

Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00 am, Tuesday, 1 March 2016

Present

Councillors Godzik (Convener), Fullerton (Vice-Convener), Aitken, Aldridge, Austin Hart, Bridgman, Child, Corbett, Griffiths (substituting for Councillor Day), Howat, Jackson, Key, Lewis, Lunn, Main, Milligan, Redpath, Robson, Rust and Tymkewycz.

Added members for Education matters

Marie Allan, Allan Crosbie, Craig Duncan, Alexander Ramage and John Swinburne.

1. Order of business

The Convener agreed that the items of business be dealt with in the following order.

2. Communities and Families Small Grants to Third Parties 2016/17 – Proposals for Expenditure

2.1 Deputations

The Committee agreed to hear the following deputations in relation to the report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families on the Communities and Families Small Grants to Third Parties 2016/17 – Proposals for Expenditure.

2.1.1. Corstorphine Youth and Community Centre (CYCC)

Tommy McLean (Vice Chair) spoke on behalf of the Corstorphine Youth and Community Centre (CYCC) and highlighted the following:

- The CYCC had previously made a deputation to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 11 February 2016 in regard to the Communities and Families Revenue Grants to Third Parties for 2016-19.
- Although the CYCC was advised at the Committee meeting on 11 February 2016 that its application had been formally referred to the small grants fund, this was untrue. A formal referral, recommending an award from the small grants fund, did not happen; an informal redirection did.
- The CYCC was trying to increase income independently, but this would not cover the complete withdrawal of the grant from Communities and Families. It

was likely that match funding would be reduced, and as a result, CYCC volunteers would be unable to cover services

The deputation went on to make the following general points about the grants process and the new criteria:

- The new grants criteria had a very narrow focus and made it difficult for community based organisations providing universal provision to receive funding.
- Both the large and small grants schemes left large geographical areas without any funding support. For example, no group based in the West Edinburgh Neighbourhood Partnership Area had been awarded a grant from either the large or small grants fund.
- Communities and Families were implementing a grant system that did not support community groups.
- Of the eleven organisations receiving funding from the small grants fund, six were national or larger than Edinburgh organisations. No local independent based groups had been awarded a grant, and four of the small grant recipients had also received a grant from the large grants fund.
- These figures indicated that the new grants criteria raised serious issues by withdrawing support for groups providing universal provision, in particular local community centres.
- It was strange that in a time of developing localities and community empowerment, adequate resources were not being given to local community groups.
- It was the view of the CYCC that the new grants criteria favoured larger organisations.

The Convener thanked the deputation for his presentation and invited him to remain for the Committee's consideration of the related report at item 2.2 below.

2.1.2 Lothian Association of Youth Clubs (LAYC)

Ian Boardman spoke on behalf of the Lothian Association of Youth Clubs (LAYC) and highlighted the following:

- The new grants scheme had a number of discreet differences from the scheme it was replacing.
- The previous grants scheme had awarded a number of small grants despite not having a specific allocation set aside for this. Many of the grants awarded under the previous scheme were for amounts under £10k.
- Four large national organisations had been recommended for grants as part of the small grants scheme, despite these organisations having a combined yearly income of over £400m.
- If it was the intention of the Committee to set up a small grants scheme to support small localised organisations, then this had failed.

- Communities and Families should have set parameters for the small grants process that supported smaller local organisations and helped to address the lack of provision in specific areas of the city.
- There were currently deserts of provision, and the small grants programme could have righted this if it had been set up correctly.
- Perhaps a cap could have been applied to those organisations that could apply, e.g. a limit set based on an organisations previous years income (EVOC suggests £200k).

The Convener thanked the deputation for his presentation and invited him to remain for the Committee's consideration of the related report at item 2.2 below.

2.2 Report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families

The Committee had previously agreed to set aside £108,000 for a small grants programme to third parties and had requested that a report on proposed awards from the scheme be submitted to this meeting.

Proposed awards to organisations submitting small grant applications for 2016/17 were detailed. Awards would be for one year and would be for a minimum of £1,000 and a maximum of £10,000.

