

Minutes

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday 24 August 2021

Present:

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

Religious Representatives

Fiona Beveridge, Therese Laing and Rabbi David Rose.

Parent Representative

Alexander Ramage

1. Minutes

Decision

- 1) To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 18 May 2021 as a correct record.
- 2) To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 28 May 2021 as a correct record.

2. Work Programme

The Committee's Work Programme updated to August 2021 was presented.

Decision

To note the Work Programme.

(Reference – Work Programme, 24 August 2021, submitted)

3. Rolling Actions Log

The Rolling Actions Log updated to August 2021 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:
 - Action 2 – Lifelong Learning Plan
 - Action 5 – Future Statutory Consultation Requirements

- Action 6 – Senior Phase Attainment
 - Action 7 – Response to Incident Survey
 - Action 9 – Edinburgh Learns Health and Wellbeing
 - Action 12 – Motion by Councillor Laidlaw – Reducing Child Poverty and Hunger
 - Action 13 – Results of Violence at Work Survey
 - Action 15 – South East Improvement Collaborative
 - Action 17 – Review Changes to ASL at Dalry Primary
 - Action 19 – Schools Reopening Update
 - Action 20 – Wester Hailes Working Group
 - Action 22 – Promoting Equality
 - Action 25 – Child Poverty Update
 - Action 29 – Motion by Councillor Laidlaw – Publication of OECD Review
 - Action 31 – Lifelong Learning Plan Service Update
- 2) To confirm if the response had been sent to the Edinburgh Parent Council Network via Headteachers as noted in Action 26(3) – Motion by Councillor Laidlaw – Delivery of School Sports.
- 3) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, 24 August 2021, submitted)

4. Business Bulletin

The Business Bulletin for August 2021 was presented.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted)

5. Update on Gaelic Medium Education Statutory Consultation

As previously agreed by Committee, the Convener had written to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to seek confirmation whether the proposal outlined in the draft statutory consultation paper aligned with the Scottish Government's new national strategic approach for the growth of Gaelic Medium Education (GME) particularly in relation to the commitment to create a standalone secondary school in the centre of Edinburgh.

Following a meeting held on 15 July 2021 with the Cabinet Secretary, the Council had re-evaluated two other site options for a GME secondary school and were awaiting a response from the Scottish Government. As a result, it was not deemed appropriate to progress with statutory consultation at this stage.

Once a response had been received from the Cabinet Secretary, a further update report would be submitted to Committee for consideration.

Decision

To note the update.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 28 May 2021 (item 1); report by the Interim Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services, submitted)

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Burgess declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a parent of children attending the Gaelic primary school in Edinburgh.

6. Education Improvement Plan 2021-2024

The Education Improvement Plan for 2021-2024 was presented to Committee. The Plan was noted to be fully aligned with the aims of The Edinburgh Children’s Partnership Children’s Services Plan 2020-23.

The next steps of the plan were also presented to members, which included progressing the work as laid out in Appendix 1, evaluating the progress and impact of the Plan through the appropriate streams, and reporting this progress to the Committee and Senior Management Team when appropriate.

Decision

- 1) To approve the improvement outcomes and key strategic actions related to the aspects of the draft Education Improvement Plan 2021-24.
- 2) To agree the next steps set out at paragraphs 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 of the report.
- 3) To agree that updates on the work detailed in the report and the Action Plan be presented annually to the Education, Children and Families Committee.

(Reference – Report by the Interim Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services, submitted)

7. Education Standards and Quality Report 20-21 (Part 2)

An update on progress of Standards and Quality throughout areas of strategic improvement within Schools and Lifelong Learning was presented. The key areas included Leadership, Learning Together, Sustainability, Children and Young People’s Participation, 1+2 Modern Languages, Numeracy and STEM. The outcomes, key strengths and next steps for each area were presented alongside the sources of evaluative data.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress and impact within each of the strategic areas of improvement reported in the report (Part 2).

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- 2) To note the continued hard work of staff in schools, central teams and partners, to support children and young people as part of the Covid-19 response.
- 3) To agree the next steps at 5.1-5.3.
- 4) To agree that updates on the work detailed in the be presented at Committee as required.
- 5) To note the progress against some metrics but to express concern that the recently published Scottish Primary School Attainment survey published by the Times Scotland showed that in 2019 nearly one third of Edinburgh learners went from primary to secondary school without reaching the required standard in literacy and numeracy according to teacher assessments, and that the results were lowest for schools in Edinburgh with the highest percentage of pupils coming from homes in areas of deprivation.
- 6) To agree to a report within one cycle specifically examining numeracy in primary schools where over 50% of children come from homes in areas categorised SIMD 1 and 2 and identifying the most successful targeted interventions to improve these metrics.

