

Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00am, Tuesday 5 March 2019

Present:

Councillors Perry (Convener), Dickie (Vice-Convener), Bird, Mary Campbell, Corbett, Griffiths, Howie, Rust, Smith, Whyte (substituting for Laidlaw) and Young.

Religious Representatives

Fiona Beveridge, Monsignor Anthony Duffy and Rabbi David Rose

Parent Representative

Alexander Ramage (non-voting)

1. Deputation – Stepping Stones North Edinburgh

Decision

To note that the deputation request had been withdrawn at the request of the applicant.

2. Deputation – James Gillespie’s High School Parent Council – Wi-Fi Pilot in James Gillespie’s High School

The Committee received a deputation from Professor Charles Warlow from James Gillespie’s High School Parent Council and Adam Paton (James Gillespie’s High School pupil) in relation to the Wi-Fi Pilot in James Gillespie’s High School.

James Gillespie’s had set up a pilot study of “bring your own device”, in December 2018, which was working satisfactorily and had been successful. Of the pupils surveyed, three-quarters agreed that they used their own device and over 90% thought that Wi-Fi access was beneficial to the learning experience.

Concerns were expressed that the WiFi had been switched off by the Council on 19 December and only restored in the week beginning 14 January 2019. This had caused confusion and disruption to the pupils in their preparation for prelims.

The Committee was urged to continue to provide Wi-Fi access for pupils at James Gillespie's and roll this out to other Edinburgh secondary schools. This would contribute hugely to raising attainment, closing educational gaps, supporting equity for pupils and enhancing the quality of teaching.

Decision

- 1) To note the issues raised.
- 2) To note that financial information would be included in the report on the digital learning strategy scheduled to be submitted to Committee in May 2019.

Declaration of Interest

Alexander Ramage declared a non-financial interest in the above item, as his son attended Liberton High School.

3. Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 11 December 2018 as a correct record subject to a minor adjustment to the list of those present to reflect that Councillor Rose had substituted for Councillor Rust and not Councillor Laidlaw.

4. Rolling Actions Log

The Rolling Actions Log for March 2019 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To close the following actions:
 - Action 2 – Implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 – Update
 - Action 7 – Education Governance and the Establishment of a Regional Collaboration.
 - Action 9 – Strategic Management of School Places.
 - Action 11 – Energy in Schools Annual Report.
 - Action 19 – Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare from 600-1140 hours by 2020, Current Progress and Next Steps.
 - Action 22 - Revenue Monitoring 2018/19 – Month Three Position.
 - Action 25 – Motion by Councillor Smith – Liberton High School
 - Action 31 – Gaelic Medium Education Plan and Growth Strategy
 - 2) To add the following to the rolling actions log:

“To include information on the success criteria for the Wi-Fi pilot at James Gillespie’s High School in the next Business Bulletin.
 - 3) To update the rolling actions log to reflect decisions taken at this meeting.
 - 4) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions
- (Reference – Rolling Actions Log – 5 March 2019, submitted)

5. Business Bulletin

The Business Bulletin for March 2019 was presented.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted)

6. Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 Update

An outline was provided on the new duties for local authorities regarding young carers in the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. It reviewed the current services available to support young carers within their school environment and developments in information for young carers, teachers and other pupils.

Solutions for support gaps identified in a recent consultation with carers were outlined, including improved transition between education and higher education.

Young carers presented a video to the Committee.

Decision

- 1) To note the presentation by the young carers.
- 2) To note the progress of work done to date regarding the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.
- 3) To approve the locality and school cluster approach to supporting young carers at school.
- 4) To support the approach of supporting young carers in transition from school to higher education.
- 5) To develop criteria for assessing the success of the strategy in consultation with young carers.
- 6) The Executive Director for Communities and Families to provide a progress report in six months' time.

(References – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

7. Promoting Children's Rights, Equalities and Inclusion in Schools and Services

An update was provided of some of the work being undertaken across Communities and Families helping to promote children's rights, equalities and inclusion with children and young people.

An overview was provided of key developments and steps being taken to address the impact of discrimination and inequalities which highlighted how the department was working with children, young people, parents, schools and other partners to help improve life chances for people living in poverty, facing greatest disadvantage and/or had protected characteristics and/or have a disability.

