

Minutes

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday 7 December 2021

Present:

Councillors Perry (Convener), Dickie (Vice-Convener), Bird, Burgess, Griffiths, Douglas, Key, Laidlaw, Miller (substituting for Councillor Mary Campbell), Rae (substituting for Councillor Burgess for item 8), Rust and Louise Young.

Religious Representatives

Fiona Beveridge, Therese Laing and Rabbi David Rose.

Parent Representative (non-voting)

Alexander Ramage

1. Minutes

Decision

To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 12 October 2021 as a correct record.

2. Work Programme

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

Decision

- 1) To note the Work Programme.
- 2) To confirm the approach implemented by other Executive Committees regarding the timeline for reporting the 'Implementing Programme for the Capital Coalition Commitments' prior to Local Government Elections in May 2022.

(Reference – Work Programme, 7 December 2021, submitted)

3. Rolling Actions Log

The Rolling Actions Log updated to December 2021 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:
 - Action 5 – Reducing Child Poverty
 - Action 10 – Standards & Quality Report
 - Action 11 – Teaching, Learning and Assessment in the Broad General Education
 - Action 19 – Motion by Rabbi David Rose – Promoting Equality in Schools
 - Action 20A – Motion by Councillor Louise Young – West Edinburgh High School
- 2) Action 2 – Community Access to Secondary School Sport Facilities – Non-Core Hour Changes – to circulate a briefing to members explaining why a report was no longer required.
- 3) Action 13A & 13B – School Sports and Extracurricular Activities – To keep these actions open until the questions and concerns raised in the motion at the October meeting had been addressed.
- 4) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, 7 December 2021, submitted)

4. Business Bulletin

The Business Bulletin for December 2021 was presented.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted)

5. Early Years Report – Covid-19 Pandemic Recovery for Provider in Edinburgh – Holy Corner Play Group

Information was presented to the Committee on the pandemic recovery programme for the provision of childcare providers across Edinburgh. The update followed from a deputation made at the last Education, Children and Families Committee meeting from Holy Corner Play Group.

Council officers met with representatives of Holy Corner Playgroup on 1 November 2021. The officers were informed that the management committee and the registered manager for the playgroup had changed over the summer of 2021. Unfortunately, the new members of the committee and the manager were not fully aware of the range of support that was available to them from the council.

The representatives of Holy Corner Playgroup requested more financial support from the Council and support to encourage more parents to use the service. The playgroup details were available on the Council website and officers suggested how the representatives could promote their service within the community e.g. stay and play sessions and leaflets at coffee shops and health visitor settings.

Decision

To note the report.

(References – Education, Children & Families Committee 12 October 2021 (item 1); Report by the Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services, submitted)

6. Early Years Update

An update on the delivery of 1140 funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) hours was presented to the Committee. The report noted the delays in securing the funded hours as a result of the pandemic and delays to the Capital Programme, however, noted that the Council were now fully delivering the hours which had been a statutory requirement since August 2021.

Decision

- 1) To note the achievement of the Council in meeting the requirement to provide all eligible children with their full funded entitlement of 1140 hours should their parents/carers choose to use this.
- 2) To agree to explore the cost of an increased hourly rate paid to partner providers for the provision of funded places for eligible two-year-olds.
- 3) To note the early years support for Primary 1 settings to provide play-based learning.
- 4) To note the intention to return to Committee in March 2022 with the findings of the session 2021-22 parent survey.
- 5) To note the intention to return to Committee in March 2022 advising on the progress of tender processes for new nurseries and identifying any capital funding shortfalls and the measures to be put in place to address these.

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

7. School Sports and Extracurricular Activities – Progress Update

(a) Deputation - Comhairle Nam Parent, Bunsgoil Taobh na Pairce

The deputation made the following key points:

- Concern, disappointment and frustration had been expressed by parents over the implementation by the Council of recent changes in the role of active schools co-ordinators and the SportScotland requirement that activity was free to the participant at the point of access
- Parent Councils recognised and supported the aim of the policy to make opportunities for wider achievement accessible for all but felt that this objective had been undermined by fundamental flaws in implementation including the failure to carry out stakeholder consultation in advance, the

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absence of any economic or equality impact assessment, the lack of clarity and detail concerning administration and funding, and the lack of notice of the changes to the schools or to families. Despite continued advocacy for action at the Consultative Committee with Parents and through motions at the Education, Children and Families Committee the deputation remained concerned that the parent voice remained unheard.