Decision

- 1) To note the 2016/17 Small Grants budget approved by Committee on 11 February 2016 which agreed an allocation of £108,000 for small grants to third parties.
- 2) To approve the awards to the organisations outlined in appendix one of the report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families.
- 3) To note that support would be offered to unsuccessful applicants to discuss what additional internal and external assistance could be provided.
- 4) That the short-life working group on third party grants which Committee agreed to reconvene at their meeting in 11 February 2016 should also look at lessons learned from the small grants process, including:
 - The form and level of support provided to unsuccessful organisations.
 - The ability to provide part-awards.
 - Consideration of the ability of national organisations to bid for awards and the criteria used.
 - The role "localities" may play in future decision-making.
 - The quality assurance processes.

(References – minute of the Education Children and Families Committee 11 February 2016 (item 1.2); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Corbett declared a non-financial interest in the foregoing item as an employee of Shelter Scotland.

3. Primary School Estate Rising Rolls

3.1 Deputation – Liberton Primary School Association (LPSA)

The Committee agreed to hear a deputation from Lucy Blackburn and Louise Slorance (co-chairs) on behalf of the Liberton Primary School Association (LPSA) in relation to the report by Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families on Primary School Estate Rising Rolls. The following was highlighted:

- Liberton Primary had been part of the rising rolls discussion for three of the last four years, however, this was the first time that the LPSA had felt a need to engage with the Committee. This had been caused by concerns that the pressure on space within the school was becoming increasingly noticeable.
- Classroom sizes in the school were relatively small by standards across the city and circulation space had now been reduced substantially.
- In the last year the school had been able to move from a 14 class school to a 15 class school, but this had only been possible because the Scottish Government had relaxed the space standards requirements for primary school classrooms.
- If there was no significant drop off in registrations, then the school might have to go to a 16 class setup in August 2016, which could result in the possible loss of a further general purpose space.
- Liberton Primary was the only school in Edinburgh with more than 400 pupils that operated using a single hall space. This put pressure on the 2 hours per week recommended provision of physical education, and there was an increasing year-round reliance on using outdoor space to deliver the target. This was proving increasingly difficult, particularly during the winter months.
- The LPSA was concerned that the rising rolls process would only look at classroom provision, and not include the increasing pressures on hall space at the school.

The deputation welcomed the creation of a Working Group to discuss possible solutions and requested that the LPSA be part of those discussions. They urged the Council to use the Working Group as a means to look at the school's accommodation issues, including hall space, as a whole.

The Convener thanked the deputation for their presentation and invited them to remain for the Committee's consideration of the related report at item 3.2 below.

3.2 Report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families

Seven primary schools (Bruntsfield, Liberton, Newcraighall, St Margaret's, Stockbridge, Trinity and Victoria) had been identified as potentially facing accommodation pressures in August 2017 and beyond.

Where necessary, working groups (involving school management and parent council representatives) would be established with the aim of identifying a preferred option for each school. This would be reported back to Committee on 24 May 2016.

Decision

- 1) To note the content of the report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families and the intention to bring a further report to Committee on 24 May 2016 to identify the preferred solution (including delivery model) for each school facing a potential accommodation pressure in August 2017. This report to also include an update on Wardie Primary School.
- 2) To note that the latest cost projection to 2020/21, excluding any further costs to deliver the third phase of additional capacity which may be required at Stockbridge Primary School, represented a funding deficit of £1.676m for which additional resources would need to be identified in future capital budgets.
- 3) That the implications of classroom reconfiguration on the delivery of the recommended two hours of physical education activity per week be included in a future update report.

(References – minute of the Education Children and Families Committee 8 December 2015 (item 10); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Allan Crosbie declared a non-financial interest in the foregoing item as a parent of a child attending Bruntsfield Primary School.

Councillor Key declared a non-financial interest in the foregoing item as a parent of a child attending Bruntsfield Primary School.

4. Minutes

Decision

- 1) To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 8 December 2015 as a correct record.
- 2) To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 11 February 2016 as a correct record.

5. Education, Children and Families Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan – May to October 2016

The Education, Children and Families Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan for the period May to October 2016 was presented.

Decision

To note the Key Decisions Forward Plan for May to October 2016.

(Reference – Key Decisions Forward Plan – May to October 2016, submitted.)

