital receipts.

Total Facilities Management would:

- Centralise and provide a more efficient customer centred delivery model – ie corporate landlord.
- Provide clear and understandable service standards.
- Allow schools to focus on teaching and other core duties.
- Provide a single point of contact.
- Provide training and development opportunities for staff.
- Provide improved support to flexible and collaborative working.

In response to questions raised, the following points were confirmed:

1. In terms of janitorial review, there was no intention to change current service support in schools. In the longer term, the janitorial service would be examined for more effective use during the school day.
2. Closure of buildings which were no longer fit for purpose would save revenue which could be allocated towards buildings better suited for purpose.
3. It was acknowledged that better plans were needed for condition surveys and maintenance checks on schools. It was noted that FM team managers would regularly visit buildings within their areas and build on their knowledge and understanding for improved maintenance.
4. It was acknowledged that the relationship between Service Support Officers and schools was key, and that there was a sense of ownership many SSOs had with their schools.
5. The decision to re-locate Pilrig Park Child and Family Centre to Craigentenny Primary School was cited as a good example of benefit in service and more effective use of space.

Decision

- 1) To thank Mark Steed and Willie Crosbie for their presentation.
- 2) That the presentation be made available to members of the CCWP.

5. Communications

Decision

To note that work was ongoing on this item and would be brought back to a future meeting.

6. Neighbourhood Group Issues

1. South Neighbourhood Group

Jeanna Brady raised the issue of politicians speaking in schools. John Swinburne suggested there should be balance from all political parties

Gillian Tee confirmed she would request advice on this.

2. East Neighbourhood Group

Paul Smart and Sarah Ross raised the following issues:

- In terms of the Parental Engagement Strategy, parents queried how better engagement could be made with BME groups.
- Details were requested on catchment areas for nursery provision.
- Parking problems were being experienced at St John's Primary School.
- Parents queried whether in-service days could be held on Fridays.
- Guidance was requested on information that Parent Councils were allowed to place on school websites.
- Sarah Ross advised she did not yet have the e-mail addresses of School Council Chairs in her Neighbourhood Group.

3. North Neighbourhood Group

Lindsay Law and Diane Anderson reported the following:

- Norma Prentice, Head Teacher, Drummond Community High School, had provided good information to parents on the ICT refresh.
- BME parents were involved in a Drummond Community High School Diversity Day.
- Broughton High School had experienced a higher number of pupils with additional support needs than expected. Resources had been taken from senior classes to support the needs of those coming into the school.

Gillian Tee agreed that she would look into the specific case highlighted in respect of Broughton High School, and that in general terms, she would also look at attainment levels for P7/S1/S2.

4. South West Neighbourhood Group

Jonathan Gibbs reported as follows:

- The issue of inconsistency of school holidays with neighbouring authorities was raised. It was queried whether this was something Scottish Government could be involved in.
- It had been suggested there was an imbalance in the length of term times and that the period from August to December was too long.

5. West Neighbourhood Group

Mary Brownlee raised the following issues:

- Many parents wondered why a holiday was still held on Victoria Day.
- Some parents felt that a return date of 15 August after the summer holiday period was too late.
- Parents had requested that the costs of travel for schools with no PE facilities be considered.
- Minutes from both the Neighbourhood Groups and CCWP were needed by parents as quickly as possible.

(NOTE:- minute wording for item 6.5 above adjusted by the Committee meeting on 15 May 2013).

Decision

- 1) To note the reports from the five Neighbourhood Groups.
- 2) To note that appropriate responses would be provided to the issues raised.

7. National Parent Forum

Tina Woolnough circulated copies of the National Parent Forum of Scotland newsletter dated Spring 2013. The newsletter highlighted the launch of the “Let’s Talk” campaign promoting effective communication between home and school, and urging everyone to play their part in building positive, sustained relationships and in creating good communication channels. Parents were urged to display the National Parent Forum posters in their schools to encourage parents to contact the Forum and share their views and ideas.

‘Nationals in a Nutshell’ were summaries of the new National qualifications for parents/carers which were being prepared over the next few months. The first Nutshells were available at www.parentforumscotland.org .

Decision

- 1) To note the information provided and to thank Tina for the update.
- 2) To note that the Literacy Strategy report which had been approved by the Education, Children and Families Committee could be presented to the next meeting of the CCWP if parents wished.

Declaration of Interest

Lorraine Spalding declared a financial interest in the foregoing item in terms of consultancy work she was involved in with the National Parent Forum Scotland.

8. Scottish Parent Teacher Council

Decision

In the absence of Eileen Prior, it was noted that the next update from the SPTC would be made to the next meeting of the CCWP in May.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Decision

To note that the date of the next meeting of the CCWP had been changed to 6.30pm on Wednesday 15 May 2013.