

Minutes

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday 6 June 2023

Present:

Councillors Griffiths (Convener), Burgess, Cowdy, Davidson, Graham, Jones, Key, Kumar (with the exception of item 12), Nicolson (substituting for Councillor Kumar for item 12), Mattos Coelho, Staniforth (substituting for Councillor O'Neill) and Young.

Added Members for Education Items

Religious Representatives

Fiona Beveridge, Angela Campbell and Dr Ruhy Parris.

Secondary Sector Parent/Carer Representative

Alexander Ramage (non-voting)

Primary Sector Parent/Carer Representative

Louise Collingwood and Sara Collins (shared role) (non-voting)

1. Minutes

Decision

To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 27 April 2023 as a correct record.

2. Work Programme

The Committee's work programme updated to June 2023 was presented.

Decision:

To note the Work Programme.

(Reference – Work Programme, 27 April 2023, submitted)

3. Rolling Actions Log

The rolling actions log updated to June 2023 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:
 - Action 3 (3) – Outdoor Learning, Homelessness Prevention Group Response to Incidents Survey - Update on Response to Incidents Survey via Business bulletin
 - Action 4A&B – Gaelic Medium Education Update
 - Action 6 – Motion by Councillor Perry – Support for Teachers and School Staff
 - Action 7 – Business Bulletin – Supporting Teach for the Future
 - Action 8 – Appointment of Religious Representatives to the Education, Children and Families Committee
 - Action 9 – Early Years Partner Provider - Hourly Rate for Funded Early Learning and Childcare
 - Action 10 – Motion by Councillor Young – West Edinburgh High School
 - Action 13 – Motion by Councillor Jones – Absenteeism in Schools
 - Action 16 – Motion by Councillor Kumar – Care Experienced Protected Characteristic
 - Action 17 – Motion by Councillor Lezley Marion Cameron – Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Adults at Risk
 - Action 18A – Emergency Motion by Councillor Day – LOVE Gorgie Farm
 - Action 18B – Gorgie Farm Response to Emergency Motion by Councillor Day – report by the Executive Director of Children, Education and Justice Services
 - Action 19 – Edinburgh Secure Services and Residential Estate Update - report by the Executive Director of Children, Education and Justice Services
 - Action 21 – School Admission and Appeals Update - report by the Executive Director of Children, Education and Justice Services
 - Action 22 – Quality Improvement and Scrutiny Update - report by the Executive Director of Children, Education and Justice Services
 - Action 23 – Improvement in School Attendance - report by the Executive Director of Children, Education and Justice Services
 - Action 28 – Motion by Councillor Louise Young – Queensferry/ Kirkliston High School Consultation
 - Action 29 – Motion by Councillor Jones – Flexi Schooling
- 2) Action 8 – Voting Rights for Religious Representatives – to note that a report on this issue was scheduled to be submitted to Council on 22 June 2023.
- 3) To issue a briefing note with an update on the Young People’s Forum.
- 4) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, June 2023, submitted)

4. Work Programme

The Committee's work programme updated to April 2023 was presented.

Decision:

To note the Work Programme

(Reference – Work Programme, 6 June 2023, submitted)

5. Business Bulletin

The Business Bulletin for 6 June 2023 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To note the updates in the Business Bulletin.
- 2) To request a further update on curriculum work for digital literacy of children and young people in the next Business Bulletin.
- 3) To request officers to circulate the Strategic Action Plan and Toolkit for Outdoor Learning to committee members together with information on how the toolkit was being used by schools and what was being done to encourage all schools to use the toolkit.
- 4) To provide an update to the next committee meeting in September on food pantries expansion plan.
- 5) To note that overseas excursion guidance had been published and piloted and was planned to be in place next academic session.
- 6) To request officers to explore an appropriate landing page on the Council website for strategic documents and integrated impact assessments.
- 7) To invite sportScotland to make a presentation to a future committee meeting on Active Schools.
- 8) To note that officers intended to engage with special schools regarding summer holiday provision.

6. Quality Improvement and Scrutiny Update

Information was provided on a range of Education Scotland scrutiny and local authority reviews. The main finding continued to be the need to improve consistency of quality in leadership and teachers' skills.

Progress was noted in developing equalities and the rights of young people. Leadership would continue to build capacity by focusing on tracking and monitoring of attendance, attainment and pupils' achievements. This included increased moderation sessions to deepen teachers' understanding of national standards to inform professional judgement about progress in learning.

Sharing best practice and challenging underperformance was the work of the Quality Improvement Service and recorded in the Capacity and Risk Register of Schools. This included data to identify Learning Communities in need of intensive or targeted support.

Decision

- 1) To note the purpose and learning points from Education Scotland and QICS scrutiny activity.
- 2) To note the strengths and areas for improvement identified through internal supported self-evaluation activity.
- 3) To agree next steps set out in paragraphs 5.1 to 5.4 of the report.
- 4) To note that the climate/sustainability issue would be referred to the Consultative Committee with Parents to discuss parental engagement and to also add environmental sustainability to locality meetings agendas and the committee's work programme.
- 5) To agree that officers review the procurement list to check bio-degradability of products.

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

7. Energy in Schools Annual Report

An update was provided on energy consumption in schools during 2021/2022 and 2022/2023. The report outlined the current energy use across the learning estate, as well as providing details of key initiatives aimed at reducing energy use.

Information was also provided on the strategic programmes focussed on decarbonising the Council's learning estate including the adoption of Passivhaus as a standard for Council buildings and schools.

Motion

- 1) To note the report and the detail on current and historic energy use across the Council's learning estate.
 - 2) To note the progress on initiatives focussed on supporting net-zero carbon in the learning estate.
- moved by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Graham

Amendment

- 1) To note the report and the detail on current and historic energy use across the Council's learning estate.
- 2) To note the progress on initiatives focussed on supporting net-zero carbon in the learning estate.
- 3) To agree that a report on reducing the standardised set point from 19C to 18C as set out in paragraph 4.13 of the report should be brought to Committee within the next 3 cycles.

- moved by Councillor Cowdy, seconded by Councillor Jones

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

Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Walker:

- 1) To note the content of the report and the detail on current and historic energy use across the Council's learning estate.
- 2) To note the progress on initiatives focussed on supporting net-zero carbon in the learning estate.
- 3) To agree that a report on reducing the standardised set point from 19C to 18C as set out in paragraph 4.13 of the report should be brought to Committee within the next 3 cycles.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 1 March 2022 (item 6); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

8. Pathways

A summary was provided of approaches to improving curriculum pathways, employability skills and positive destinations of children and young people across City of Edinburgh's schools. It identified key strengths and outlined strategic next steps in response to emerging need and educational reform.

Decision

- 1) To note the achievements and next steps in DYW (Pathways) at City of Edinburgh schools.
- 2) To note the continued hard work of teams across departments within the City of Edinburgh, staff in schools, and partners to improve employability skills and positive destinations of our children and young people.

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

9. Gaelic Implementation Steering Group

The Policy and Sustainability Committee, on 23 May 2023, had agreed that ownership of the Gaelic Implementation Steering Group should be transferred from the Education, Children and Families Committee to the Policy and Sustainability Committee.

Approval was also required from the Education, Children and Families Committee to proceed with this change.

Decision

To continue consideration of the matter until the September meeting to allow further information to be submitted on the rationale of transferring ownership of the Gaelic Implementation Steering Group from the Education, Children and Families Committee to the Policy and Sustainability Committee.

(References – Policy and Sustainability Committee 23 May 2023 (item 20); report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Burgess declared a non-financial interest in the above item as his children attend a Gaelic School.

10. Motion by Councillor Davidson – LGBT Youth Scotland Report

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

“Committee:

- 1) Notes with concern the recent LGBT Youth Scotland report which recognised a significant drop in the number of LGBT young people who felt Scotland was a safe and welcoming place towards them.
 - 2) Welcomes the Council’s involvement in the LGBT Youth Scotland charter but notes that despite this resource being made freely available to schools uptake is not yet universal amongst all Edinburgh High Schools.
 - 3) Believes that in a climate where LGBT young people feel safe all Edinburgh schools should be taking proactive public steps to show their commitment to LGBT inclusion.
 - 4) Requests a report to Education, Children and Families Committee in three cycles looking at uptake of the charter, current policies around LGBT inclusion in Edinburgh schools and the prevalence of homophobic and transphobic incidents.”
- moved by Councillor Davidson, seconded by Councillor Young

Amendment

- 1) Notes with concern the recent LGBT Youth Scotland report which recognised a significant drop in the number of LGBT young people who felt Scotland was a safe and welcoming place towards them.
- 2) Welcomes the council’s involvement in the LGBT Youth Scotland charter but notes that despite this resource being made freely available to schools uptake is not yet universal amongst all Edinburgh High Schools.
- 3) Believes that in a climate where LGBT young people feel safe all Edinburgh schools should be taking proactive public steps to show their commitment to LGBT inclusion.
- 4) Requests a report to ECF in three cycles looking at uptake of the charter, current policies around LGBT inclusion in Edinburgh schools and the prevalence of homophobic and transphobic incidents.”

5) Requests that a single report is provided covering issues raised in this and the motion 8.4 agreed at full Council on 1 June by Councillor McFarlane – Time for Inclusive Education.

- moved by Councillor Jones, seconded by Councillor Cowdy

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

Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Davidson:

- 1) To note with concern the recent LGBT Youth Scotland report which recognised a significant drop in the number of LGBT young people who felt Scotland was a safe and welcoming place towards them.
- 2) To welcome the Council's involvement in the LGBT Youth Scotland charter but to note that despite this resource being made freely available to schools uptake was not yet universal amongst all Edinburgh High Schools.
- 3) To believe that, in a climate where LGBT young people felt safe, all Edinburgh schools should be taking proactive public steps to show their commitment to LGBT inclusion.
- 4) To request a report to the Education, Children and Families Committee in three cycles looking at uptake of the charter, current policies around LGBT inclusion in Edinburgh schools and the prevalence of homophobic and transphobic incidents.
- 5) To request that a single report be provided covering issues raised in this and the motion 8.4 agreed at full Council on 1 June by Councillor McFarlane – Time for Inclusive Education.

11. Motion by Councillor Davidson – Free Food Provision in Schools

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

“Committee notes:

- 1) The Cost-of-Living Crisis is still very much a reality for many children and families across the city and has had an impact on the wellbeing on young people, particularly in terms of hunger.
- 2) That well-fed young people have better academic opportunities and wellbeing and that as of February 2023, 25 Council-run secondary schools across Edinburgh provide some form of breakfast club, and 15 distribute free food in other ways.
- 3) Teachers from multiple schools have raised concerns about the cost of sourcing food through the approved Council procurement channel.

Therefore, committee requests a report in one cycle outlining the current challenges with the procurement process and what solutions could make the food easier to obtain.”

- moved by Councillor Davidson, seconded by Councillor Young

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Davidson.

12. Emergency Motion by Councillor Young – Ferryhill Primary School

The Convener ruled that the following item, notice of which had been given at the start of the meeting, be considered as a matter of urgency to allow members to give early consideration to this matter.

The following motion by Councillor Young was submitted in terms of Standing Order 17 and verbally adjusted in terms of Standing Order 22(5):

- 1) Committee notes with concern recent reports of violence and unsafe behaviour at Ferryhill Primary School leading to repeated police attendance at the school.
- 2) Further notes that these concerns have escalated to the extent that the Parent Council have released a statement on the 5 June calling for a “strike” day to draw attention to these concerns.
- 3) Therefore, calls for officers to urgently engage with the school leadership and parental representatives at Ferryhill Primary School so that these issues do not continue into the new academic year.
- 4) Requests a briefing note to be provided for ward councillors and committee members within two weeks detailing the background to the current situation and what steps have been taken to reduce tensions and tackle parental concerns alongside a timeline on the reported incidents and actions taken up to this point.

- moved by Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Davidson

Decision

To approve the adjusted motion by Councillor Young.