

Minutes

Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00am, Tuesday 13 October 2020

Present:

Councillors Perry (Convener), Dickie (Vice-Convener), Bird, Burgess, Cameron (substituting for Councillor Griffiths), Mary Campbell, Douglas, Key, Laidlaw, Rust and Young.

Religious Representatives

Fiona Beveridge, Therese Laing and Rabbi David Rose.

Parent Representative

Alexander Ramage

1. Work Programme

The Committee's Work Programme updated to October 2020 was presented

Decision

To note the Work Programme.

(Reference – Work Programme 13 October 2020, submitted)

2. Rolling Actions Log

The Rolling Actions Log for October 2020 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To close the following actions:
 - Action 1 – Edinburgh Leisure - Free and Affordable Activities.
 - Action 2 – Wester Hailes Working Group
 - Action 4 – Edinburgh Community Learning and Development Partnership Plan 2018-2021.

Tuesday, 13th October, 2020

- Action 5 – Towerbank Primary School - On-site Cooking of School Meals.
 - Action 11 – Community Access to Secondary School Sport Facilities - Impact of Introduction of Non-Core Hour Charges.
 - Action 13 and 25 – Early Years 1140 Expansion - Progress and Risk Update.
 - Action 15 – Improving Attainment - Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund.
 - Action 16 – Choose Youth Work.
 - Action 22 – 2020-2023 Communities and Families Grants to Third Parties Programme.
 - Action 23 – Promoting Equality.
 - Action 23 – Children and Young People’s Participation.
 - Action 29 – School Roll Projections and Rising School Rolls.
 - Action 31 – Update on the Wester Hailes Education Centre Working Group.
 - Action 34 – Revenue Monitoring 2019-20 - Month Nine Position.
- 2) To add a new action to indicate that a further update would be provided at the next meeting on the Wester Hailes Working Group.
 - 3) To circulate a briefing note to committee members providing an update on Action 9 - Delivery of the New Boroughmuir High School - Post Project Review.
 - 4) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference - Rolling Actions Log – 13 October 2020, submitted)

3. Business Bulletin

The Business Bulletin for October 2020 was presented

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted).

4. Edinburgh Children’s Partnership Children’s Service Plan 2020-2023

Tuesday, 13th October, 2020

The Edinburgh Children's Partnership 3-year strategic plan was presented. The Plan had been produced in consultation with Edinburgh's children, young people, parents, carers and staff

It was noted that the Plan, its content and its progress was to be reviewed annually by the Scottish Government as well as the Edinburgh Children's Partnership, with the first year review due in April 2021.

Decision

- 1) To approve and ratify the report before it is put before the NHS Lothian Board for agreement.
- 2) To record the Committee's thanks to all officers, partners and stakeholders for their work in taking forward the Plan.

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

5. Schools Reopening Update

An update was provided on the progress on the safe return of schools since the initial reopening on 11 August 2020. The Council's Delivery Phasing Plan still remained the basis and route-map for the safe return to schools.

Detailed information was also provided on the following areas of the safe return to school roadmap:

- Learning and teaching
- Support for learners who are self-isolating
- Line-teaching
- Digital provision
- Learning grids
- Resources for secondary schools
- Clickview
- Communications
- Facilities management
- Transport
- Buildings
- Risk

- Outdoor learning/extra-curricular.

It was noted that further areas had been made available from Scottish Government to aid in the provision of these factors noted above throughout the 2020/21 academic year.

Written deputations were accepted by Committee from five parent/volunteer coaches regarding reinstatement of extra-curricular activity and from the Jack Kane Centre Community Wing in relation to the resumption of youth work.