6. Education, Children and Families Committee Rolling Actions Log – March 2016

The Education, Children and Families Committee Rolling Actions Log for March 2016 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To approve the closure of actions 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 16, 23, 27, 28, 30 and 31.
- 2) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log – 1 March 2016, submitted.)

7. Education, Children and Families Committee Business Bulletin – March 2016

The Education, Children and Families Committee Business Bulletin for March 2016 was presented.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin – 1 March 2016, submitted.)

8. Strategic Management of School Places: P1 and S1 Intakes for August 2016

Decision

To note that the report had been withdrawn from the agenda by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families.

9. Review of Positive Action Funding in Primary Schools

An update was provided on the further work undertaken to review the options for allocating positive action funding, using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, and approval was sought for proposed changes to the way in which this was allocated across Primary Schools to ensure the effective targeting of funding to those children most in need.

Decision

- 1) To approve that positive action funding in the primary sector was allocated to those schools with children living in Deciles 1 and 2 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation with a weighting of 2:1 to those pupils living in Decile 1 and a 40% threshold being used.
- 2) To approve the interventions for use in reducing the attainment gap amongst those pupils most in need.
- 3) To note the way in which the use of positive action funding would be monitored in the future.
- 4) That a yearly update report be submitted to Committee on the impacts of the review of Positive Action Funding in primary schools.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 6 October 2015 (item 25); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

10. Scottish Attainment Challenge

The aims of the Scottish Attainment Challenge were outlined together with details of the projects planned for the eight primary schools in Edinburgh taking part in the Challenge (Canal View, Castlevew, Clovenstone, Craigroyston, Niddrie Mill, Sighthill, St Catherine's and St Francis').

The schools had been selected because over 70% of their pupils lived in the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland. The overall aim of the challenge was to raise attainment and to reduce educational inequality.

Decision

- 1) To note the commitment from the Scottish Government to raise attainment and close the attainment gap.
- 2) To note the commitment of officers from Communities and Families to support and challenge the eight attainment challenge schools to raise attainment and ensure equity for all learners.

- 3) To note that an update report would be submitted to Committee once the projects being carried out by the eight schools had been evaluated.

(Reference – report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

11. Vision for Schools

As previously requested by the Committee, an update was provided on progress on the areas identified as development priorities for delivering the Council's Vision for Schools.

Motion

- 1) To note the continued progress made with the priorities for moving schools from "good to great" identified in the Vision for Schools report submitted to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 3 March 2015.
- 2) To note the positive contribution of the new initiatives, Edinburgh's Challenge and 1 in 5 - Raising Awareness of Child Poverty in Edinburgh Strategy to delivering the Council's Vision for Schools in Edinburgh.
- 3) To note that officers would be happy to discuss the issues raised in paragraph 2 of the amendment by John Swinburne below with the teacher representatives.

- Moved by Councillor Godzik, seconded by Councillor Fullerton.

Amendment

- 1) In similar terms to the motion, subject to the deletion of paragraph 3 and the inclusion of the following:
- 2) To note that the continuing development of high quality teaching was not supported by annual embedded cuts to school budgets and to request that officers report in May 2016 on:
 - The full extent of embedded cuts to school budgets since 2009;
 - The full extent to which the money saved through Advanced Higher cuts had, or had not, been pooled and shared to facilitate consortia arrangements;
 - The financial consequences of ending the above cuts in the next Council Budget.

- Moved by John Swinburne, seconded by Allan Crosbie.

Voting

For the motion	14
For the amendment	11

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Godzik.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 3 March 2015 (item 9); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

12. Chair

Councillor Fullerton (Vice-Convenor) chaired the meeting for item 13 below. Councillor Godzik resumed the Chair for the remaining items of business thereafter.

13. Total Craigroyston

An overview was provided of the work undertaken by the Total Craigroyston initiative over the previous year, and the lessons that could be taken forward into the Council's Transformation Project with particular relevance for the development of the locality management structure.

Decision

To note the impact of the approach on the key outcomes for children and families as well as the lessons learned for the future development of the Localities approach.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 3 March 2015 (item 16); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

14. Castlebrae Community High School - Progress Report

As previously requested by the Committee, an update was provided on progress towards improving outcomes for pupils attending Castlebrae Community High School.

Decision

- 1) To note the contents of the report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families.