(Reference – Report by the Interim Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services, submitted)

8. National Qualifications – Alternative Certification Model

Information on the alternative certification model for national qualifications was presented. The assessment plans had been developed to support provisional grades, in accordance with subject-specific guidance, in response to the impact of Covid-19 on the regular exam diet.

Members approved of the next steps and welcomed the fact that no young person had been disadvantaged as a result of the amended arrangements, and had been supported throughout the process, and beyond, to enable them to progress in their learning and move to sustained positive destinations.

Decision

- 1) To note the assessment arrangements in place, to support the award of National Qualifications, amended to reflect the impact of Covid-19.
- 2) To approve the next steps detailed in order to support young people in making progress in their learning and in moving to positive destinations.

(Reference – Report by the Interim Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services, submitted)

9. School Excursions - Equity

An overview of residential visits prior to Covid-19 was presented. The report included an updated city-wide account of the proportion of pupils that attended school excursions and how they were funded, as well as reasons behind why pupils did not attend. Members were asked to note the estimated cost of investing in a central excursion fund.

Decision

- 1) To note the initial findings from information gathered about school residential visits to Benmore and Lagganlia just prior to the onset of the pandemic, existing good practice and the different kinds of funding available to schools.
- 2) To note the different estimated costs of investing in a central dedicated P7 residential excursion fund for pupils from low-income families.
- 3) To note the key actions which will be included in a 2021/222 action plan and that these provided the next steps in reducing inequality and maximising participation in school excursions.
- 4) To commend schools for their equity work in supporting the attendance of all pupils on P7 residential trips, where cost was a barrier, and noted that for some, this involved financial mitigation for whole cohorts of children and families.
- 5) In relation to para 6.3 in the report which stated “the estimated costs of investing in a central fund are for illustrative purposes and are not allocated to any budget”, to request a report back to October Committee to show how a central budget might be funded, how it would be targeted and how it would be distributed.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 10 December 2019 (item 16); Report by the Interim Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services, submitted)

10. Distribution of Scottish Government Community Mental Health Funds

Information was provided on how the Council had monitored the Scottish Government Community Mental Health Funds allocated for the 2020/21 financial year (£335,000).

Decision

- 1) To note the actions taken since March 2021 by the Interim Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services in consultation with the Convener to monitor the grant funding (£335k) to voluntary and third sector organisations under the Urgency Procedure set out in paragraph 4.1 of the Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Functions.
- 2) To note the completion of the procurement process to fund future work in four locality lots and a fifth city wide lot in July 2021 (£1.343m per annum).
- 3) To provide brief updates to Committee via the business bulletin.

(Reference – Report by the Interim Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services, submitted)

11. New Primary School Name

An update was provided on the process being undertaken to establish a name for the new primary school currently under construction in Canaan Lane . The school was on course to be opened in August 2022 with nursery and primary 1 pupils only. A list of suggestions made to date for the new name was presented to members.

Decision

To continue consideration of the report to the October Committee to provide further details on the consultation/engagement methods used to gather views of local interest groups on options for names for the new primary school and to carry out the following actions:

- To confirm with Head Teachers what information had been sent to parents regarding the list of options for the new school name.
- To circulate the correspondence sent to parents from the Council on the naming option of Canaan Lane Primary School.
- To agree to include North Morningside Primary School on the list of options for school names.
- To engage with ward councillors and community councils on the options for naming the new primary school and the options for conducting the consultation.
- To approach the groups and individuals responsible for the suggested suitable names to allow them the opportunity to create a briefing/leaflet on the context surrounding their name option.

(Reference – Report by the Interim Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services, submitted)

12. Revenue Monitoring 2021-2022

The projected month three revenue monitoring position for the Communities and Families service was presented to Committee. Members noted that a more detailed review of the budget was on-going, and an update will be reported to the October Committee.

Decision

- 1) To note the estimated net residual budget pressure of £2.562m at month three.
- 2) To note that approved savings and operational efficiencies in 2021/22 totalled £2.584m. Further savings of £1.658m, relating to pressures from the delivery of prior year approved budget savings also required to be managed within the 2021/22 budget, resulting in a revised savings target of £4.242m. £2.895m on track to be delivered in full; £0.685m assessed as amber, pending further detailed

implementation plans and £0.662m assessed as being at risk of not being delivered.

- 3) To note that the Interim Executive Director of Education and Children's Services was taking measures to reduce the residual budget pressures.

(Reference – Report by the Interim Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, submitted)

13. Appointments to Sub-Committees and Working Groups 2021-2022

The Committee were asked to reappoint the membership of its Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families, Consultative Committee with Parents and Working Groups for 2021-2022.