Decision

- 1) To note the contents of the report.
- 2) To note the actions taken to respond to Covid-19 and the return to schools.
- 3) To approve the incremental reintroduction of extra-curricular activities.
- 4) To note that Officer's intended to circulate a briefing note on 16 October 2020 to all elected members on proposals for the reintroduction on a phased basis of extra-curricular activities and outdoor learning and that elected members on this Committee would be sighted on the content of the briefing note in advance of its wider circulation.
- 5) To request that the following information to be included in the briefing:
 - a. Clarification on plans for indoor physical education
 - b. Greater clarity around the reintroduction of outdoor sports
 - c. Informing schools and parents on what measures they could take to organise activities, within the guidelines.
 - d. Information on how organisations could operate independently within council owned facilities and deliver a service safely and within the guidelines.
 - e. Information on the process for organisations who may wish to submit applications to use community centres for indoor activities.
 - f. Information on the Scottish Government and YouthLink Scotland guidance on indoor youth work.
- 6) To note the briefing note would cover other Council services in addition to schools and lifelong learning.
- 7) To note that Officers intended to provide a response to the three questions raised in the written deputation from the Jack Kane Community Wing in relation to the resumption of indoor youth work and that elected members would also be sighted on that response.

- 8) To recognise the vital role of youthwork in holistic education, the wellbeing of children and young people, and the school recovery process, and note the ongoing work to scale back up provision post October recess. Furthermore, to note that new arrangements to support youth work in schools and across the Council estate would need to identify solutions to meet the additional COVID safety requirements and delegates to the Executive Director for Communities and Families to work with relevant groups in the City to work through these barriers as far as possible.
- 9) To request a report back to the Education Children and Families Committee in December 2020 outlining the progress in the reintroduction of extracurricular activities into schools.
- 10) To ensure that officers communicated to parents, families and carers the extra-curricular activities planned to be reintroduced after the October break.
- 11) To request that a briefing be circulated to members on progress with the plans and associated timescales for young people's access to digital learning across the school estate.

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

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Key declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a parent of a child attending a school in the city.

Councillor Young declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a parent of a child at one of the affected schools.

6. Standards and Quality Report

An update was given on the standards and quality currently being achieved throughout the city as well as the key inputs responsible for achieving these standards.

There had been an improvement across the board in attainment and literacy, with the school's commitment to improving teaching and learning skills of staff - through the Edinburgh Learns Teaching programme - a key mechanism in this improvement. This alongside the increased flexibility and responsiveness of staff had been pivotal in improving standards and quality.

It was further noted that there had been a clear improvement in employer engagement, with 92.4% increase of young people in employment, education or training, which represented an increase of 0.2% since August 2019 and was above the national average of 92.1%.

Decision

Tuesday, 13th October, 2020

- 1) To note the improvements in progress towards actions across every Edinburgh Learns themed Board.
- 2) To commend the flexibility and responsiveness of all staff in delivering services within the context of risk management
- 3) To provide an update to Committee once full information on predicted pupil subject grades were available.

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

7. Promoting Equality

A summary was provided on progress of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan approved at the July 2020 Policy and Sustainability Committee. The work involved within the framework of the Plan aimed at raising awareness of discrimination and inequality most notably the deep-rooted issue of systematic and interpersonal racism.

The report noted the main pathways utilised to raise awareness of discrimination and inequality including:

- Communication and Engagement
- Adaption and Renewal
- Representation, Retention and Renewal
- Teaching and Learning
- Health and Wellbeing
- Professional Learning

It was recognised that the next steps for promoting equality were outlined in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and that progress must be in alignment with Children's Partnership members.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress and work underway to promote equality, diversity and inclusion across City of Edinburgh schools and youth work, in all aspects of education and Lifelong Learning systems, procedures and practices
- 2) To progress work as outlined in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan set out in Appendix 2 of the report ensuring alignment with Children's Partnership members.
- 3) To agree to written and verbal updates at every cycle of meetings by rotation.

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

8. Outcome of the Consultation Process for the Naming of the New Castlebrae Community High School Building

A replacement building for the existing Castlebrae Community High School was under construction. The original scheduled completion date was August 2021 although this had now been delayed by approximately six months due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

As part of the design process, consultation took place with the school and wider community and key partners, to establish the preferred option for the name of the new building. The outcome of this consultation was majority support for retaining the name “Castlebrae”.

During discussion, members felt it would be appropriate that further consultation should be undertaken with the school, wider community and key partners in order to clarify the proposed options for the new school’s name as this had not been made expressly clear during the initial consultation process.