Decision

- 1) To approve the aims of **Discover!** the citywide reach, the strategic approach and the local delivery.
- 2) To endorse the establishment of the Child Poverty Action Unit.
- 3) To approve the new inclusion policy 'Included, Engaged and Involved in Edinburgh' (Appendix 1 of the report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families).
- 4) To welcome the direction of proposals arising from the review of Social work services for children affected by disability.
- 5) To endorse the continued development of integrated working across Communities and Families with the NHS and other partners, to promote children's rights and reduce the impact of discrimination and inequity of outcomes or children and young people.
- 6) To agree that detailed information on attendance figures and part-time timetables should be included in the next report to Committee.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 12 December 2017 (item 17); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

8. Teacher Recruitment Update

A summary was provided of the steps taken up to August 2018 to improve recruitment processes for teachers within the Council to address difficulties engendered by the national teacher shortage.

Reference was also made to issues that had arisen at the start of session 2018-19 and the measures taken to address and alleviate these going forward.

Decision

- 1) To note the report and the detail responding to queries raised about the recruitment of newly-qualified teachers.
- 2) To note the issues being raised by schools around recruitment barriers, and the measures taken to address these.

(References – Act of Council No 10 of 20 September 2018; report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families submitted)

9. Schooling Options for Children Living in Edinburgh

Details were provided of the schooling options outside of those offered by the City of Edinburgh Council for school aged children living Edinburgh. The report set out how this information was captured in the current roll projection methodology used by the Council forecast future school rolls.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To note the intention to establish better information sharing with neighbouring local authorities.
- 3) To note the intention to continually seek improvements in the methodology, data integrity, presentation, and accuracy of school roll projections.
- 4) To agree that the Executive Director for Communities and Families submit a report to Committee in two cycles (August 2019) identifying numbers of young people who were unregistered for school and who had never been in school.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 11 December 2018 (item 12); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

10. Early Years Expansion, Workforce Update

Approximately 650 additional staff were estimated to be required to deliver 1,140 hours by session 2020 - 2021. The expansion plan for Edinburgh estimated that approximately 300 staff would be recruited by the end of the academic session 2018-2019.

£248,000 funding had been secured from Skills Development Scotland to create Foundation Apprenticeships in early years and from June 2019, 80 places will be available.

Decision

To note to progress towards recruiting the workforce required to deliver the Early Years expansion.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 11 December 2018 (item 18); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

11. Staff and Resources Required to Deliver Future School Accommodation

An overview was provided setting out the staff and resource capacity required in the School Estate Planning Team to deliver future accommodation requirements.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To note that the Executive Director for Communities and Families would look at how the work required to deliver future school accommodation was resourced from 2019/20 onwards.

(Reference – Education Children and Families Committee December 2018 (item 12); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

12. Communities and Families Small Grants to Third Parties 2019/20 – Proposals for Expenditure

Details were provided of the recommended awards to organisations submitting small grant applications to Communities and Families for 2019/20. The awards were made for one year and were for a minimum of £1,000 and a maximum of £10,000.

Decision

To approve the awards to organisations outlined in Appendix 1 of the report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 11 October 2016 (item 7); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

13. Renewal of NHS Service Level Agreements

Approval was sought for the renewal of joint funding arrangements to the value of £1.6m for NHS services supporting enhanced integrated support for children and young people in need.

Decision

- 1) To agree the extension of Service Level Agreement contracts for children's services with the NHS, to the value of £1.6m per annum, listed at Appendix 3 of the report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, from 1 April 2019, for a period of one-year subject to strategic direction and monitoring by the Integrated Children's Services Board.
- 2) To refer the report to the Finance and Resources Committee.

(Reference - report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted.)

14. What Kind of Edinburgh

The project “What kind of Edinburgh?” had involved children and young people from across the City, working in partnership with senior staff involved with the work of the Children’s Partnership over the past eight months. The final session on empowerment and participation would be held on Wednesday 6 March 2019. Participants were keen to share the outcomes of their work with the Committee and discuss how to increase and develop children and young people’s participation in decision-making as part of the commitment towards Edinburgh as a children and young people friendly city.