Decision

- 1) To appoint the membership of the Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2) To appoint Councillor Perry as the Convener of the Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families for 2021/22.
- 3) To agree to replace Councillor Burgess with Councillor Mary Campbell on the Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families.
- 4) To appoint the membership of the Consultative Committee with Parents for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 2 and to agree to include two representatives from the Locality Group for parents of the cohort of children with additional support needs, who attend mainstream schools.
- 5) To appoint Councillor Perry as the Convener of the Consultative Committee with Parents for 2021/22.
- 6) To agree to replace Councillor Burgess with Councillor Mary Campbell on the Consultative Committee with Parents.
- 7) To appoint membership of the Working Groups for 2021/22 as set out in Appendices 3, 4 and 5 and confirm the lifespan and necessity for those Working Groups.
- 8) To agree to dissolve the Short Life Youth Work Working Group (Appendix 6).

(Reference – Report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services, submitted)

14. Internal Audit: Overdue Findings and Key Performance Indicators as at 27 April 2021

The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee had referred a report on Internal Audit overdue findings and key performance indicators as at 27 April 2021 to this Committee for information.

Decision

To note the report.

(Reference – Report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services, submitted)

15. Motion by Councillor Laidlaw – School Sports and Extra Curricular Activities

The following motion was submitted by Councillor Laidlaw in terms of Standing Order 17:

“Committee notes that while from 9 August the vast majority of Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted by the Scottish Government, certain measures have been retained in schools which are specifically noted in the Scottish Government publication ‘Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on reducing the risks in schools’ which identifies measures to be retained for a period of ‘up to six weeks’ after schools reopen.

Committee notes that of specific relevance to the provision of school sports, the guidance states:

- Parents should not enter school buildings unless required
- Contact Groupings (aka bubbles) are to be removed

Given the above, Committee agrees that outdoor sport, including clubs delivered by external (often parental) coaching, can be delivered per the previously agreed motion by Cllr Laidlaw restricting access to school buildings, in full from the start of the new school term, with indoor external led coaching to be prepared for resumption in late September (after the six-week period noted in the guidance).

Committee notes that the autumn term is particularly crucial in competitive team sports and that concerns have been expressed over the new funding model for Active Schools.

Accordingly, Committee calls for a report within one committee cycle to inform members on how the above request has been delivered, covering:

- How the new Active Schools funding model has been implemented and if it can deliver the previous (pre-Covid) programmes while fulfilling the obligation to offer sport free of charge to all children
- How many PTAs have been asked to provide funding for coaching to make-up the shortfall, and at which schools
- If CEC will be providing additional funding to schools to address any funding gaps
- What CEC sports academies have restarted and what the full programme for academic year 21-22 will cover
- What other extra-curricular activities have restarted (e.g., choirs, bands etc.) and what are still in abeyance – and reasons for delay?”

Decision

- 1) To approve the motion.
- 2) To include information on in-school lets in the report.

- 3) To include any outstanding or new requests from groups that had not been actioned at the time of the report coming to Committee.

16. Motion by Rabbi David Rose – Promoting Equality in Schools

The following motion was submitted by Rabbi David Rose in terms of Standing Order 17:

“The Education, Children and Families Committee agrees to note the following:

- Schools should ensure that all pupils are enabled to feel safe, irrespective of their ethnic, religious or national origin.
- No pupil should be targeted or negatively singled out for any reason, including in consequence of international events or conflicts.
- Schools should ensure that some pupils' desire for political expression is not the cause of other pupils feeling targeted or unsafe.
- International issues, especially involving areas of conflict, must be taught in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, taking into account the background of all pupils in the school, including ethnicity, religion, and possible connections with people in the relevant area of conflict.”

Decision

- 1) To approve the motion.
- 2) To share the motion with Head Teachers.

Declarations of Interest

Rabbi David Rose declared a non-financial interest in the above item as the motion concerned children and young people within his community.

17. Motion by Councillor Louise Young – West Edinburgh High School

The following motion was submitted by Councillor Louise Young in terms of Standing Order 17:

“Committee notes:

1. the decision of 12 December 2017 Education Committee, to explore options for a West Edinburgh High School in/around Kirkliston, following a consultation on the future feeder status of Kirkliston Primary School;
2. the interim informal updates issued by officers on work to identify a potential site, most recently at the March 2021 committee, where school roll projections identified Queensferry High School as breaching capacity from 2024 thus requiring a new West Edinburgh High School from that point;

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3. that Council Officers advised the outcome of the new Local Development Plan (LDP) would inform the next steps and identify any potential site options; and
4. that given delays to the publication of the LDP, there is now a shortening time period before a new high school will be required, and recognises the concern and uncertainty facing parents and future pupils in Kirkliston around future high school provision.

Committee therefore agrees that a report be brought to the first Education Committee following the Planning Committee's first review of the draft LDP, which should outline the next steps for identifying a site for West Edinburgh High School, and set out a timetable and key milestones up to and including an expected building completion and intake of pupils."

Decision

To approve the motion.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Louise Young declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a parent of children attending one of the feeder primary schools.