Decision

- 1) To note the outcome of the consultation.
- 2) To request the Executive Director for Communities and Families to undertake further consultation and engagement with the school, wider community and key partners to clarify the preferred option for the name of the new building.
- 3) Thereafter, the Executive Director for Communities and Families would advise all committee members by email of the outcome of the further consultation in order that a final decision could be reached timeously.

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

9. New Primary School Name Confirmation – Frogston Primary School

Information was provided on the consultation process which had been undertaken between the Council, local elected members, local community councillors and the wider school community on the proposed name for the new primary school in South East Edinburgh.

The outcome of the consultation process was presented and the preferred name for the new school which Committee was asked to approve was Frogston Primary School.

Decision

To approve the name for the new primary school in South East Edinburgh as Frogston Primary School.

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

10. Early Years Expansion to 1140 Funded Hours – Progress Update

An update was provided on the impact of Covid-19 on the delivery of 1140 hours from August 2020. The Scottish Government had informed local authorities that the statutory requirement to deliver 1140 hours from August 2020 had been suspended and that this remained at 600 hours for 2020/21. Further guidance was awaited from the Scottish Government on when the statutory requirement for 1140 hours would be re-introduced.

The Scottish Government had further advised that local authorities could use the 1140 funding for 2020/21 to provide critical childcare for the period 1 April to 7 August 2020.

Uncommitted funding could also be used to address the costs of education recovery. A report presented to the Council's Policy & Sustainability Committee on 6 August 2020 had indicated that up to £10.4m of 1140 funding was estimated to be required to address these costs.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress update on the Early Years 1140 Expansion in Edinburgh and the Scottish Government delay for this to be fully implemented by August 2020.
- 2) To agree to the continued phasing in of 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare in local authority and partner provider settings where this was already in place and where there was capacity to deliver the increased hours.
- 3) To acknowledge the potential financial saving of not continuing to proceed with the implementation of 1140 hours where there was capacity to delivery this prior to the revised statutory due date to be confirmed by the Scottish Government.
- 4) To agree to work with Partner Providers to establish how many extra 1140 hours places they could provide from January 2021 and to consider how these extra places could be prioritised in the first instance to families experiencing poverty because of COVID.
- 5) To ensure that families/carers were provided with full information about how their funded hours could be used between local authority and partner providers should they be required to split nursery care between the two sectors.

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

11. Revenue Monitoring 2020/21 – Month Three Position

The Revenue Monitoring 2020/21 - Month Three Position was presented to Committee. The report projected the month three revenue monitoring position for the Communities and Families service, based on analysis of actual expenditure and income to the end of June 2020, as well as expenditure and income projections for the remainder of the financial year.

It was noted that the total projected (full year) gross budget pressure was currently £12.4m, partially offset by one-off mitigations totalling £4.1m, resulting in a net residual budget pressure of £8.3m.

It was noted that the Executive Director for Communities and Families was committed to taking all measures necessary to reduce budget pressure, however, the magnitude of these pressures alongside the pandemic pressures had the potential to generate significant overspend.

Decision

- 1) To note the net residual budget pressure of £8.3m which remained at month three, of which £8.2m related to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2) To note that approved savings and operational efficiencies in 2020/21 totalled £4.547m, with £4.141m on track to be delivered in full; £0.306m assessed as amber, pending further detailed implementation plans and £0.100m 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.

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

12. Appointment to the Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Family, Consultative Committee with Parents and Working Groups 2020/21

Committee were asked to consider the appointment of members to the Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families, Consultative Committee with Parents and other Working Groups for 2020/21.

Decision

Tuesday, 13th October, 2020

- 1) To appoint the membership of the Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families for 2020/21 as set out in appendix 1 of the report subject to Councillor Burgess replacing Councillor Mary Campbell.
- 2) To appoint Councillor Perry as Convener of the Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families for 2020/21.
- 3) To appoint the membership of the Consultative Committee with Parents for 2020/21 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report subject to Councillor Burgess replacing Councillor Mary Campbell and Councillor Douglas replacing Councillor Smith.
- 4) To appoint Councillor Perry as the Convener of the Consultative Committee with Parents for 2020/21.
- 5) To appoint membership of the Working Groups for 2020/21 as set out in Appendices 3, 4 and 5 of the report subject to Councillor Corbett replacing Councillor Mary Campbell on the Wester Hailes Working Group.