Decision

- 1) To invite children, young people and champions from “What kind of Edinburgh?” to make a presentation on their work and its outcomes to the next meeting in May.
- 2) To note the progress of “What kind of Edinburgh?”.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

15. Revenue Monitoring 2018/19 – Month Nine Position

Details were provided of the projected month nine revenue monitoring position for the Communities and Families Directorate, based on analysis of actual expenditure and income and expenditure and income projections for the remainder of the financial year.

The total projected full year unfunded budget pressure was currently £12.7m, partially offset by mitigations totalling £8.7m, and resulting in a net residual unfunded budget pressure of £4.0m.

Decision

- 1) To note the net residual budget pressure of £4.0m which remained at month nine.
- 2) To note that approved savings in 2018-19 total £2.84m, with £2.115m on track to be delivered in full and £0.725m assessed as red and non-deliverable.
- 3) To note that the Executive Director of Communities and Families was taking measures to reduce budget pressures and progress would be reported to the Finance and Resources Committee on 7 March 2019.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

16. Motion by Councillor Laidlaw – Adjustment of Christmas Holiday 2020/21 School Year

The following motion by Councillor Laidlaw was submitted in terms of Standing Order 16:

Motion

- “1) Committee notes that the agreed Christmas holidays for school year 2020/21 are Thursday 24 December 2020 to Wednesday 6 January 2021, with the last day in school Wednesday 23 December.
 - 2) Committee recognises that many pupils and teachers will need to travel and/or prepare for Christmas and that is a challenge with only one day’s holiday before Christmas day.
 - 3) Committee agrees to consult with head teachers on the proposition that the term ends on Tuesday 22 December and returns Tuesday 5 January and report back to Committee after two cycles for agreement.
- moved by Councillor Rust, seconded by Councillor Smith

Amendment

To approve the terms of the motion subject to deleting the words “for agreement” at the end of paragraph 3).

- moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Dickie

In accordance with Standing Order 21.1, the amendment was accepted as an addendum to the motion.

Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Laidlaw:

- 1) Committee notes that the agreed Christmas holidays for school year 2020/21 are Thursday 24 December 2020 to Wednesday 6 January 2021, with the last day in school Wednesday 23 December.
- 2) Committee recognises that many pupils and teachers will need to travel and/or prepare for Christmas and that is a challenge with only one day’s holiday before Christmas day.
- 3) Committee agrees to consult with head teachers on the proposition that the term ends on Tuesday 22 December and returns Tuesday 5 January and report back to Committee after two cycles.”

Declaration of Interests

Alex Ramage declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a parent of a child who would be affected by the school term dates proposals.

Councillor Young declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a parent of a child who would be affected by the proposed school term dates proposals.

17. Motion by Councillor Laidlaw – Contribution of Independent Schools to the City of Edinburgh

The following motion by Councillor Laidlaw was submitted in terms of Standing Order 16:

Motion

- 1) Committee notes the report *Economic and Fiscal Contribution of Edinburgh's Independent Schools* by BiGGAR published on 19th December, which detailed the unique contribution of Edinburgh's independent school sector, whereby the 10 Edinburgh independent schools together educate 11,700 nursery, primary and secondary pupils, accounting for 14% of Edinburgh primary and secondary school aged pupils.
 - 2) Committee recognises the achievements these schools have made in offering increased financial assistance to pupils wishing to attend these schools, noting that in 2017/18 the total level of financial assistance provided by the Edinburgh independent schools was £17.5 million, of which £10.5 million was paid out in means-tested assistance and £6.9 million was paid out in non-means tested; benefitting over 2,700 pupils, representing 23% of the pupils educated by the Edinburgh independent schools.
 - 3) Committee recognises the economic contribution the sector makes to the city of Edinburgh, equalling £125 million Gross Value Added (GVA), supporting 3,000 jobs and a fiscal contribution through taxation paid and collected as well as through public sector cost savings from the schools' provision of education, amounting to £85 million in 2017/18, of which, the City of Edinburgh Council benefitted by £47 million.
 - 4) Committee notes the increasing levels of partnership between City of Edinburgh run schools and the independent sector, including but not limited to providing academic support to other schools through special educational events, some of which focus on UCAS applications, and facilities such as the Swire Language Centre for learning Mandarin.
 - 5) Committee agrees the Committee would benefit from a better understanding of the partnerships that exist between the independent sector and City of Edinburgh schools and asks for a members briefing within two cycles of Committee."
- moved by Councillor Rust, seconded by Councillor Smith

Amendment

- 1) To delete points 1 to 4 of the motion.
 - 2) To accept point 5 requesting a briefing for members on the partnership between the independent sector and City of Edinburgh Council schools.
- moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Dickie.

Voting

For the motion - 3
For the amendment - 7

(For the motion – Councillors Rust, Smith and Whyte.

(For the amendment – Councillors Bird, Mary Campbell, Corbett, Dickie, Howie, Griffiths and Perry.)

Decision

To approve the amendment by Councillor Perry.

18. Emergency Motion by Councillor Mary Campbell – School Strike for Climate Action

The Convener ruled the following emergency motion by Councillor Mary Campbell as urgent to allow the Committee to consider it at this meeting:

Motion

- 1) Committee recognises that children and young people in Edinburgh have self-organised involvement in the worldwide Strike for Climate. This involves children striking from school on Fridays to protest outside the Scottish Parliament for action on climate breakdown, with a global day of action planned for the 15th of March involving 50 nations.
 - 2) Committee believes that school staff should support and engage with pupils who feel so passionately about climate breakdown, who are trying to play their part as responsible citizens and make their voices heard. This could be expressed through a variety of methods that link to experiences and outcomes within Curriculum for Excellence. There should be no punitive action for pupils who are concerned about climate breakdown and feel they need to participate in the climate strike.
 - 3) Committee requests that the school strike for climate action taking place on Fridays outside the Scottish Parliament should be considered by the authority as an authorised absence from school as long as a parent/carer has sent prior written permission to their child's school and a clear statement that the parent/carer will be responsible for their child during the absence from school.
- moved by Councillor Mary Campbell, seconded by Councillor Dickie

Amendment

- 1) To delete the Green/SNP motion.
 - 2) Committee recognises that climate change is a significant issue and there is no doubt that many young people have become very engaged in the debate around climate change and environmental issues.
 - 3) Committee agrees that it is very important we listen to the views of young people on climate change as with other subjects generally on which they are well informed and have much to contribute.
 - 4) Committee does not accept in principle that it is appropriate for young people to miss classes at school to make their views known, but would wholeheartedly encourage other avenues of debate.
 - 5) Committee regrets that due to the late notice of the motion there has been insufficient time to establish views from Parent Councils and teaching staff.
 - 6) Committee therefore requests a report to include (a) an impact assessment detailing the impact on a young person's learning through missing Friday lessons, including by age; (b) the informed views of Parent Councils and teaching staff; (c) the additional administrative resource which would be required processing such absences; (d) details of what controls would be required to mitigate any risks; (e) the legal position for both Council and parents should such authorised absence be permitted during teaching hours; (f) options available through school curriculum to discuss and articulate issues such as climate change; (g) practice in relation to school absence in other local authorities; and (h) an update on absence policies applied in City of Edinburgh schools and absence levels in primary and secondary schools
- moved by Councillor Rust, seconded by Councillor Smith

Voting

For the motion - 8
For the amendment - 4

(For the motion – Councillors Bird, Mary Campbell, Corbett, Dickie, Howie, Griffiths, Perry and Young)

(For the amendment – Councillors Rust, Smith and Whyte; Rabbi David Rose)

Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Mary Campbell:

- 1) Committee recognises that children and young people in Edinburgh have self-organised involvement in the worldwide Strike for Climate. This involves children striking from school on Fridays to protest outside the Scottish Parliament for action on climate breakdown, with a global day of action planned for the 15th of March involving 50 nations.

- 2) Committee believes that school staff should support and engage with pupils who feel so passionately about climate breakdown, who are trying to play their part as responsible citizens and make their voices heard. This could be expressed through a variety of methods that link to experiences and outcomes within Curriculum for Excellence. There should be no punitive action for pupils who are concerned about climate breakdown and feel they need to participate in the climate strike.
- 3) Committee requests that the school strike for climate action taking place on Friday 15 March 2019 outside the Scottish Parliament should be considered by the authority as an authorised absence from school as long as a parent/carer has sent prior written permission to their child's school and a clear statement that the parent/carer will be responsible for their child during the absence from school.