The deputation requested the Council to take the following actions:

- 1) CEC undertake an immediate and extensive consultation with parents, pupils, volunteer coaches, teachers and schools - to build a new delivery model and framework collaboratively, ensuring that it is a sustainable model for all schools (particularly those with limited Parent Council resources), fit for the future.
- 2) CEC or Sports Scotland fund the start-up costs and hidden running costs of the Active Schools programme for all schools, including its administration, sports kit, training, match/court equipment and upkeep, first aid boxes & refills, national sporting body membership, transport (to tournaments, competitions or matches) and recruitment of volunteers.
- 3) CEC alleviate the administrative and governance burden (registration, invoicing, PVG's, governance, assurance, insurance, accounting and bookkeeping) and provide centralised support in policy provision (safeguarding, C-19 mitigation etc) to ensure consistency of provision across all schools.
- 4) CEC build on the previous successes of the Active Schools Program; working with volunteers and professional coaches with past experience of Active Schools to ensure the quality of provision and increased opportunity for participation and to explore new and reinforce existing progression pathways to club sport.
- 5) CEC undertake a full evaluation of the impact of these changes including quantitative evaluation to track their impact on the "hard to reach groups" who are supposed to benefit from the change, as well as the wider impact on the school population. This should focus on both outputs and outcomes and should include wider benchmarking measures and an EQIA.

(b) Report by the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services

An update on the approach taken to progress the implementation of school sports and extracurricular activities was presented to Committee. The report followed from the October 2021 Committee meeting and addressed each section of the composite motion agreed at that meeting.

Decision

Following a discussion in the Consultative Committee with Parents, to request the Executive Director to provide the following information to the next Education, Children and Families Committee scheduled for 1 March 2022:

- 1) To list all the schools that have not managed to re-start three or fewer Active Schools activities.
- 2) To identify the barriers to schools returning to pre-Covid level of activities and suggest ways these barriers can be removed.
- 3) To determine if parents in any school have been asked to make a larger financial contribution, including indirect costs, than pre covid in order to restart activities.
- 4) To update the table in Appendix 1 to include all schools.
- 5) To extend 1), 2) and 4) above to include progress about the resumption of wider extracurricular opportunities.
- 6) To arrange a meeting between the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services and parent representatives to address the specific issues raised in the deputation by the Parent Council Chairs.
- 7) To note the over 50% reduction in the number of clubs operating between November 2019 and November 2021 and reduction of 4,150 participants.
- 8) To note that substantial elements of the motion agreed by Committee on 12 October had not been delivered as requested and instructs officers to prioritise the following:
 - To issue the communication referred to in Item 4.1 before the return of pupils after the Christmas break.
 - To include in this communication the offer referred to in item 4.3, and agreed by Committee on 12 October, that one evening, per school, per week, will offer the period 6-9pm for volunteer delivered sport free-of-charge in three one-hour slots, and to set this up in the school-lets booking platform accordingly.
 - To deliver the ask of item 4.6, as agreed by Committee on 12 October – through liaison with CEC school staff and PTAs, and using the information already included in Appendix 1 – to feedback on what sports previously offered under Active Schools are now organised independently to include: - *What is being offered and provider - Costs to pupils - Costs being met by PTAs and other parental donations - If ParentPay is being used.*
 - To provide evidence to quantify the assertion in 4.7 that “Many coaches and organisations that used to provide sport and physical activity sessions are no longer available for a range of reasons e.g., they have found different employment or have left Edinburgh, due to the pandemic”.
 - To clarify what percentage of clubs are being delivered by ‘volunteers’.

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- To revisit the decision not to conduct an Equalities Impact Assessment given there had been a significant change in the programme of work in terms of how it was organised, administered, governed, delivered.

(References – Education, Children & Families Committee 12 October 2021 (item 2); report by the Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services and written submission from Comhairle Nam Parent, Bunsgoil Taobh na Pairce, submitted)

8. Update on Gaelic Medium Education Statutory Consultation

An update on the ongoing engagement with the Scottish Government on the site options for a Gaelic Medium Education (GME) school was presented. The report highlighted the progress since May 2021 and recommended that a statutory consultation paper be presented for consideration at a special meeting of the Committee in January 2022.