(Reference – report by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

13. Motion by Councillor Laidlaw – Urgent Need to Reconsider ECC Stance on Extra-Curricular Sport

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

“Committee:

Notes City of Edinburgh schools have yet to return to scheduled after-school sports, including those that are played outside.

Recognises the importance of sports for physical and mental health and the very low level of coronavirus risk for sports played outside.

Notes that Edinburgh’s independent schools have resumed after- schools sports, with many taken advantage of additional slots at City of Edinburgh facilities, and that such activities have prevented spectators attending to reduce any coronavirus contagion risk.

Notes that Council Sports Academies - which provide extra training for S1 and S2 pupils – allowing an advantage to independent school children in the chance to successfully trial for developmental pathways to district and national team selections.

Agrees to an immediate return to activity on a sport-by-sport basis for all schools, where the national governing body for that sport has guidelines for safe return to play.

- moved by Councillor Laidlaw, seconded by Councillor Rust

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Laidlaw.

14. Motion by Councillor Burgess – School Extra-Curricular Activity

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

- “1. Notes the current Council practice to suspend all school extracurricular activities, including primary school football on public parks;
2. Understands the decision is because of the concern about spreading covid19 virus and is intended to minimise contact between children or young people, and adults who are not teachers, and also to minimise the possible mixing of pupil year-group ‘bubbles’ during activities;
3. However, notes the positive benefits of extracurricular activity on the overall health and well-being of children and young people and that many extracurricular activities take place outdoors, some conducted in public parks and that in many cases children take part in their established school bubble;
4. Notes the relatively low risk of contagion during outdoor activity as reflected by Scottish Government guidance. Further notes that private sports have been permitted under Scottish Government regulations since August and that children who attend private schools or who are members of private clubs have been taking part in extracurricular sports while children attending council schools have not be able to do so;
5. Believes that it would be possible to put in place guidance for groups undertaking at least certain extracurricular activities such as primary school football in public parks, in order to minimise the risk of contagion and allow activities to go ahead;
6. Therefore, requests that the current position on school extracurricular activity be reviewed in time for the return to school after the October holiday, with appropriate guidance issued to schools and school sports clubs about which extracurricular activities may be carried out and in what way, with a briefing note on this review circulated to committee members.”

- moved by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Mary Campbell

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Burgess.

15. Motion by Councillor Burgess – Outdoor Learning

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

“This Committee:

1. Welcomes that the Council’s Local Delivery Phasing Plan for the return to school emphasises the importance Outdoor Learning in response to the Covid19 pandemic and states that for both secondary and primary schools that ‘*outdoor learning will be maximised*’;
2. Regrets that outdoor centres and outdoor learning projects across Scotland face a bleak future with greatly reduced income and that the Council’s own outdoor centres face a shortfall of nearly £1.4m this year;
3. Recognises that there is some outdoor learning being provided by school staff. However, understands that third- sector outdoor learning providers in the City are ready to provide additional outdoor learning for schools and that many schools would be glad to have that extra teaching capacity. Yet, the engagement of outdoor learning partners is currently suspended by the council;
4. Acknowledges that the well-being of pupils and staff during the covid19 pandemic is paramount but that by its nature outdoor learning is relatively a low-risk activity in terms of contagion, that pupils tend to take part in class or year- group ‘bubbles’ and that risks could be mitigated through the application of a risk assessment and appropriate guidance;
5. Notes that Scottish government guidance issued on 2 September states that ‘*In the autumn term, if they wish to, schools can resume non-overnight domestic educational visits*’
6. Therefore, calls for an immediate review of the current suspension of outdoor learning provided by third-sector partners, with a view to maximising outdoor learning opportunities for council school pupils following the October holiday and a briefing note on this review circulated to committee members.”

- moved by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Mary Campbell

Decision

- 1) To approve the motion by Councillor Burgess.
- 2) To note that officers had committed to providing an update on outdoor learning in the briefing note called for under item 5 above (Schools Reopening Update).

Tuesday, 13th October, 2020