

Minutes

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday 15 November 2022

Present:

Councillors Griffiths (Convener), Burgess, Cowdy, Davidson, Jones, Key, Kumar, Mattos Coelho, O'Neill, Walker and Young.

Added Members for Education Items

Religious Representatives

Fiona Beveridge and Dr Ruhy Parris.

Parent Representative

Alexander Ramage (non-voting)

1. Attainment in the Broad General Education in Edinburgh Primary and Secondary Schools 2021-22

a) Deputation – Educational Institute of Scotland (Edinburgh Local Association)

The deputation advised that EIS members had expressed increasing concern over the provision of ICT in schools. Basic functions such as being able to log on to computers in a timely fashion or operate two apps at the same time had been proving increasingly challenging.

The deputation had surveyed EIS representatives to get a clearer provision across the city and the findings of that survey was presented to the Committee.

The deputation asked the Committee to put pressure on CGI the Council's ICT provider to resolve the situation to ensure that Edinburgh's schools had an ICT system that was fit for purpose.

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

A summary was provided of the analysis of attainment in the Broad General Education (BGE) for the City of Edinburgh's primary and secondary schools for the year 2021-22.

In the majority of cases, the data for 2021-22 showed an improvement compared to 2020-21 with overall figures broadly in line with the position before the Covid-19 pandemic.

Concerns had been expressed regarding the literacy levels in Primary 4 stage, particularly in writing, and literacy levels in Secondary 3 stage compared to those for numeracy. Next steps to address these concerns and deliver further improvements were set out in the report.

Motion

- 1) To note the update regarding the position in educational attainment in Edinburgh primary and secondary schools within the Broad General Education for session 2021-2022.
- 2) To agree the next steps as outlined in section 5 of the report.
- 3) To agree to receive further annual reports on attainment and improvements in performance.

- moved by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Walker

Amendment 1

To add to the motion by Councillor Griffiths:

"Committee notes with concern the Scottish Government response to a written question which stated "there are no plans to discontinue national standardised assessments for P1 learners" in spite of the Scottish Parliament voting to halt these tests.

Furthermore, notes that prominent educational bodies have criticised these tests as adding to the pressure and mental health problems experienced by children, particularly recognising these impacts are felt more keenly by those already facing multiple adverse childhood experiences including poverty.

Therefore, calls for:

- 1) A report to the January Education, Children and Families Committee on the extent that Edinburgh Schools are carrying out standardised assessments for Primary 1 and the impact this has had on children's wellbeing.
- 2) The Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee to write to the Scottish Government Education Secretary expressing our dissatisfaction at the continuation of these tests and requesting that the practice be halted."

- moved by Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Davidson

Amendment 2

To add to the motion by Councillor Griffiths as verbally altered in terms of Standing Order 22.5:

- 1) To agree to an update on the Council's Literacy Strategy Review in two cycles.
- 2) To agree to an update on the Thematic Review of Literacy Across Learning in four cycles.

- moved by Councillor Jones, seconded by Councillor Cowdy

In terms of Standing Order 22(12) Amendment 2 was accepted as an addendum to the motion.

Voting

For the motion (as adjusted): - 11 votes

For the amendment: - 2 votes

(For the motion (as adjusted) – Councillors Burgess, Cowdy, Griffiths, Jones, Key, Kumar, Mattos Coelho, O'Neill and Walker; Fiona Beveridge and Dr Ruhy Parris.

For the amendment – Councillors Davidson and Young.)

Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Griffiths:

- 1) To note the update regarding the position in educational attainment in Edinburgh primary and secondary schools within the Broad General Education for session 2021-2022.
- 2) To agree the next steps as outlined in section 5 of the report.
- 3) To agree to receive further annual reports on attainment and improvements in performance.
- 4) To agree to an update on the Council's Literacy Strategy Review in two cycles.
- 5) To agree to an update on the Thematic Review of Literacy Across Learning in four cycles.

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

2. Minutes

Decision

To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 20 September 2022 as a correct record.

3. Work Programme

The Committee's work programme updated to November 2022 was presented.

Decision

To note the Work Programme.

(Reference – Work Programme, 15 November 2022, submitted)

4. Rolling Actions Log

The rolling actions log updated to November 2022 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:
 - Action 3 – Edinburgh Learns for Life – Inclusion Annual Report
 - Action 10 – Motion by Councillor Laidlaw – Preparation of School Meals
 - Action 12 – Edinburgh Secure Services Update
 - Action 14 – Edinburgh Learns for Life - Equity
 - Action 16 – Quality Improvement and Scrutiny
- 2) Action 2 - Proposed Response to the Consultation on Education Reform – to agree to circulate the response to members in a briefing note.
- 3) Action 21 – Motion by Councillor Cowdy – YouTube Access at High School – to agree to keep this action open until the points raised in the motion had been addressed in a report back to members.
- 4) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, 15 November 2022, submitted)

5. Business Bulletin

The business bulletin for November 2022 was presented.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, 15 November 2022, submitted)

6. Promoting Equality

A summary was presented of progress in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan involving early years settings, primary, secondary and special schools, the Additional Support for Learning service, Quality Improvement and Curriculum service, Lifelong Learning and partner organisations.

Information was given on the work being undertaken to raise awareness of discrimination and inequality with a sustained focus on race equality and anti-racism.

An update was also provided on the Equalities Thematic Review carried out in October 2022 including visits at St Augustine's RC High School and Holy Rood RC High School to review progress against recommendations from the March 2021 report on the investigation into allegations of racism.

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 agree the next steps set out in section 5.1 of the report.
- 3) To agree that updates on the work detailed in the report and the Action Plan be presented annually to Committee.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 1 March 2021 (item 15); report by the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, submitted)

7. Getting it Right for Every Child – Inclusion in City of Edinburgh Schools

Information was provided on the work being undertaken as part of a multi-agency approach to meet the needs of learners within the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) framework. This included a range of settings in mainstream schools, enhanced provision in mainstream settings, specialist provision and with the NHS and third sector partners.

Schools in Edinburgh had made significant progress in upholding their responsibilities to care experienced children and young people and was in line with meeting the calls to action set out in The Promise.

Motion

To note the significant work being carried out to support inclusion across mainstream and special schools.

- moved by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Walker

Amendment

To add to the recommendation:

“To supply information to Committee on the sources of funding for providing support services to children with additional post-covid needs, and which third party providers were assisting with the provision of these support services - to be provided within 4 weeks and by briefing note.”

- moved by Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Davidson

In terms of Standing Order 22(12), the amendment was accepted as an addendum to the motion.

Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Griffiths:

- 1) To note the significant work being carried out to support inclusion across mainstream and special schools.
- 2) To supply information to Committee on the sources of funding for providing support services to children with additional post-covid needs, and which third party providers were assisting with the provision of these support services - to be provided within 4 weeks and by briefing note.

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

8. Quality Improvement and Scrutiny Update

Updates were submitted in response to additional recommendations by Committee relating to visits and reports on schools undertaken by the Quality Improvement and Curriculum Service (QICS).

The following schools had experienced a follow-through visit following an Education Scotland inspection pre-Covid:

- Boroughmuir High School
- St Augustine’s RC High School
- Gracemount Primary School
- Granton Primary School

A supported self-evaluation process had been undertaken with Holy Rood RC High School and key strengths and next steps had been identified as set out in the report.

St John Vianney RC Primary and St Crispin’s School had both participated in the National Thematic Inspections focussing on inclusion and feedback would be provided in the Overview of National Practice document on completion of the national inspection.

