

Committee Minutes

Education, Children and Families Committee

Edinburgh, 15 March 2011

Present:- Councillors MacLaren (Convener), Beckett (Vice-Convener), Balfour, Blacklock, Buchan, Cairns, Dawe, Day, Edie, Godzik, Johnstone, Keir, Lang, G Mackenzie, Milligan, Morris, Munn and Rose.

Present for the Education Items:- T Brack, M Bryce-Stafford, A C Duncan, Rev Dr R Gould and R Simpson.

Also Present:- Councillor Wilson (item 4.3).

1 Motion By Councillor Godzik – Reduction of Management Costs in Secondary Schools

Councillor Godzik had tabled a motion on the Reduction of Management Costs in Secondary Schools for consideration at this meeting in terms of Standing Order 27.

Decision

The Convener ruled that the matter was not urgent. Accordingly, the motion would be included as an item for the next ordinary meeting of the Committee.

2 Minute

Decision

The minute of the meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 25 January 2011 was approved as a correct record.

3 Edinburgh Youth Issues Forum Event – The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and a ‘RIGHT blether’

The Committee heard a presentation from a group of young people involved with the Youth Issues Forum, on the theme of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and a RIGHT blether.

The Edinburgh and National results of the RIGHT blether vote were also presented to members of the Committee, the results of which were intended to help plan the work of the Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People.

Decision

- 1) To thank the members of the Edinburgh Youth Issues Forum for their presentation.
- 2) To note the success of the event and the issues raised.

(References – report by the Edinburgh Youth Issues Forum Committee, submitted, and the national results of the RIGHT blether vote, tabled.)

4 St Joseph’s RC Primary School and Broomhouse Primary School Accommodation

4.1 Deputation – Broomhouse Primary School Parent Council

The Committee heard a deputation from Carol Munro and Suzanne Herbert, Broomhouse Primary School Parent Council on accommodation issues at St Joseph’s RC and Broomhouse Primary Schools. They highlighted:

- The activities and successes of the school which they felt would be affected if the option to switch accommodation was approved.
- The joint projects currently shared by the two schools.
- The tensions experienced with the accommodation issue being raised again.
- Additional support needs of pupils.
- Practical issues within the school such as the use of class dividers.

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- Some factual inaccuracies in Paragraph 5.1 of the Director of Children and Families' report.

The preferred option of Broomhouse Primary School Parent Council was to share accommodation as outlined in Option 1 of the report by the Director of Children and Families (item 4.3 below).

The Convener thanked the deputation for their presentation and invited them to remain for the Committee's consideration of the Director of Children and Families' report.

4.2 Deputation – St Joseph's RC Primary School Parent Council

The Committee heard a deputation from Yuva Arumugam and Rosaleen Hardie, St Joseph's RC Primary School Parent Council, on accommodation issues at St Joseph's RC and Broomhouse Primary Schools. They highlighted:

- The various cultures and religions at the school.
- That St Joseph's was a victim of its own success and pupils were being disadvantaged because of the current over-crowding at the school.
- Potential problems with sharing accommodation such as pupils crossing to the dining area.
- Various health and safety issues that had to be taken into consideration.
- That if the option to share accommodation was agreed, it was likely that St Joseph's would have to come back to the Committee next year requesting more space.

The preferred option of St Joseph's RC Primary School Parent Council was to switch accommodation as outlined in Option 2 of the report by the Director of Children and Families (item 4.3 below)

The Convener thanked the deputation for their presentation and invited them to remain for the Committee's consideration of the Director of Children and Families' report.

4.3 Report by the Director of Children and Families

The Committee had previously agreed, amongst other things, to ask the school management teams and communities of St Joseph's RC Primary School and Broomhouse Primary School to work together in conjunction

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with the Children and Families Department to identify a solution to the accommodation issues for implementation in August 2011, and that the Director of Children and Families report to a future meeting.

Details were presented of the three options that had been the subject of further discussion with the respective school communities of St Joseph's and Broomhouse Primary Schools. Option 1 was to share accommodation, Option 2 was to switch accommodation and Option 3 was to cap P1 intake at St Joseph's.

Following these further discussions, no consensus had been reached with the option to share accommodation being the preferred option of Broomhouse and the option to switch accommodation being the preferred option of St Joseph's. Neither school was in favour of the option to cap P1 intake at St Joseph's.

Councillor Wilson was heard as a local ward member.

Decision

- 1) To approve the proposal to share accommodation as detailed in the report by the Director of Children and Families.
- 2) To note that the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh had indicated its preference for the option to switch accommodation, and that it considered a 5:3 sharing of rooms arrangement in the southern wing in St Joseph's Primary School's favour to be fairer on a pro rata basis than a 4:4 sharing arrangement.

(References – Education, Children & Families Committee, 27 April 2010 (minute item 1); report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

5 Motion by Councillor Johnstone Remitted from Council – Energy Use in Schools

The following motion by Councillor Johnstone was remitted from the Council in terms of Standing Order 28(3):-

“That this Council;

Notes that sustained low temperatures over winter are putting severe pressure on school energy budgets.

Notes concerns raised by parents over poor energy efficiency and inadequate temperature control within schools.

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Notes that feed-in tariffs for renewable energy systems offer a significant income generating opportunity.

Believes that there are significant savings which could be made on energy budgets within schools and calls for a report into these issues and into how the Council can prepare and implement a comprehensive school energy improvement plan in advance of winter 2011-12.”

Councillor Johnstone was heard on her motion.

Decision

1) To note that:

- The Council had acknowledged that the prolonged low temperatures over the winter has caused budget problems for some schools and had taken action to help schools who have a deficit in their energy budgets in the current year.
- A programme is underway to install smart energy meters in all schools and that significant investment of £250,000 is already being made in a variety of measures which will not only see a saving in energy costs but a reduction in carbon emissions. This current investment programme will see voltage optimisers installed in nine of our older secondary schools and a variety of improved insulation and other energy efficiency measures in a range of establishments within the estate.
- A survey of all non PPP schools has been undertaken and each building now has an assessed energy performance certificate.
- A further review of energy consumption and temperature settings in schools has been instructed by the Children and Families Department in order to reduce energy consumption and target improvement measures where they can deliver most benefit.

2) To ask officers to report back to the Committee on progress within two cycles.

(Reference – Act of Council No 12, 3 February 2011).

6 Strategic Management of School Places: P1 and S1 Intakes for August 2011

School placement, accommodation and associated staffing issues for the anticipated P1 and S1 intakes for August 2011 were presented, together with

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details of a series of strategies to manage intake limits for some schools and the action required to address emerging issues.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To agree to follow The Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2010 setting a maximum class size of 25 for P1 intakes.
- 3) To prioritise placing requests out of Corstorphine Primary School.
- 4) To prioritise placing requests out of Stockbridge Primary School.
- 5) To note there may be a requirement to prioritise baptised Roman Catholics into St Catherine's Primary School.
- 6) To prioritise baptised Roman Catholics into St Mary's (Leith) Primary School.
- 7) To prioritise baptised Roman Catholics into St Peter's Primary School and prioritise placing requests out of St Peter's Primary School.
- 8) To note that accommodation issues at St Joseph's RC Primary School had been addressed by the Committee's decision at item 4.3 above.

(Reference – amended report by the Director of Children and Families, tabled.)

7 School Session Dates 2012/13

The Council on 18 November 2010 had agreed to designate a staff in service training day in all City of Edinburgh primary schools on polling days for fixed term elections, where the dates were known well in advance, subject to further discussion with the Director of Children and Families.

Approval was sought for the School Session Dates for 2012/13 and the designation of polling days as staff In-Service days in all City of Edinburgh schools (secondary, primary, special and nursery).

Decision

- 1) To approve the Session dates for 2012/13 as detailed in version one of the Director's report.

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- 2) To approve a staff in-service training day in all City of Edinburgh schools on 5 June 2014, 7 May 2015, and any other polling days for fixed term elections thereafter, where the dates were known in advance, subject to further discussion with the Director of Children and Families.
- 3) That the Director of Children and Families look at the feasibility of changing one of the previously designated in-service training days to the day of the local government elections in May 2012, and report back to members of the Committee.

(References – Act of Council No 8, 18 November 2010; report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

8 Social Work Services for Children with Disabilities

An update was provided on the progress and development of social work services for children with disabilities.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To note the new respite service for children with disabilities which would open in September 2011.
- 3) To request an annual report from the disability service area.

(Reference – report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

9 Positive Destinations

Progress was detailed on improving school leaver destinations based on the annual census by Skills Development Scotland in September/October 2010.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To request a further report on progress in improving positive destinations from the Directors of Children and Families and City Development when the follow-up School Leaver Destination report is presented to the Committee in September 2011.
- 3) That future follow up reports include:

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- Figures for individual schools.
 - The number of children for each school.
 - Specific action being taken to improve performance.
 - Trends for (up to) the previous five year period.
- 4) To ask the Chief Executive for a progress report on the initiatives being progressed with the private, further and higher education and health sectors, to address the issue of improving positive destinations for school leavers in Edinburgh.

(Reference – report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

10 School Attendance in Edinburgh 2009/10

Trends and patterns in school attendance in Edinburgh in 2009/10, and strategies to improve attendance were outlined.

Key factors in improving attendance were:

- Ensuring that all schools had in place policies and procedures informing the management of pupils' attendance and absence.
- Robust monitoring of absence data by schools and the Education Welfare Service (EWS) to identify priorities.
- Setting of challenging attendance targets annually in all sectors.
- Regular review of statistics centrally to inform tracking of individual pupils at risk.
- Working in partnership with parents and other agencies to address attendance issues and to promote early intervention.

Decision

To note the report.

(Reference – report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

11 Active Schools: Evaluation of Phase Two, 2008 - 2011

The achievements of phase two of the Active Schools Programme and plans for phase three were outlined. Active Schools offered a successful, highly valued and valuable service to Edinburgh's children and young people. **Sportscotland**

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had confirmed that funding for the Active Schools Programme would continue for a further four years until March 2015.

Decision

- 1) To note the report and request an update on phase three of the Active Schools Programme in March 2013.
- 2) To note that the Council was committed to maintaining funding for Active Schools until March 2015, subject to future budget agreement.
- 3) To note that the Director of Children and Families would incorporate participation rates and quality of provision into future reports.
- 4) To note that the Director would provide information to Committee members on current participation rates.

(Reference – report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

12 Pre-Birth to Three: Plan for Action

The improvement and development of Pre-Birth to Three Services within Edinburgh were highlighted. An Action Plan to raise standards of care and increase support to young children and their families was also detailed.

Decision

- 1) To note the report and the commitment to the improvement and development of Pre-Birth to Three services.
- 2) To note the contents of the Action Plan.

(Reference – report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

13 Performance Report – Children and Families – December 2010/January 2011

Performance management information for the Children and Families Department for the period December 2010/January 2011 was presented.

Decision

To note the improved and maintained performance during the reporting period, and the areas noted for further improvement.

(Reference – report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

14 Redevelopment of Riddle's Court

Approval was sought to proceed with the redevelopment of the former Riddle's Court Community Centre in partnership with the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust.

Decision

- 1) To authorise the Directors of City Development and Children and Families to conclude an initial five year lease with the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust for the occupation of Riddle's Court.
- 2) To agree to receive updated reports when the final scope of works and the associated position regarding capital funding to redevelop Riddle's Court is known.
- 3) To note that a lease beyond an initial five year term would require to be approved by the Finance and Resources Committee.
- 4) That paragraph 2.8 of the Director's report be deleted.

(Reference – report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Beckett declared a non-financial interest in the foregoing item as a Board Member of 6VT Café.

15 Outstanding Remits

The Policy and Strategy Committee on 2 November 2010 had agreed that outstanding remits be submitted to individual Committees on an annual basis.

Outstanding remits for the Education, Children and Families Committee were detailed.

Decision

To note the list of Outstanding Remits which still required to be addressed as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Director's report.

(References – Policy and Strategy Committee, 2 November 2010 (minute item 4); report by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

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