- 2) To note the progress of strategies within the school which aimed to deliver a high quality educational experience for learners.
- 3) To note the progress in management arrangements within the Castlebrae Learning Community which had been implemented since December 2015.
- 4) To note the outcome of the review led by authority officers and Education Scotland's Area Lead Officer, November 2015, published as a follow through report.
- 5) To agree to receive a further follow through report at the Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families after November 2016.
- 6) That a briefing note be prepared for Committee members on the delivery of a new high school for Craigmillar.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 9 December 2014 (item 15); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

15. Outdoor Centres and Outdoor Learning

An update was provided on recent and newly proposed developments at the Council's two residential outdoor centres at Benmore and Lagganlia. Details were also provided of an enhanced commercial approach at the centres, set against the context of an updated Outdoor Learning Strategy.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress regarding recent and proposed development at the Council's Outdoor Centres, in particular an enhanced commercial approach to facilitate future investment in the Centres.
- 2) To support the expectation that Primary Schools in Edinburgh choose Benmore or Lagganlia as their first choice of a fully serviced Residential Outdoor Learning week providing there was available space during the peak period of mid February through to mid November.
- 3) To approve the updated Outdoor Learning Strategy for the period 2016-2020.
- 4) To agree to receive a further report in September 2017 following the completion of an organisational review of the performance of the Outdoor Centres in the next full financial and academic year.

(References – minutes of the Education, Children and Families Committee 21 June 2011 (item 16), 8 March 2012 (item 10) and 5 March 2013 (item 17); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

16. Support to Children and Young people with Disabilities: Annual Progress Report

An update was provided on progress on performance and planning over the previous 18 months in relation to the provision of services for children and young people with disabilities.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress made within social work services for children and young people with disabilities.
- 2) To request a further report on progress in March 2017.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 11 September 2014 (item 8); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

17. Education Complaints Improvement Update

An update was provided on progress towards implementing improvements to the education service complaints handling process as previously requested by the Education, Children and Families and Corporate Policy and Strategy Committees.

Decision

To note the improvement actions underway and progress made to date.

(References – minutes of the Education, Children and Families Committee 6 October 2015 (item 36) and Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee 1 September 2015 (item 6); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

18. Short-Life Working Group – School Admissions/Appeals

As previously requested by the Committee, an update was provided on the work of the Short-Life Working Group on School Admissions and Appeals, including progress with the delivery of the action plan.

Decision

- 1) To note there had been further progress made to date on improving the quality of information on the admissions and appeals process available on the Council website and that further work had been undertaken to improve the quality of public information to ensure that all relevant information could be easily accessed.

- 2) To note that a formalised open recruitment and selection process had now taken place.
- 3) To note the findings of the survey monkey of young people, as outlined in appendix 1 to the report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families.
- 4) To note the development of a comprehensive communications strategy which would be implemented over the course of 2016, as outlined in appendix 2 to the report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families.
- 5) To note the ongoing development of an annual mandatory training programme for panel chairs/members and all officers, including head teachers, who were involved in the Appeals process was well underway.
- 6) To request that the next annual report on school admissions and appeals include an update regarding progress made on the recommendations within the report to the Committee in December 2015, including statistics and data relating to school placements and the number of out of catchment requests; the number of appeals lodged; the number of common and individual cases won on appeal; in order to build up long term data trends and identify areas of priority.
- 7) That the next annual report on school admissions and appeals also include an update on the delivery of the action plan.
- 8) To note the Short Life Working Group had considered and produced a more user friendly Admissions Policy and associated procedures, which was considered as separate item on the agenda for this Committee (see item 19 below).
- 9) To note that the action plan had been updated in line with progress made, as outlined in appendix 3 to the report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families.

(References – minutes of the Education, Children and Families Committee 8 December 2015 (item 3); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

19. Admissions to Mainstream Schools

The Convener ruled, in terms of Standing Order 27(1), that this item, which included a recommendation which, if accepted, would require a change to the Committee's decision of 8 December 2015, should be considered due to a material change in circumstances, namely that the Short Life Working Group on School Admissions and

Appeals had suggested changes to make the Admissions Policy more accessible to users.