Decision

- 1) To note the updates provided in response to the additional recommendations requested by Committee on 20 September 2022:
 - to provide a copy of all recent Quality Improvement and Curriculum Service (QICS) school reports to members of the committee and relevant ward councillors
 - to provide an update on support to Gracemount High School
 - to provide an update on any new inspection visits which had taken place during September to December
 - to provide a report on any school that received a less than satisfactory rating for any individual score to allow for detailed discussion and scrutiny.
- 2) To agree the next steps as set out in section 5 of the report as follows:
 - to undertake a follow-through visit to Ratho Primary School in November 2022
 - to undertake planned SSEs in October/November to:
 - Forrester High School
 - Drummond High School
 - James Gillespie's High School
 - Wester Hailes High School
 - Queensferry Community High School
 - Pirniehall Primary School
 - to continue to review capacity and risk register to plan future programme of supported self-evaluation processes.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 20 September 2022 (item 11); report by the Executive Director of Children's Services, submitted)

9. **Edinburgh Child Protection Committee – Annual Report 2021-2022**

The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Annual Report for 2021-2022 was presented. The report summarised the work of the multi-agency strategic partnership within the past year and highlighted the core business of the Committee as well as areas of strength and good practice alongside identified priority areas for the coming year.

Motion

- 1) To note the content of the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2021-2022.

- 2) To note the positive contribution made by services across the City in keeping children safe.
- moved by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Walker

Amendment

To add to the motion by Councillor Griffiths and verbally altered in terms of Standing Order 22.5:

“To circulate by email to members timelines for the delivery of the areas of work set out at 5.2.1 to 5.2.3, detailing what is being delivered by what target date during the ‘coming year’ mentioned at 5.1.”

- moved by Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Davidson

In terms of Standing Order 22(12), the amendment as adjusted was accepted as an addendum to the motion.

Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Griffiths:

- 1) To note the content of the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2021-2022.
- 2) To note the positive contribution made by services across the City in keeping children safe.
- 3) To circulate by email to members timelines for the delivery of the areas of work set out at 5.2.1 to 5.2.3 of the report, detailing what was being delivered by what target date during the ‘coming year’ mentioned at section 5.1.

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

10. Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2021-2022

The Chief Social Work Officer’s Annual Report for 2021-2022 was presented. The report provided a broad outline of some of the key issues facing social work and social care in Edinburgh and included data on statutory services, areas of decision making and set out the main developments, challenges and performance.

Decision

To note the Chief Social Work Officer’s Annual Report for 2021-2022.

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

11. Headteacher Recruitment Process for All Schools

A proposed new procedure was proposed for the recruitment and selection of headteachers across all sectors of the school estate in the City of Edinburgh.

Decision

To approve the recruitment process for the appointment of all new, permanent headteachers to the City of Edinburgh Council.

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

12. Establishment of the City of Edinburgh Council Corporate Parenting Board

Proposals were presented to establish a Corporate Parenting Board within the Council. Information was provided on the previous monitoring and scrutiny arrangements which were in place through the Corporate Parenting Member/Officer Group, the rationale for this to be changed and the proposed new structure.

Decision

- 1) To agree the need for a dedicated Corporate Parenting Board whose task it was to monitor and further improvements for Edinburgh's care experienced community.
- 2) To agree that the Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee be appointed a member of the City of Edinburgh Council's Corporate Parenting Board.
- 3) To agree the membership and oversight structure of the proposed Corporate Parenting Board.
- 4) To discuss the political balance of elected member representation on the Board.

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

13. Revenue Monitoring 2022-23 – Month Five Position

The projected month five revenue monitoring position for Education and Children's Services, based on analysis of actual income and expenditure to end of August 2022 and projections for the remainder of the year was presented.

A review of pressures and savings within the budget indicated a projected net pressure of £4.0m after assumed corporate provisions for continuing COVID impacts

on the service. This represented an increase of £1.5m from the position reported to Committee in September 2022.

Work was ongoing to identify mitigating measures to reduce the existing pressures and to identify and implement management actions required to address these.

Decision

- 1) To note the estimated net residual budget pressure of £4.0m at month five.
- 2) To note that a further update would be provided to Committee later in the year on the month nine position.

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

14. Finance for Equity Update

An update was submitted on the current education commissioning activity and how this was expected to identify, review and address gaps in service provision and develop contractual arrangements to allow delivery of services aligned to closing the poverty related attainment gap.

Information was also provided on the work of the planning and development of teams around the learning communities to respond to their local context by pooling resources considering best practice to facilitate collaboration and opportunities for synergies, including poverty prevention, capacity building, empowerment, subsidiarity, sustainability and best value.

Decision

To note the update provided in relation to schools and lifelong learning third party spend and finance for equity.

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

15. Renaming the Education and Children's Services Directorate

Approval was sought to rename the Education and Children's Services directorate to better reflect the changes within the directorate, put children at the forefront and be more inclusive.

Decision

To continue consideration of the report to the next meeting of the Committee scheduled for 31 January 2023.

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

16. Appointments to the Gaelic Implementation Steering Group

The Committee was required to appoint membership of the Gaelic Implementation Steering Group. The proposed membership, remit and structure was set out in the appendix to the report.

Decision

- 1) To approve the membership structure for the Group.
- 2) To agree that political groups would advise officers of their nominated representatives on the Group.

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

17. Edinburgh Secure Services Update

An update was provided on work being undertaken to progress the Edinburgh Secure Services and Residential Consolidation Improvement Plan which was an amalgamation of the recommendations identified in three separate investigations and enquiries carried out into residential care in Edinburgh.

The Service had undertaken a review of a number of processes to ensure safer recruitment, performance management, supervision, use of restraints, complaints and managing allegations of abuse against members of staff.

Decision

To note the positive progress made and agree that further updates be presented to the Education, Children and Families Committee.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 3 May 2022 (item 2); report by the Executive Director of Education and Children’s Services, submitted)

18. Motion by Councillor Davidson – Internet Safety

The following motion was submitted by Councillor Davidson in terms of Standing Order 17 and verbally altered in terms of Standing Order 22.5:

“Committee notes:

- That when it was brought to the attention of council officers that children and young people were able to access inappropriate material on council devices, access to YouTube was temporarily suspended on safeguarding grounds

- The Scottish Government Internet Safety Action Plan expects education in school to encourage innovation, build confidence and teach responsibility in the use of technologies and staying safe online.
- The Health and Wellbeing Curriculum includes provision for digital safety and risk management education for children and young people.
- Comments by the delegation from James Gillespie's High School "Pupil Voice" to October full council that many of them had never been given lessons in digital safety and risk management.

Committee therefore requests a report to Education, Children & Families within 2 cycles containing the following:

- The current guidance given to schools/headteachers and parents/carers on expectations regarding education on digital safety and risk management.
 - What initiatives are being carried out in relation to promoting internet safety education in schools and any examples of good practice or innovative ideas that could be spread more widely.
 - The outcome of further consultation with the various youth representative bodies in the city in order to ensure that children and young people's voices are being considered in this process and their needs identified.
 - A timeline for rolling out further support and education during the rest of the current academic year and how this will be integrated into standard practice from 2023/24 academic year onwards.
- moved by Councillor Davidson, seconded by Councillor Young

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Davidson.

19. Response to Whistleblowing Investigation Report – Edinburgh Secure Services – referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

The Committee in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, excluded the public from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business for the reason that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 12 and 15 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee had referred a report on the major investigation outcome report on Edinburgh Secure Services to this Committee for consideration.

Decision

To note the report.

(Reference – referral report by the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee 8 March 2022, submitted)

20. Edinburgh Secure Services Update

The Committee in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, excluded the public from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business for the reason that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 12 and 15 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

An update was provided on work being undertaken to progress the Edinburgh Secure Services and Residential Consolidation Improvement Plan which was an amalgamation of the recommendations identified in three separate investigations and enquiries carried out into residential care in Edinburgh.

Decision

Detailed in the confidential schedule to this minute as signed by the Convener.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 3 May 2022 (item 2); report by the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, submitted)