

## Note of meeting

### Consultative Committee with Parents

6.00pm, Thursday 5 December 2019

Dunedin Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh

#### Present:

##### Elected Members

Councillor Ian Perry (Convener).

##### Locality Groups Representatives

###### North East Locality

Lynne Adamson (Ferryhill Primary Parent Council)

Musarah Jumaid (Ferryhill Primary Parent Council)

###### North West Locality

Billy Samuel (Corstorphine Primary Parent Council)

###### South East Locality

Alex Ramage (Education Children & Families Committee Parent Representative)

###### South West Locality

Gareth Oakley (Craiglockhart Primary School Parent Council)

Naomi Barton (Currie Community High School Parent Council)

##### Officers in Attendance

Andy Gray, Head of Schools and Lifelong Learning

Arran Finlay, Senior Education Officer, Communities and Families

Jack Simpson, Senior Education Officer, Communities and Families

##### Apologies

Kevin Kealy (Nether Currie Primary School Parent Council), Simon Preston (Abbeyhill Primary School Parent Council), Alison Nicolson (Redhall Special School), Alistair Gaw (Executive Director for Communities and Families), Bernadette Oxley (Head of Children's Services), Eileen Prior (Connect), Sean Bell (Senior Manager, Children with Additional Support Needs).

## 1. Note of Meeting

### Decision

To approve the Note of Meeting of the Consultative Committee with Parents of 3 October 2019 as a correct record, subject to minor adjustments to wording on pages 7 and 8 regarding the feasibility study for Craigmount and clarification that the parent representative on the Education, Children and Families Committee was nominated and elected from within the parent body.

### Matter Arising

#### **Voting Rights for Additional Members of the Education, Children and Families Committee**

The Convener advised that legal discussions were still ongoing around the principle of voting rights for all additional members of the Education, Children and Families Committee. Eight local authorities across Scotland permitted non-Councillors to vote on their education committees. A report would be submitted to the full Council at the appropriate time with a proposed way forward.

### Decision

To note the update and that the view from this Group was that either all additional members should be permitted to vote or none.

## 2. Improving Communications

Arran Finlay, Senior Education Manager provided updates on work being undertaken to progress ways in which the Council communicated with the parent body across the school estate as follows:

- Minutes of each Locality Meeting would now be published on the Council's website
- Guides used at the North West Locality group had been updated and shared with the Council's Communications Team for review of language prior to publication on the website
- Contact details for all parent council chairs had been updated
- Information on the Communities and Families directorate structure together with a "who's who" would be updated and published on the website
- a work programme was now published online with the papers for the Education, Children and Families Committee which detailed a rolling reporting plan and upcoming reports
- better use of social media

### Decision

To note the updates and the work ongoing to engage the harder to reach school communities.

(Reference – Consultative Committee with Parents 5 December 2019 (item 5))

### 3. Rolling Actions Log

#### Decision

- 1) To close Action 1 – Budget – Music Tuition and Pupil Support Assistants.
- 2) To note the intention to provide an update on the wifi pilot at James Gillespie's High School to the March meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee.
- 3) To note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, submitted)

### 4. Directorate Update (Including Comments on Committee Reports)

The Head of Schools and Lifelong Learning provided an update on the budget position for the Communities and Families directorate. The Council was now heavily engaged in preparing its budgets based on indicative forecasts due to the General Election on 12 December 2019.

The directorate was committed to defending budgets for schools but this continued to be challenging each year. There would be some significant budget issues for next financial years as there was a requirement to meet savings targets agreed previously. This was an ongoing task that managers across the City were dealing with.

The Council anticipated reporting a balanced budget for 2019/20.

The Group asked if there would be an opportunity to discuss any issues once the budget had been set and it was agreed that a special meeting could be convened if required.

An update was also given on reports scheduled to be presented to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 10 December 2019. The following were highlighted:

- Outdoor Learning – The team continued to develop affordable onsite/local outdoor learning including Duke of Edinburgh's Award, policy review and renewal and significant training. Reducing inequality and contributing to the Council's net zero carbon target were key priorities across all areas.
- Primary and Special School Lets – this was a statistical update report on the key performance indicators relating to the school lets team during October 2019. There were still some issues around submission of let applications being dealt with within the agreed timescales.

#### Decision

To note the updates and that a special meeting of this Committee could be convened following publication of the Council's budget if required.

## 5. School Session Dates December 2020/January 2021

The outcome of the consultation with head teachers on a proposal to change the last day of term to Tuesday 22 December 2020 with a return date of Tuesday 5 January 2021 was reported. The majority view of responses received had indicated agreement with the proposed change.

### Decision

To advise the Education, Children and Families Committee that this Committee agreed with the proposed change for 2020/2021.

## 6. 2020/2023 Children's Services Plan

### Decision

To continue consideration of this item to the next meeting of the Committee on 27 February 2020.

## 7. Feedback from Locality and City-Wide Special Schools Groups

### City-Wide Special Schools Group

Alex Ramage advised that there were increasing concerns around the level of pupil support assistant provision within special schools. More support was required as some children and young people had increasingly complex needs.

Other issues discussed were:

- Home to school transport – there were a number of individual high impact transport cases still to be resolved
- Longer term strategies – better forward planning was required from nursery to primary to secondary or special school provision

### Decision

- 1) To note the update.
- 2) To note that the review of additional support for learning provision was ongoing and that pupil support assistants were included within that review.
- 3) To ask the Head of Children's Services to report to the next meeting of the Committee on 27 February 2020 on the ASL Project.

### North West Locality Group

Concerns had been expressed about the Scottish Government's announcement that the interim measure of 'Recognising Positive Achievement', the automatic fallback to National 4 for young people who were unsuccessful at National 5 level, would end from academic year 2019/20.

### Decision

- 1) To note the update.
- 2) To note that Alex Ramage would draft a response to the Deputy First Minister on the issue for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee on 27 February 2020.

## **South East Locality Group**

Alex Ramage reported that the following issues had been raised and discussed at the South East Locality Group meeting:

- Parking around James Gillespie's Primary – the Senior Education Manager confirmed that he had been in touch with the Safer Routes to School officer who would discuss the specific issues with the Chair of the Parent Council.
- The potential pressure on devolved school budgets if staff were on long term leave – the expectation was that Head Teachers and Business Managers would work within the allocated budget, however, if any potential overspend was looking likely to occur, schools could flag this to senior managers in Council Headquarters.
- Breakfast club at Ferryhill Primary – transition of children from the Drylaw referred breakfast club to Ferryhill was complete. It was acknowledged there was significant benefits including improved relationships and direct links between home and school. This was an important model to be shared across other schools in the estate.

### **Decision**

To note the update.

## **North East Locality Group**

All the issues raised at the North East Locality Group meeting had been covered in the other updates above.

## **8. Connect Update**

An update paper was submitted providing information on the range of activities ongoing at Connect. The AGM and Lecture for 2020 would be held in Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on 26 March 2020 and would be on the theme of supporting young people's mental health. Tickets were free and would be available early December.

### **Decision**

To note the update.

## **9. National Parent Forum - Update**

It was noted that the post for the National Parent Forum representative was vacant.

### **Decision**

To ask the Head Teacher at James Gillespie's Primary School if he had information on the name of the representative for the National Parent Forum.

## **10. Date of Next Meeting**

### **Decision**

Thursday 27 February 2020 at 6pm in the City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh.