

Minutes

Consultative Committee with Parents

Edinburgh, 27 February 2014

Present

Elected Members

Councillors Fullerton (Chair) and Dixon.

Neighbourhood Groups - Parent Representatives

Colin Burrow, Redhall School

Sally Cavers, Dean Park Primary School

Tony Foster, Nether Balerno Community High School

Lesley Gibson-Eaglesham, Gracemount High School

Lindsay Law, Broughton Primary School

Stephen Preston, Firrhill High School

Alex Ramage, Prestonfield Primary School

Sarah Ross, St Catherine's Primary School

Katy Thomson, St Augustine's High School

Head Teacher Representative

Ellen Muir, Pilrig Park School

Officers in Attendance

Gillian Tee, Director, Children and Families

Alistair Gaw, Head of Support to Children and Young People, Children and Families

Moyra Wilson, Inclusion and Pupil/Parent Support, Children and Families

Rosie Wilson, Special Schools and Specialist Provision, Children and Families

Robin Yellowlees, Sports and Outdoor Education, Children and Families

Mel Coutts, Sports and Outdoor Education, Children and Families

Susan Weir, Committee Services, Corporate Governance

Apologies

Councillors Godzik, Aldridge and Corbett; Diane Anderson, Alexandra Black, Willie French, Norma Prentice, Eileen Prior and Tina Woolnough.

1. Welcome

Councillor Fullerton welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minute

Decision

The minute of the meeting of the Consultative Committee with Parents of 5 December 2013 was approved as a correct record.

3. Director's Update

Gillian Tee advised that her update report on recent meetings, visits and events was available to view online [Director's Update February 2014](#).

Additional areas of interest highlighted by the Director included:

Action/Issues Log

Following feedback from parents, the Director was pleased to announce the development of an Action Log to ensure that issues raised at neighbourhood meetings would be picked up by the appropriate officers and investigated.

School Meals

From January 2015, school meals would be free for P1-3 pupils. A report would be presented to the Education, Children and Families Committee in May 2014.

Affordable Child Care

From summer 2014, all three and four year olds would be entitled to 600 hours of early learning & child care. It was proposed that hours would be extended for the first year with more flexibility considered in the longer term following consultation with parents. A report was proposed for the Education, Children and Families Committee in May 2014.

Mori Survey

A recent Mori Survey had indicated increased satisfaction with schools in Edinburgh.

Decision

To note the Director's update report.

4. Sports and Healthy Living

Robin Yellowlees and Mel Coutts provided information on the work of the Sports and Outdoor Learning Unit. The Unit led and contributed to a range of services across the city as follows:

Active Schools

Achievement Awards: Duke of Edinburgh; Junior Award Scheme Scotland (JASS); and John Muir Award

Bikeability (Cycle Training)

Edinburgh Primary Schools Sports Association

Excursions: Policy and Practice

Outdoor Learning

Physical Education (CPD and targeted initiatives)

Primary School Swimming and Swimming Top Up

Residential Outdoor Centres – Benmore and Lagganlia

School Based Community Sport hubs

Special Events (Be Part of It – Commonwealth Games)

Sports Academy/ SFA Performance School

Sports Development (NGB programmes, Coach Education, etc)

During discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- A range of sports were covered by the Sports Academy. Featured sports for 2013/14 were badminton, basketball, cricket, girls football and boys football (through the Scottish FA Performance School). New rugby and athletics programmes were being piloted.
- A wide range of events during 2014 had been put together by the Sport and Outdoor Learning Unit to help inspire children and young people to be part of events surrounding the Commonwealth Games 2014.
- Coach education could be provided for children at age 16. There were currently four tutor trained coaches who led this work.
- Involvement of children and young people from special schools in national teams. Other authorities were represented in national teams and it was suggested Edinburgh could be involved more.

Decision

- 1) To thank the officers from the Sports and Outdoor Learning Unit for their presentation.
- 2) To note that the involvement of children and young people from special schools in national teams would be fed into forthcoming discussion on the Active Schools Programme.

(Reference – Information pack by Sports and Outdoor Learning Unit, tabled)

5. Budget Update

The Council budget had been set on 13 February 2014. The Director outlined the savings challenges and summarised some of the Council's budget decisions which took into account parental feedback as follows:-

The Council would:

- Not go ahead with proposals to share librarians between schools.
- Not reduce additional support for learning services.
- Not increase class sizes for English and Maths in S1 and S2 for pupils who were experiencing literacy or numeracy difficulties.
- Not go ahead with the proposed level of reduction in fees paid to new kinship carers
- Not reduce front-line additional support needs services.
- Not reduce budgets for special schools for the next year.

The Director also provided details of the Council's BOLD (Better Outcomes Leaner Delivery) Programme which had been set up to make sure the Council delivered on existing budget savings, but also created opportunities to invest in priorities.

Consultation and work with staff was being undertaken to understand services and to work towards a clear vision for the future shape of the Council. Over the coming months, members of the BOLD team would be meeting with staff to hear their thoughts on how best to address the pressures faced.

Decision

- 1) To note the update from the Director.
- 2) To note that the Director would propose the engagement of parents in the BOLD Programme.

(Reference - [Looking After Children and Young People – Council Budget 2014/15 - City of Edinburgh Council](#))

6. Term Dates

Moyra Wilson reported that school session dates for future years were available. Parent Councils were asked to feed back comments by the end of March 2014. Draft proposals for future years included possible lengthening of the summer break and shortening of the Christmas break. It was also proposed that where possible, links would be made with other authorities across the Lothians on school term dates.

During discussion, a question was raised on whether any research was available which could be looked at to help determine if there were educational benefits of having a longer summer holiday or if a longer summer break could be detrimental to children's education.

Decision

- 1) To agree that the availability of research on the effect of longer holiday breaks for school children be investigated.
- 2) To note that parents are encouraged to feed ideas on school term dates to SchoolsAndCommunityServices@edinburgh.gov.uk.

7. Neighbourhood Issues

7.1 BT Connectivity

The Director advised that problems for BT connectivity in schools had been addressed as follows:

1. Wired Network – increased internet capacity work had now been done.

2. Wireless Internet – connection was being lost in schools. Work on this was a priority, however a higher specification switch which had been identified would not be available for another week or so. Thereafter, connection in schools would be monitored.
3. Upgrade of network – 70% of schools had now been upgraded and 15% of schools had equipment ordered. For the remaining 15% of schools there was a problem with BT Openreach (affecting approximately 12 schools).

The Director reported that an officer from the ICT team had offered support for school ICT issues lct@edinburgh.gov.uk or carolann.miller@edinburgh.gov.uk .

Decision

- 1) To note the update from the Director.
- 2) To agree that a further update on these issues be made at the next CCWP in May.

7.2 Wisepay

Wisepay was a secure online payment service that allowed parents/carers to make payments to schools using debit/credit cards. A range of workstreams had been undertaken to tailor for the five schools piloting Wisepay so far; the pilot had been well received. It was estimated it would take about a year to roll the service out to other schools.

Decision

- 1) To note the update from the Director.
- 2) To agree this matter be added to the parents Issues Log and monitored.

8. Committee Reports – Education, Children and Families Committee: 4 March 2014

The Director highlighted three reports being presented to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 4 March 2014 as follows:

1. Primary School Estate Rising School Rolls

Primary school rolls were projected to rise to a peak of nearly 31,000 pupils by 2019 which was an increase of approximately 15% on the position at the start of the 2013/14 school year. Detailed analysis identified schools potentially facing accommodation pressures in August 2015 and beyond. A range of potential solutions had been identified for each school to address the pressure. Consultation would be undertaken with each school community regarding the options, and any other potential solutions.

2. Primary School Capacity Pressure in South Edinburgh

The south side of the city centre was an area that had traditionally experienced pressure for primary school places with schools having had high occupancy levels

during a period of declining rolls and additional accommodation provided through temporary units and annexes. There were three primary schools which were predominantly affected by this issue - South Morningside, James Gillespie's and Bruntsfield Primary Schools. All three schools operated from constrained sites (South Morningside also through annexe arrangements) with no dedicated playing fields. The scope to extend capacity by extending the schools on their existing sites was severely limited.

Analysis had been undertaken to identify a range of options to address the future accommodation pressures in South Edinburgh in both the short and long term. Consultation would be undertaken with each school community on the options, and any other potential solutions.

3. Children and Families Revenue Asset Management Priorities

The Education, Children and Families Committee had agreed a £31.56m programme of capital investment in the Children and Families estate over the next five years and the prioritisation criteria applied in determining the programme. A significant revenue investment requirement of £29.1m over the next five years had also been identified from the condition surveys which were undertaken.

Decision

To note the information highlighted by the Director on the reports.

(References - [Full Papers for Education, Children and Families Committee 4 March 2014](#); and [Minute of Education, Children and Families Committee 4 March 2014](#).)

9. Neighbourhood Group Updates

Issues recently discussed by the individual School Neighbourhood Groups were as follows:

North Neighbourhood Group (Lindsay Law)

- Active Schools
- School Meals
- Parking

South Neighbourhood Group (Alexander Ramage)

- Community Access to Schools
- Local Development Plan
- School holidays
- Parking at schools pilot
- Road potholes at Liberton High School

South West Neighbourhood Group (Tony Foster)

- Community Access to Schools. A report had been anticipated for the March meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee.

Special Schools Group (Colin Burrow)

- School holidays
- Council budget
- Community Access to Schools

East Neighbourhood Group (Sarah Ross)

- Increased parking problems at schools

West Neighbourhood Group (Katy Thomson)

- Fox Covert Nursery proposal
- Parking issues and possibility of parking provision
- Other issues discussed by the other Groups

Decision

- 1) To note the updates from the Group representatives.
- 2) To note that the expected report on Community Access to Schools (CATS) had required more time for discussions/engagement and would now be scheduled for the Education, Children and Families Committee on 20 May 2014.
- 3) To note that the Director would provide further information to parents on the timetable and ongoing work for CATS.
- 4) To note that the issues of parking and road maintenance at schools needed further investigation and all possible solutions looked at, possibly within a separate group. The possibility of an officer from Transport attending a meeting would also be considered.

10. Report from the National Parent Forum Representative

An update report on the latest issues from the National Parent Forum had been circulated together with additional resources on the National Qualifications. The next National Parent Forum meeting would be held on 1 March 2014 and parents were encouraged to raise any issues with Tina Woolnough.

Decision

- 1) To note the information provided.
- 2) To note that further details on any of the information circulated could be obtained from the National Parent Forum website www.parentforumscotland.org
- 3) To note that the main points of the recent presentation made by Karen Prophet on the new Highers and National 4 and 5 qualifications would be made available on the parents website.

(Reference – paper by the National Parent Forum Representative and additional resources on National Qualifications, tabled)

11. Report from Scottish Parent Teacher Council Representative

An update report on the latest issues from the Scottish Parent Teacher Council (SPTC) had been circulated including details of the SPTC Conference and AGM 2014.

Decision

- 1) To note the information provided.
- 2) To note that further details on any of the information circulated could be obtained from Eileen Prior.

(Reference – paper by the Scottish Parent Teacher Council Representative and additional information on the SPTC Conference, tabled)

12. Business for Next Meeting – Anti Bullying

Decision

To note a request for discussion at the next CCWP meeting on Anti Bullying.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 15 May 2014, 6.30-8.30pm, in the City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh.