

Minutes

Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00am, Tuesday 10 December 2019

Present:

Councillors Perry (Convener), Dickie (Vice-Convener), Bird, Booth (substituting for Councillor Mary Campbell), Burgess, Day (substituting for Councillor Griffiths for item 7.9), Griffiths (items 1 to 7.8 and 7.10 onwards), Key, Laidlaw, Mowat (substituting for Councillor Webber for item 14 onwards), Rust, Webber (items 1 to 13) and Young.

Religious Representatives

Fiona Beveridge, Monsignor Anthony Duffy and Rabbi David Rose.

Parent Representative

Alexander Ramage

1. Towerbank Primary School – Catering Provision

(a) Deputation – Towerbank Parent Group

The deputation provided the Committee with a brief insight into their work to try and improve school meals for children and young people attending Towerbank Primary School and thanked Council officers and elected members for their advice and assistance over the past three years.

There was no on-site cooking facility at Towerbank and meals were currently prepared at Portobello High School and delivered to the primary school on a daily basis.

Some food did not travel well and parents/carers and Council officers had been working to find a solution to cooking such food items on-site at Towerbank.

The deputation asked the Committee to support the proposal to fund a hybrid kitchen project at the school.

(b) Report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families

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Information was provided on a number of actions undertaken at Towerbank Primary School relating to its status as a dining centre. Towerbank Parent Group had been working with Council officers to improve the quality of school meals.

The feasibility of a hybrid model of food production at Towerbank had been examined whereby dishes were largely prepared off site but were cooked or assembled on site to improve quality and uptake of school meals.

Proposed changes were reported that could be delivered within existing budgets together with those that would require an additional investment to be approved.

Decision

- 1) To note the changed location of the current production kitchen for Towerbank Primary School from Portobello High School to St John's RC Primary School.
- 2) To note that funding for a pilot hybrid kitchen model at Towerbank Primary School would be considered as part of the budget setting exercise for 2020/21.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 9 October 2018 (item 7); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

2. Petition – Review Cuts to English as an Additional Language for Dalry Primary School

A petition had been received from Dalry Primary School Parents and Carers Council relating to the reduction in the provision of English as an Additional Language (EAL) in Dalry Primary School.

The petitioners were heard in support of their petition and highlighted their concerns that no consultation had been undertaken with the school community prior to the decision being made to reduce the provision of EAL. They stated that reductions would significantly impact the workload of teachers to the detriment of all children. Reducing the EAL provision was indirect discrimination under the Equality Act as this would disproportionately disadvantage pupils with little or no English language.

The petitioners asked that the Council:

- Reinststate the EAL service provision to 3 days 1 hour until a proper consultation with parents and teachers had been undertaken.
- Give assurances that any future service provision changes would be properly consulted on with proper notice.
- Initiate an inquiry into the statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act in terms of producing an equalities impact assessment.

Decision

- 1) To note that the new EAL model would not be introduced into Dalry Primary School this academic session.
- 2) To agree that the previous 2016 and 2017 reports on introducing the new EAL model into the Authority's schools would be circulated to members for information.
- 3) To request the Executive Director for Communities and Families to report on the benefit assessments set out in these reports and what status the interim Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had to these documents. To note that the Council's Head of Legal and Risk was reviewing whether correct legislative procedures had been adhered to in terms of the production of the original EIA in the 2016 and 2017 reports and that this legal opinion would be shared with members as soon as it was available.
- 4) To request that the Executive Director for Communities and Families report back on the issues set out in the petition to the next meeting of the Committee in March 2020; the report to include information on what consultation and engagement had taken place with the school community; information on whether Dalry Primary had been disproportionately impacted or if it was a city wide issue; to provide evidence where the EAL model had been effective in other schools and to look at the EAL model specifically relating to Level 1 and Level 2 learners.
- 5) In advance of the report called for, to circulate a briefing note to Committee members on the practical information available at this time regarding why it had been necessary for parents and carers to submit an FOI request to gain information about the Equalities Impact Assessment and why that EIA was not signed and dated; this information to also be shared with the Parent Council.
- 6) To note that the Convener and Vice-Convener had arranged a further meeting with the Parent and Carers Council to discuss the issues raised.

(Reference - report by the Chief Executive, submitted)

3. Deputation – Edinburgh Local Association of the Educational Institute of Scotland - Results of Survey on Violence at Work

The deputation had previously presented information to the Committee on the results of a joint survey by UNISON and the EIS on incidences of violence experienced by teachers, nursery nurses and pupil support assistants in Edinburgh schools.

Priority issues identified at that time were the need for consistency of guidance, training and reporting across the school estate and that all complaints would receive a response detailing actions taken.

As previously advised, a further survey had been undertaken to measure progress and the deputation provided information on the outcomes of that survey. A huge amount of work had been done over the period and there had been some improvement in better reporting and better communication and discussion of sharing of experiences.

However, this was still not having the desired impact on the ground that was being sought and both teaching staff and children were still being adversely impacted by violent incidents.

Decision

To ask the Executive Director for Communities and Families to provide an update report back to Committee on violence against teachers in two cycles.

(Reference – Education, Children and Families Committee 11 December 2018 (item 4)

4. Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 16 August as a correct record.

5. Energy in Schools Annual Report

An overview was submitted of 2018/19 energy use, associated carbon emissions and energy expenditure across the Council's School Estate. Detailed information was provided active projects and initiatives to improve energy management and reduce energy and carbon emissions across the school estate.

Decision

- 1) To note the report and the positive steps underway to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions across the Council's school estate.
- 2) To note that the school estate was responsible for approximately half of this Council's energy use, energy costs and associated climate-changing carbon emissions, principally from the use of fossil fuels to heat and light our schools.
- 3) To recognise that, to achieve the Council's aim of reaching net-zero carbon by 2030, there would have to be an extremely significant reduction in these carbon emissions within the next 10 years.
- 4) To welcome the work being done on energy management accreditation, Passivhaus standards for new schools and research into deep retrofit of energy efficiency in existing council buildings.
- 5) To note that there was no comprehensive information in the report about the significance of these and other measures as regarded to being able to achieve the net-zero 2030 target.

- 6) To call for a further report that would provide a route map for achieving net-zero carbon by 2030 in the school estate and to refer this on to the Policy and Sustainability Committee to decide the appropriate timeline.

(References – Policy and Sustainability Committee 6 August 2019 (item 10); report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted)

6. Minutes

Decision

To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 8 October 2019 as a correct record.

7. Work Programme

The Committee's work programme updated to December 2019 was presented.

Decision

To note the work programme.

(Reference – Work Programme 10 December 2019, submitted)

8. Rolling Actions Log

The Rolling Actions Log for December 2019 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To close the following actions:
 - Action 2 – Lifelong Learning Service Officers
 - Action 4 – Anti-Bullying
 - Action 10 – Arts and Creative Learning Update
 - Action 25 – Primary and Special School Lets Update
- 2) To update the rolling actions log to reflect the decisions taken at this meeting.
- 3) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log – 10 December 2019, submitted)

9. Business Bulletin

The Business Bulletin for December 2019 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To note the Business Bulletin.

- 2) To amend the text of the business bulletin in relation to Promoting Equality to reflect that young people were taking the lead in the Equalities Steering Group.
- 3) To invite representatives of the Educational Institute of Scotland to attend the Steering Group.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted)

10. School Roll Projections and Rising School Rolls

Information was presented on the latest school roll projections together with identified actions which were required to be taken for individual schools.

It was proposed to provide an update report to the March meeting of the Committee outlining the progress made in taking forward these actions and their implications.

Decision

- 1) To note the intention to progress the actions arising from School Roll projections as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report.
- 2) To note the intention to return a report to Committee in March 2020 providing an update on the actions taken.
- 3) To note the intention to report to the Finance and Resources Committee in January 2020 the financial implications of 'live' Rising Rolls projects.

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

11. Update on Trinity Academy Wave 4 Project

The preferred option for Phase 2 investment as part of the Wave 4 programme of refurbishment of Trinity Academy was presented. Approval was also sought to progress this option should Phase 2 funding be confirmed as part of the budget setting process in February 2020.

Decision

- 1) To approve the preferred option for Phase 2 of the Trinity Academy Wave 4 Project as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report.
- 2) To note that an update report would be submitted at the end of the feasibility stage.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 21 June 2018 (item 3); Finance and Resources Committee 10 October 2019 (item 7); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

Declaration of Interest

Alex Ramage declared a non-financial interest in the above item as his son attended one of the schools in the Wave 4 programme.

12. Update on Wester Hailes Education Centre Working Group

Information was provided on the proposed actions agreed at the Wester Hailes Education Centre (WHEC) Working Group to improve educational and other opportunities for young people in the area.

The Working Group consisted of parents and teachers from WHEC and its feeder primaries, elected members and relevant Council officers.

Decision

- 1) To note the work ongoing by the working group to improve outcomes for pupils attending Wester Hailes Education Centre.
- 2) To note a further update would be provided following agreement of the Council Budget on 20 February 2020.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 14 August 2018 (item 6); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

13. Communities and Families Excursions and Schools and Lifelong Learning Staff Travelling and Working and Overseas Policies

In response to a motion by Councillor Mary Campbell, proposed changes to the Communities and Families Excursion Policy and the Staff Travelling and Working Overseas Policy were submitted.

Decision

- 1) To note the changes to the overseas section of the Communities and Families Excursions Policy regarding a consideration of the Council's 1 in 5: Raising Awareness of Child Poverty strategy and the Council's net zero carbon target for 2030.
- 2) To note changes beyond the Overseas Section in the Communities and Families Excursions Policy and to the Schools and Lifelong Learning Staff Travelling and Working Overseas Policy regarding a consideration of the Council's 1 in 5: Raising Awareness of Child Poverty strategy, and the Council's net zero carbon target for 2030.
- 3) To note the recent and planned work detailed in a new action plan set out in Appendix 9 of the report.

- 4) To note the planned direct and meaningful consultation with young people and creation of supplementary guidance and resources including an audit tool for establishments.
- 5) To approve the updated Communities and Families Excursions Policy and Schools and Lifelong Learning Staff Travelling and Working Overseas Policy.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 12 December 2017 (items 21 and 22); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

14. Communities and Families Policy and Guidance on Sponsorship

A revised policy and procedures on sponsorship targeted at primary and secondary school pupils through events, visits and partnership working was submitted for approval.

Decision

- 1) To amend paragraph 3.3 of the Policy statement to read “... may conflict with the Council’s Strategies, Policies and moral or ethical standards.”
- 2) Thereafter, to approve the updated policy and guidance on sponsorship in Communities and Families.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 7 March 2017 (item 12); Policy and Sustainability Committee 6 August 2019 (item 11); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families submitted).

15. Pricing Policy – Community Access to Secondary Schools and Outdoor Learning

Information was submitted on proposals to introduce an additional charge for use of secondary schools outside of core hours and a variable fee structure for outdoor learning centres to support participation in core education provision linked to reducing inequality.

Decision

- 1) To note an additional non-core hour charge of between £10 per hour and £50 per hour for community access to secondary schools’ which would be subject to ratification by the Council as part of setting the Council’s 2020/23 budget. The charge to become effective from 1 April 2020.
- 2) To note 20/21 and 21/22 Outdoor Learning residential prices for school residential and commercial users which would be subject to ratification by the Council as part of setting the Council’s 2020/23 budget.

- 3) To note that Council approval was required for the delegation of authority for Outdoor Learning pricing to be varied based on demand and agree that the Chief Executive include this when he next reported to Council on the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 16 August 2019 (item 14); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

16. Outdoor Learning

Information was provided on the transformational change carried out by the Council's Outdoor Learning team whilst maintaining significant progress and performance in relation to the residential centres.

The team continued to develop affordable onsite/local outdoor learning including Duke of Edinburgh's Award, policy review and renewal and significant training. Reducing inequality and contributing to the Council's net zero carbon target were key priorities across all areas.

Decision

- 1) To note the performance and progress since the last outdoor learning report, and upcoming development work, particularly linked to reducing inequality and supporting the Council's net zero carbon target.
- 2) To continue to support the recommendation that The City of Edinburgh Council's Primary Schools chose 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 request a report back to Committee in two cycles on how schools could ensure that young people from low income families were not excluded from experiencing residential outdoor learning, the percentage of young people who were not attending outdoor learning and the reasons why, and investment required to allow appropriate financial support to be available to address the reducing poverty and inequality agenda; the report to also include data on numbers of children attending and details of funding in place to allow them to attend.
- 4) To record the Committee's thanks and appreciation to staff at all the outdoor centres for their work and commitment.

(Reference – Education, Children and Families Committee 12 December 2017 (item 20); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

17. Edinburgh Learns – Pathways to Develop Our Young Workforce

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A summary was provided of the work of the Quality Improvement and Curriculum Service in collaboration with schools and partners to support the improvement of pathways to develop our young workforce in educational settings and schools.

The Edinburgh Learns Pathways Framework focused on improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.

In response to a motion by Councillor Laidlaw, information was also provided on the breadth of learning in the senior phase across all Edinburgh secondary schools.

Decision

- 1) To approve the Edinburgh Learns Framework: Pathways to develop the young workforce set out in Appendix 1 of the report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families.
- 2) To receive further annual reports from the Edinburgh Learns Pathways Strategic Board to ensure impact of this framework across educational settings.
- 3) To note the findings from a recent survey of all Edinburgh secondary schools on the breadth of learning in the senior phase as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

(References – Act of Council No.14 of 30 May 2019; report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

18. Edinburgh Learns Inclusion Framework

A summary was provided of the work of the Edinburgh Learns Framework Board during 2019-20 together with information on local data to support the local authority's inclusive practice.

During this period, the Edinburgh Learns Inclusion Framework had been consulted on, finalised and issued to all schools. The Framework ensured the multi-disciplinary shared approach to inclusive practice strategy sat within the citywide strategy for school improvement and planning.

The Board planned to meet three times annually and the annual report would pull together relevant data to track inclusive practice. The Board would use data to identify key strategic tasks in relation to inclusion.

Decision

- 1) To note the completion of a clear framework and vision for inclusion including consultation with children and young people.
- 2) To note the completion of the recent school survey of flexible (part time) timetables as part of the framework board actions.
- 3) To receive annual reports on inclusion.

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- 4) To agree that the board would have a minimum of three meetings annually. The board would identify strategic tasks in relation to inclusion and liaise with senior managers to request the establishment of working groups to progress them.
- 5) To note the continued hard work of pupils, staff, parents and partners to develop positive and inclusive learning communities.

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

19. School Session Dates Amendment 2020/2021

In response to a motion by Councillor Laidlaw, the outcome of the consultation with head teachers on a proposal to change the last day of term to Tuesday 22 December 2020 with a return date of Tuesday 5 January 2021 was reported. The date change had also been discussed by the Consultative Committee with parents. The majority view of responses received had indicated agreement with the proposed change.

Decision

To approve the amendment to the Christmas holiday dates for 2020/2021.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 5 March 2019 (item 16); Consultative Committee with Parents 5 December 2019; report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

20. Supporting Inclusion Flexible Timetables

Information was provided on the survey into the implementation of the flexible timetables procedure and recording process. The survey demonstrated that flexible timetables were used sparingly, when appropriate, and that the views of children and young people were sought and heard in the planning process. Appropriate inter-agency involvement was evident in both planning meetings and individual support plans for learners.

Decision

To note the results of the survey into the implementation of the flexible timetables procedure and recording process and to agree the next steps.

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

21. South East Improvement Collaborative

An update was provided on progress being made with the six workstreams which formed Phase 2 of the South East Improvement Collaborative Plan. The Plan aimed to improve attainment and achievement including closing the attainment gap and to improve quality in schools and early years settings.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress of the work to date and next steps.
- 2) To note the updated South East Improvement Collaborative Phase 2 plan.
- 3) To request further updates as appropriate.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 11 December 2018 (item 13); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

22. Revenue Monitoring 2019-20 – Month Six Position

Information was provided on the projected month six revenue monitoring position for the Communities and Families Service based on analysis of actual expenditure and income to the end of September 2019 and expenditure and income projections for the remainder of the financial years.

Decision

- 1) To note the net residual budget pressure of £4.45m which remained at month six.
- 2) To note that approved savings and operational efficiencies in 2019/20 totalled £4.334m, with £3.009m on track to be delivered in full, £0.320m assessed as amber pending further detailed implementation plans and £1.005m assessed as being at risk of not being delivered.
- 3) To note that the Executive Director for Communities and Families was taking measures to reduce budget pressures and progress would be reported to the Finance and Resources Committee on 23 January 2020 and to the meeting of this Committee on 3 March 2020.

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

23. Primary and Special School Lets Update – Performance Information October 2019

An update was provided on the key performance indicators relating to the School Lets Team during October 2019.

Decision

- 1) To note the data on the performance of the School Lets Team in October 2019.
- 2) To note the intention to monitor and revise the performance targets to better match the timescales set out by the Asset Management Works Programme and Facilities Management colleagues.

- 3) To note the intention to improve customer service by exploring different options.

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

24. Breakfast Clubs at St Francis' RC, Niddrie Mill and Ferryhill Primary Schools - Update

An update was provided on the attendance of St Francis' RC and Niddrie Mill Primary pupils who currently or previously attended the Venchie referred breakfast club.

Information was also submitted on attendance of Ferryhill Primary pupils who no longer attended Drylaw referred breakfast club.

Decision

- 1) To note the process for children and families to transition from the Venchie referred breakfast club into the universal breakfast club at St Francis' RC and Niddrie Mill Primary School.
- 2) To note that the attendance pattern of children continuing to attend the Venchie referred breakfast club broadly followed the attendance pattern of St Francis' RC and Niddrie Mill Primary Schools.
- 3) To note the continued progress of Ferryhill Primary School universal breakfast club.
- 4) To agree that key evidence provided indicated that there was no significant, detrimental impact on the attendance of children as a result of their transition from the referred to the universal breakfast clubs.
- 5) To request that the Executive Director for Communities and Families submit a follow up report in Summer 2020 providing monitoring information on attendance figures relating to children and families transitioning from The Venchie breakfast club into the universal breakfast club at St Francis' RC and Niddrie Mill Primary School.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 8 October 2019 (item 2); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

25. Motion by Councillor Mary Campbell – Appointments to Sub-Committees and Working Groups

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

“Committee:

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- 1) Agrees to replace Councillor Mary Campbell with Councillor Steve Burgess on the Consultative Committee with Parents, Sub-committee on Standards for Children and Families and Committee on Pupil Student Support.
 - 2) Agrees to replace Councillor Gavin Corbett with Councillor Mary Campbell on the Corporate Parent Member Officer Group.”
- moved by Councillor Mary Campbell, seconded by Councillor Burgess

Decision

To approve the motion.

26. Motion by Councillor Laidlaw – Thistle Foundation’s Children’s Wellbeing Project

Decision

To note that Councillor Laidlaw had withdrawn his motion.

27. Motion by Councillor Young – Queensferry High School

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

“On the 31st March 2020, pupils of Queensferry High School will move into their new school building. As part of the transition, parents were advised in November that the school will be closed for an additional 4 days before the start of the Easter break.

Committee:

- regrets that parents were notified of this proposal without any prior engagement, and that local ward councillors were not consulted in advance
- recognises that the transfer of the school community into the new building, is a major logistical undertaking
- Acknowledges that all parties involved are keen to minimise the disruption to pupils and their education, especially at this time of exam preparations
- Notes that parents have expressed concern about the 4 additional days of closure and the challenge this creates for working parents who need arrange alternative childcare or take annual leave/unpaid leave • Notes that there will be no pre-existing ‘holiday clubs’ in place to provide an alternative option, as this is normal term time for other schools
- Notes that the next Education Committee is scheduled for March 2020 which is too late to consider any proposals to mitigate this impact

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Council therefore requests a survey of parents on their ability to accommodate these 4 days without financial or other loss before the end of term, and a member briefing by 31 January 2020 to cover the following:

- the experience of the transition for Boroughmuir High School, and what lessons were learned in minimising the impact on pupils and childcare
- the pupil numbers affected in each academic year for QHS
- the findings of the parent survey as requested above
- proposals for different ways to provide an additional holiday club type service (or alternative solution informed from the results of the survey) and recommendations on how this could be delivered within the Communities and Families existing budgets.

Due to the lack of a committee meeting date to formally agree on the briefing recommendations, Council agrees to delegate to group spokespeople and council officers to review the proposals and agree any implementation of a solution.”

- moved by Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Laidlaw

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Young.