

Committee Minutes

Education, Children and Families Committee

Edinburgh, 8 March 2012

Present:- Councillors MacLaren (Convener), McIvor (Vice-Convener), Balfour, Blacklock, Brock, Buchan, Cairns, Day, Dundas, Edie, Godzik, Johnstone, G Mackenzie, Milligan, Morris, Rose and Snowden (substituting for Councillor Lang).

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

1 Buckstone Primary School Choir

The Director of Children and Families welcomed Buckstone Primary School Choir and invited them to perform.

Decision

The Convener thanked the Choir and school staff on behalf of the Committee for their performance and complimented them on their hard work and enthusiasm.

2 Getting Set for the Games – DVD Presentation

The Committee viewed a DVD presentation entitled “Getting Set for the Games”.

Decision

To note the DVD presentation.

3 Minute

Decision

The minute of the meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 31 January 2012 was approved as a correct record.

4 Motion by Councillor Godzik – South Morningside Primary School

The following motion by Councillor Godzik had been submitted in terms of Standing Order 28(1):

“Committee

- notes the desire of South Morningside Primary School to improve its dining facilities;
- welcomes the work already done by the Parent Council, teachers, the Pupil Council and CEC officers in progressing this work;
- congratulates the pupils on their work outlining their needs; how the new dining facility could look and how it could enhance their learning experience as a multi-purpose space;
- requests a report on how this work can be progressed.”

Motion

To approve the terms of the motion.

- moved by Councillor Godzik, seconded by Councillor Johnstone.

Amendment

- 1) To take no action on Councillor Godzik’s motion as plans for the new dining facilities at South Morningside Primary School are far advanced, the money identified and the work scheduled to begin in the summer of 2012.
- 2) To note the briefing paper by the Director of Services for Communities tabled at the meeting.

- moved by Councillor MacLaren, seconded by Councillor Mclvor.

In accordance with Standing Order 30 (7), the last bullet point of the motion was deleted and the amendment was added as an addendum to the motion, subject to replacing the request to take no action on the motion and instead, noting plans for the new dining facilities.

Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion:

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Committee:

- Notes the desire of South Morningside Primary School to improve its dining facilities.
- Welcomes the work already done by the Parent Council, teachers, the Pupil Council and CEC officers in progressing this work.
- Congratulates the pupils on their work outlining their needs; how the new dining facility could look and how it could enhance their learning experience as a multi-purpose space.
- Notes that plans for the new dining facilities at South Morningside Primary School are far advanced, the money identified and the work scheduled to begin in the summer of 2012.
- Notes the briefing paper by the Director of Services for Communities tabled at the meeting.

(Reference – briefing paper by the Director of Services for Communities, tabled.)

5 Motion by Councillor MacLaren – Contribution of Women to Scottish Life

“In recognition of International Women’s Day, an event involving 100 young women from schools across the city, together with 13 successful women who will act as role models is being held on 8 March at the City Chambers. This Committee supports all efforts to promote and celebrate the amazing and valuable contribution that many women have made down the centuries to Scottish life. Actions could include the erection of female statues, commemorative plaques, and the naming of public spaces and buildings after women who have made a significant contribution.

Committee asks the Director of Children and Families to identify ways in which schools and other educational establishments could further assist with this initiative.”

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor MacLaren.

6 Strategic Management of School Places – P1 and S1 Intakes for August 2012

School placement, accommodation and associated staffing issues for the anticipated P1 and S1 intakes for August 2012 were presented, together with details of a series of strategies to manage intake limits for a number of schools.

Decision

- 1) To prioritise placing requests out of Liberton Primary School.
- 2) To prioritise placing requests out of Preston Street Primary School.
- 3) To prioritise placing requests out of Trinity Primary School.
- 4) To prioritise placing requests out of Wardie Primary School.
- 5) To delegate authority to the Director of Children and Families to prioritise baptised Roman Catholics into the following schools as required:
 - St Catherine's R C Primary School
 - St Cuthbert's RC Primary School
 - St David's RC Primary School
 - St Francis RC Primary School
 - St John's RC Primary School
 - St Joseph's RC Primary School
 - St Mark's RC Primary School
 - St Mary's RC (Leith) Primary School
 - St Ninian's RC Primary School
 - St Peter's RC Primary School
- 6) To note Holy Rood High School's increased S1 intake limit of 240 to be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 7) To note that a report setting out the long-term implications of continuing growth in demand for places in the primary sector would be the subject of a separate report to Council in due course.

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

7 City of Edinburgh Literacy Strategy

The Committee had previously agreed to receive an annual report on progress in securing improvements in literacy.

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Details were presented of the Council's strategy towards improving literacy skills in early years establishments and primary and secondary schools. Strategies aimed at improving adult literacies were also detailed.

The Council was one of five local authorities invited by the Scottish Government to be involved in supporting improvements in literacy at a national level.

Decision

- 1) To note the report by the Director of Children and Families.
- 2) To note that attainment in literacy would be included as part of the overall attainment report.
- 3) To agree to receive an annual report on progress in securing improvements in literacy from the Director of Children and Families.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 13 September 2011 (item 8); report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

8 Review of Secondary Schools Management Structures – Progress Report

The Committee had previously asked for more evidence regarding the educational benefit associated with the Review of Secondary Schools Management Structures along with details of how the projected savings could be made.

An update was provided on the progress being made with the implementation of the changes to the management structures in secondary schools, together with further information on the educational impact and on the current estimates of budget savings.

Motion

- 1) To note the progress that was being made with the implementation of the Review of Secondary Schools Management Structures.
- 2) To note that a report on the outcome of the review of guidance and pupil support would be submitted to Committee in June 2012.

- moved by Councillor MacLaren, seconded by Councillor McIvor.

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Amendment

To agree, as highlighted in paragraph 3.12 of the Director of Children and Families report, that there is little evidence of educational benefits under the faculty model, adoption of which has resulted in the loss of many experienced teachers, at a time when uncertainty over a new exam system is causing concern within the teaching profession.

Considers that this action has been driven solely by financial concerns and calls for a detailed update on how the savings of £2.4m have been, and will be, achieved.

- moved by Councillor Johnstone, seconded by Councillor Godzik.

Voting

For the motion - 15 votes
For the amendment - 7 votes

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor MacLaren

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 15 November 2011 (item 3); report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

9 School Exclusion and Attendance

Trends and patterns in school attendance and exclusion in Edinburgh in 2010/11 were detailed, together with strategies to improve attendance and reduce the need for exclusion in city schools.

Decision

- 1) To note the report by the Director of Children and Families.
- 2) To note that the Director of Children and Families would forward information to Councillor Blacklock on the number of unauthorised absences in schools.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 15 March 2011 (item 10); report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

10 Children and Families Residential Outdoor Centres – Progress Update

The Committee had previously asked for a progress report on encouraging greater use by schools of the Council's Residential Outdoor Centres at Benmore and Lagganlia, and how children from disadvantaged backgrounds could be assisted to participate in centre activities.

An update was provided on progress being made. Sixty schools went to Benmore and Lagganlia in 2011, compared to a total of thirty four in 2010. Advance bookings for 2012 for both centres were extremely encouraging with sixty four Edinburgh schools already booked for the new calendar year.

The Council had allocated £100,000 of additional funding to support disadvantaged children and young people to access sporting and outdoor opportunities.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress to date.
- 2) To congratulate staff on their hard work and success.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 21 June 2011 (item 17); report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

11 Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People in Craigoyston

The Committee had previously requested a progress report on initiatives to improve outcomes for children and young people in Craigoyston.

Details were presented of a multi-agency approach being taken in the Craigoyston High School cluster to tackle the complex needs of the some of the families in that area and to improve the life chances and outcomes for the children and young people involved. An initial workplan detailing key objectives, timescales and progress to date was also provided.

Decision

- 1) To note the approach to improving outcomes for children and young people in Craigoyston as set out in the Director of Children and Families' report.
- 2) To note the initial workplan for February to August 2012.

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- 3) To seek a further progress report in October 2012.
- 4) To note that the Director of Children and Families would involve members of the Committee in the Engagement Plan as well as local members.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 15 November 2011 (item 16); report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

12 Paolozzi Prize for Art

An update was provided on progress towards awarding Edinburgh's first Paolozzi Prize for Art. A revised report by the Director of Children and Families was tabled at the meeting.

A launch event would be held at the City Art Centre on Monday 12 March 2012, with the first award to be presented at an awards ceremony in June 2012.

The prize would be awarded annually and was aimed at 5th and 6th year pupils studying art and design. The overall first prize would be £500 with three category winners who would each receive £250.

Decision

- 1) To note the report by the Director of Children and Families.
- 2) To note that an update would be reported to the Education, Children and Families Committee annually.
- 3) To note that, if successful, the Prize could be opened up to all Edinburgh schools in the future.
- 4) To note that the Director of Children and Families would consider suggestions made by members of the Committee for the involvement of Richard Demarco and the Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop in the project.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 13 September 2011 (item 13); revised report by the Director of Children and Families, tabled.)

13 Corporate Parenting Action Plan

Details were provided of an Action Plan developed to improve outcomes of looked after children which the Council had responsibility for as a Corporate Parent.

Decision

To welcome and endorse the Corporate Parenting Action Plan as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Director of Children and Families' report.

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

14 Engagement of Children, Young People and Parents/Carers in the Development of Services for Children and Families in Edinburgh

Details were provided on a range of ways Children and Families engages with service users. A large scale survey of parents and pupils highlighted key developments in young people's participation and linked developing service user engagement with customer service excellence accreditation.

Areas of progress were highlighted together with areas identified for further development and improvement.

Decision

- 1) To note progress in the area of engagement of service users.
- 2) To agree to receive an annual update on the engagement of children, young people and parents/carers in the development of services for children and families.

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

15 Update on UNICEF Child Rights Partners

The Committee had previously agreed to receive a report on the outcome of the Children and Families Department's participation in UNICEF's Child Friendly Communities pilot.

The Council, along with 11 other UK authorities, took part in the pilot which aimed to develop a framework, accreditation, inspection and an award scheme for local authorities to become "Child Friendly Communities".

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UNICEF had reviewed the pilot and replaced it with the Child Rights Partners Programme. An update on Child Rights Partners programme was detailed.

Decision

- 1) To note progress to date.
- 2) To agree to receive an update on the proposed programme after November 2012.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 18 March 2010 (item 5); report by the Director of Children and Families, submitted.)

16 Councillor MacLaren – Valedictory

Councillor MacLaren advised that she was not standing at the local government elections in May 2012. She paid tribute to the work and achievements of the Committee and, in particular, acknowledged the following contributions:

- Councillor McIvor for his support and work as Vice-Convener since taking over from Councillor Beckett.
- Councillor Johnstone – wishing her well in taking up her position as an MSP.
- The Religious Representatives on the Committee for all their hard work and particularly their contribution to the Head Teacher recruitment process.
- Margaret Bryce Stafford – noting that Margaret was standing down from her role a teacher representative and thanking her for her seventeen years commitment and service to this and predecessor Committees.
- Bob Gould – noting his retirement and wishing him well for the future.

In response, Councillors Rose, McIvor, Milligan, Godzik and Johnstone thanked Councillor MacLaren on behalf of the Committee for her passion and commitment to education in Edinburgh and wished her a happy and healthy retirement.