Motion

- 1) To note the report.
 - 2) To agree that a report including a proposed Statutory Consultation paper on the future of GME in Edinburgh be presented to a special meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee in January 2022.
- moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Dickie

Amendment

- 1) To note the content of this report.
- 2) To agree that a report including a proposed Statutory Consultation paper on the future of GME in Edinburgh be presented to a special meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee in January 2022.
- 3) To welcome the ongoing engagement between the Council and the Scottish Government regarding the provision of a Gaelic Medium High (GME) school in Edinburgh, to support development of Gaelic education and language, in line with City of Edinburgh and Scottish Government policy.
- 4) To note that the Council had identified two possible sites for a stand-alone GME High School - at Fettes Police Headquarters and the Royal Victoria Hospital site. However, that Fettes had been ruled out because the site may not be available for two years.
- 5) To note that the Scottish Government had requested further information from the Council about development of a GME high school at the site of the Royal Victoria Hospital - which could be opened by 2026/27.
- 6) To request that council officers continue to work with the Scottish Government to provide the information required to inform government decision making about their support for a stand-alone school at the Royal Victoria Hospital site, and consequently the options that could be included in the Council’s forthcoming statutory consultation.
- 7) To note that a letter from the Council to the Scottish Government (Appendix 2) acknowledged that any overcapacity at James Gillespie’s High School in the

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- year 2026/27 would have to be managed for a year to allow a standalone GME High School to be opened in 2027.
- 8) However, to recognise that successful management of a limited overcapacity at JGHS for one year would allow sufficient time to develop options and consult fully on those options for a GME high school in Edinburgh, whilst not impacting on the education of pupils at JGHS.
 - 9) To request that the capacity at James Gillespie's high school in each year up to 2029/30 is reassessed to inform the forthcoming committee decision, particularly given anecdotal reports that the roll at the Gaelic primary school, Taobh na Pairce had recently been declining.
 - 10) To believe that an informal consultation on the Royal Victoria site and other options as described in this report could be useful, however recognises that, at present, limited information on this option was available for parents and other stakeholders and that information may need to be worked up before a consultation could become meaningful.
 - 11) To note that an informal consultation over the Christmas holidays and a 30-day statutory consultation starting in January, may not accord with the Council's consultation policy and therefore requests that the proposed consultation timeframe be reviewed and conclusions reported to the next committee meeting.
 - 12) To note that this report stated that a statutory consultation started in June 2022 (rather than January 2022 as proposed) and completed by July 2022 would still be able to deliver a GME co-located high school by 2025 and a stand-alone school by 2027.
 - 13) To note that the location at Castlebrae in Craigmillar as suggested in the report as a possible second choice to Liberton, is a similar distance, over 4miles, from the existing Gaelic primary school in Leith, and is on the periphery of the City and therefore recognises the concern of parents and stakeholders that such location may discourage families from joining GME education and could undermine the future of Gaelic in the City.
 - 14) To request that the options of the site at Fettes Police station and the Council depot at Russell Road and any other feasible sites continue to be investigated by officers as a possible location for the GME high school and findings included in the report to committee in January.
 - 15) To confirm that the provision of a new English-medium high school at Liberton would not be delayed as a result of ongoing consultation about the future of GME.
 - 16) To recognise that Committee may decide not to proceed with a Statutory Consultation in January 2022 if there is insufficient information to provide definite options and particularly if negotiations were ongoing with the Scottish Government about the Royal Victoria or other sites.
- moved by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Rae

Voting

The voting was as follows:

For the Motion - 12 votes
For Amendment - 2 votes

(For the Motion: Councillors Bird, Dickie, Douglas, Griffiths, Key, Laidlaw, Perry, Rust and Louise Young; Rabbi David Rose, Fiona Beveridge and Therese Laing.

For the Amendment: Councillors Miller and Rae.)

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Perry.

(References – Education, Children & Families Committee 24 August 2021 (item 5); Report by the Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services and written deputation from Comann nam Pàrant, submitted)

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Steve Burgess declared a non-financial interest in the above item as the parent of children who attend the Gaelic Primary School, left the meeting and took no part in consideration of the item.

9. Promoting Equality

An update was provided to the Committee on the promoting equality work undertaken since the last meeting. The update focused specifically on instances of racial and LGBTQ+ reports across Edinburgh schools.

Decision

To note the verbal update.

10. Holiday Support for Children Affected by a Disability

As requested at the March 2021 meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee, an update on holiday support for children affected by a disability was presented for noting.

The report updated Committee on changes to the support as a result of the changing guidance and restrictions, as well as the next steps, which included further consideration of the future model of service delivery, the progress of which would be presented at the March 2022 meeting.

Decision

- 1) To note the current provision for holiday support for children affected by a disability of a planned return to a 2019 level and the interim arrangements that had been put in place in light of Covid restrictions and the lessons learned.

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- 2) To note that wider consideration of the provision was required in light of the above, in line with parents' views and wishes, and in recognition of a widening of need with more families requiring support along with the experience over the last year. The wider consideration on the future model of service delivery would be developed as outlined in section 5 (Next Steps).
- 3) To agree that the next iteration of the report be submitted to the Consultative Committee with Parents in draft form prior to Committee consideration.
- 4) To note that Committee agreed in March 2021 to commit to achieving 2019 levels of provision as a minimum and should seek to achieve these levels whilst augmenting the provision.

(References – Education, Children & Families Committee 2 March 2021 (item 12); Report by the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, submitted)

11. New Primary School Name

The results of the survey for naming the new primary school being constructed at Canaan Lane were presented. The preferred option of all consultees from the three shortlisted names was "Canaan Lane Primary School."

Decision

- 1) To note the results of the survey undertaken.
- 2) To agree to adopt the name 'Canaan Lane Primary School'.
- 3) To formally record thanks to the participants of the survey.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 12 October 2021 (item 9); Report by the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, submitted)

12. Learning Together – Parental Engagement, Parental Involvement, Family Learning and Learning at Home

A summary was presented of the actions taken over the last 12 months to develop the ways in which schools work with families to improve learning and achievement both in schools and in everyday life.

The report noted the strengthened relationships between schools and parents/carers which had allowed them to be more responsive to specific needs.

Moving forward, the intentions to develop and further-improve this relationship between parents/carers and schools was a key objective over the next 12 months.

Decision

- 1) To note the update regarding Learning Together: Parental Engagement, Parental Involvement, Family Learning and Learning at Home.
- 2) To agree the next steps as outlined in section 5 of the report.
- 3) To agree to receive further annual reports on Learning Together: Parental Engagement, Parental Involvement, Family Learning and Learning at Home.

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

13. Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2020-21

An update was provided on the work of the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee over the past year. The report highlighted the core business of the Child Protection Committee as well as areas of strength and good practice and identified priority areas for the year ahead.

Decision

- 1) To note the content of the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2020-21.
- 2) To note the positive contribution made by services and partners across the City in keeping children safe.

(Reference – Report by the Chief Social Work Officer and Service Director for Children’s Services and Criminal Justice, submitted)

14. Professional Review and Development Policy

The updated Professional Review and Development (PRD) Policy was presented for approval. The updated Policy reflected the revised guidelines and recommendations following a period of consultation.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To approve the new policy.

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

15. Learning Estate Update

Approval was sought to undertake an informal consultation process in West Edinburgh to help shape the Learning Estates strategy to address current and future accommodation pressures. It was noted that the projections scheduled to be published in January 2022 would support the consultation.

The paper also provided an update on the Trinity Academy Phase 2 replacement project.

Decision

- 1) To note the intention to publish the latest school roll projections in January 2022.
- 2) To note the intention to return a report to Committee in March 2022 setting out how any accommodation pressures arising from the new projections would be addressed.

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- 3) To note the update on the Trinity Academy Phase 2 replacement project.
- 4) To agree that a detailed informal consultation on future learning estate infrastructure requirements in West Edinburgh be progressed with an outcomes report to Committee in June 2022.
- 5) To affirm the essential goals set out in the Council's sustainable Capital Budget Strategy 2022-2032, that future developments in the Educational Estate must include strategic briefs outlining the teaching, learning and wider community requirements from the outset to ensure that the buildings constructed were fit for purpose, and that this should include options for wider service delivery and active listening to/engagement with all potentially impacted local communities.
- 6) To request a progress update at the March Committee to include issues remaining outstanding at that point and proposed next steps.
- 7) To agree that Ward Councillors be invited to participate in the planned school working group sessions.

(References – Education, Children & Families Committee 12 October 2021 (item 10); Report by the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, submitted)

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Louise Young declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a parent of children who attend one of the feeder primary schools affected by the proposals.

16. School Excursions - Equity (Update)

Information on a potential central fund for school residential visits was presented to Committee. The report came after a request at the August 2021 Committee meeting for more information on the potential for a central fund, and included details on the feasibility, practicality and comparison with the current funding model.

Decision

- 1) To note the value of school residential excursions for pupils but also the pressures, often hidden, felt by many families around the costs.
- 2) To commend the workload taken forward by schools and parent councils to mitigate the costs to ensure every child is able to attend, as per our equity for all learners and poverty proofing the school day agendas.
- 3) To agree to forward the costs at Appendix 9.1 for creating a city-wide fund to the next Finance and Resources Committee for future budget consideration, along with any other identified funding information.
- 4) To agree that the Convener write to the Scottish Government to ask that a residential school excursion be considered for national funding.
- 5) To ask officers to report back to Committee in one cycle on the full scope of possible alternative and equitable options, including EPIC days and on all of the above.
- 6) To request that a briefing be circulated to members in early 2022 on the funding needed to implement the poverty proofing policies prior to consideration of the Council budget.

(References – Education, Children & Families Committee 24 August 2021 (item 9); Report by the Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services, submitted)

17. Response to Consultation on Education Reform

The proposed response to the Consultation on Education Reform was presented. The response supported the continuation of the Curriculum for Excellence, though suggested it be refreshed. The response also supported a revised approach to quality assuring schools that worked more in-line with the collaborative and empowered system.

Decision

- 1) To note the response to the Consultation on Education Reform.
- 2) To request updates on how the Education Reform proposals would be addressed through strategic planning within Education and Children’s Services.

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

18. Revenue Monitoring 2021-22 – Month Six Position

The projected month six revenue monitoring position for Education and Children’s Services was submitted. The projected position was based on analysis of actual income and expenditure up to September 2021 and the projections for the end of the year.

Decision

- 1) To note that a balanced overall monitoring position was forecast at month six, an improvement of £1.362 million from the previously reported position.
- 2) To note that the temporary accommodation monitoring position would be reported to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 20 January 2022, and was not reported in the forecast balanced budget for Education and Children’s Services.
- 3) To note that approved savings and operational efficiencies in 2021/2022 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. £3.195m on track to be delivered in full; £0.085m assessed as amber, pending further detailed implementation plans and £0.962m assessed as being at risk of not being delivered.
- 4) To note that a further update would be provided to Committee on 1 March 2022.

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

19. Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2020-2021 – Referral from the Policy and Sustainability Committee

The Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report for 2020-2021 had been referred to this Committee by the Policy and Sustainability Committee.

Decision

To note the information provided in the report.

(References – Policy and Sustainability Committee 30 November 2021 (item 7.16); report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services, submitted)

19. Motion by Councillor Mary Campbell – Working Group Vacancies

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

“Committee agrees to replace Councillor Gavin Corbett with Councillor Mary Campbell on the Wester Hailes Working Group and the Corporate Parenting Member Officer Group”

Decision

To approve the motion.

20. Motion by Councillor Mary Campbell – Supporting School Staff

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

“Committee recognises the extreme pressures on school staff caused by the pandemic, particularly in relation to staff absence, and the mental health impacts of the pandemic on staff and pupils.

Committee feels the resumption of school inspections is not appropriate when schools are under such pressure and agrees to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills sharing the concerns of committee and of EiS, and to request consideration of delaying inspection visits for this academic year.

Committee also understands that the pressures of the pandemic has shown the need for the Council to do more to support our Pupil Support Assistants. Committee requests a report to come to Education, Children and Families in one cycle, to analyse what could be done in terms of recruitment, training, pay and career structures.

Committee expresses thanks to all school staff working so hard in these difficult times and acknowledges the difficulties they are facing. Committee requests that Council officers look to see if any part of the workload of schools can be reduced without impacting learning and teaching.”

Decision

To approve the motion.

21. Motion by Councillor Ian Perry – Support for Teachers and School Staff

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

“Committee acknowledges the challenges outlined in the EIS email that was sent to committee members recently. We recognise this as one of the toughest times in educational history for our teachers and school staff due to pandemic related issues.

Committee expresses its deep gratitude for the sheer workload that all school staff have undertaken to keep our schools open and to ensure that there is no further educational impact on our children and young people.

Consequently, Committee agrees:

1. To write to the Scottish Government and Education Scotland and ask them to suspend school inspections during such challenging times.
2. To ask officials to report back early in the new year on the work being undertaken to improve Pupil Support Assistants' terms and conditions.
3. To communicate to parents the challenges facing schools in this recovery phase and the efforts teachers and school staff are making to keep schools open.”

Decision

- 1) To approve the motion.
- 2) To note that the Convener and Vice-Convener intended to write to teachers and school staff on behalf of the Committee to thank them for their continuing commitment and efforts throughout the pandemic.