The Committee on 8 December 2015 had approved the Admissions to Mainstream Schools Policy and had referred the Policy to the Short-Life Working Group on School Admissions and Appeals for consideration of how to make it more accessible to users.

A revised Admissions Policy, which had been amended by the Short-Life Working Group, was submitted.

Decision

To approve the changes which had been made to the Policy regarding Admissions to Mainstream Schools to make it more accessible to users following further consultation with the Short-Life Working Group.

(References – minutes of the Education, Children and Families Committee 8 December 2015 (item 4); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

20. Edinburgh Integrated Literacy Strategy

Progress with priorities within the 2015-2016 Edinburgh Integrated Literacy Strategy (EILS) action plan, which covered early years to adult literacies, was detailed. The report covered universal support and targeted interventions in Edinburgh, gave a brief overview of developments nationally and highlighted aspects for continuing development.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress with priorities within the Edinburgh's Integrated Literacy (EILS) Strategy Action Plan 2015-16.
- 2) To note the continuing progress in service improvement in literacy.
- 3) To note the progress made in closing the attainment gap/improving outcomes for the most disadvantaged 20% and 30%.
- 4) To note the positive contribution the strategy made to council outcomes and coalition pledges.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 3 March 2015 (item 10); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

21. Communities and Families Revenue Monitoring 2015/16 – Month Eight Position

The projected month eight revenue budget monitoring position for the Communities and Families directorate was outlined. Significant service pressures continued to be managed and a balanced budget position was forecast for 2015/16.

Decision

- 1) To note the forecast balanced budget position for 2015/16.
- 2) To note that approved savings in 2015/16 totalled £14.075m; the savings programme had been closely monitored during the year with action taken to address any highlighted risks of non delivery.
- 3) To note that the reported position included a contribution of £2.025m towards pressures within Health and Social Care.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 8 December 2015 (item 15); report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, submitted.)

22. Social Work Complaints Review Committee – 25 November 2015

The Committee on 8 December 2015 had considered the recommendations of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee (SWCRC) held on 25 November 2015 and noted that, due to the proximity in time of the SWCRC and the meeting of the Committee, senior managers had not had sufficient time to consider the SWCRC recommendations. The Committee further noted that a report would be brought back to this meeting of the Committee.

The recommendations of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee (SWCRC) held on 25 November to consider a complaint against the Communities and Families Directorate were again detailed. The SWCRC had upheld the complaint for the following reasons:

- 1) The SWCRC felt that the complainant had not been given any advice about kinship caring, and consequently may have been left financially worse off. The SWCRC did not have the financial information from either side to be able to determine this conclusively. It was felt that if it was demonstrated that the complainant had suffered financially, the Council should consider an appropriate ex-gratia payment.
- 2) The SWCRC noted that in the time since the complainant was caring for her granddaughter, arrangements for kinship caring had been significantly improved, which should ensure that this did not happen again.

The Communities and Families response to the decision taken by the SWCRC was outlined. Officers had considered awarding an ex-gratia payment to the complainant as requested by the SWCRC, but were recommending that a payment should not be made for the reasons outlined in the report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families. The reasons centred around the definition of Looked After and Accommodated Children and the criteria for paying maintenance allowance. The Committee was asked to approve this recommendation.

Decision

- 1) To note the decision of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee held on 25 November 2015.
- 2) To approve the proposal not to award an ex-gratia payment to the complainant for the reasons set out in paragraphs 3.4 to 3.13 of the report by the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families.

(References – minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 8 December 2015 (item 19); reports by the Chair of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee and the Acting Executive Director of Communities and Families, both submitted.)

23. Social Work Complaints Review Committee – 15 December 2015

The recommendations of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee (SWCRC) held on 15 December to consider a complaint against the Children and Families Directorate were detailed.

Decision

To approve the recommendations of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee on 15 December 2015 not to uphold the complaint.

(Reference – report by the Chair of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee, submitted.)

24. Maria Lloyd

The Convener advised that this would be Maria Lloyd's final meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee as his Departmental Assistant (DA) as she was leaving to take up the post of Quality Improvement Manager - Special Schools.

The Convener thanked Maria on a personal level, and on behalf of the Committee, for the valued contribution she had made in her role as DA.