

Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00am, Friday 16 August 2019

Present:

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

Religious Representatives

Fiona Beveridge and Monsignor Anthony Duffy.

1. Deputation – Edinburgh Trades Union Council

The Committee received a deputation from Des Loughney, Alison Murphy and Clair Robertson the Edinburgh Trades Union Council in relation to reducing child poverty.

The deputation made the following points:

- The committee report was broadly welcomed but there were some concerns.
- There were strong concerns about the food crisis, rising levels of hunger and the adverse effects of universal credit.
- There were growing needs across the city and the figures provided underestimated the number of children living in poverty.
- More resources needed to be allocated and a longer term approach taken.
- The increasing cost of housing had not been considered.
- The current measures were not enough to mitigate child poverty and the report did not specify the actions to be taken to reduce child poverty.
- It was often difficult for staff to find the time to work on child poverty initiatives.
- For practitioners working with young people, their ability to respond to injustice and empathise with young people was sometimes compromised by other pressures.
- At some schools, there were children who appeared hungry, tired and unkempt, with anger towards other children.
- Financial pressure on parents often caused anxiety for children.
- There was a waiting list for specialist resources.
- There were high levels of rent and evictions, which meant families moving out of the catchment area.
- Poverty impacts on physical and mental development.
- There was a local food bank, to which staff made contributions.

- It was challenging for staff to teach children living in poverty who needed to be nurtured.

- 1) To note the issues raised.
- 2) To advise the deputation of the decision (see item 3 below).

The full presentation can be viewed via the link below.

https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/438646

2. Deputation – Scottish Youth Climate Strikers – Global Strike for Future

The Committee received a deputation from Sandy Boyd of the Scottish Youth Climate Strikers in relation to the strike against climate change.

The deputation made the following points:

- The committee report stated that climate change was widely recognised.
- On 20 September, they would be joining the Global Climate Strike, which was expected to be well attended.
- People had to act on climate change, time was running out and young people had to have authorised absences to put pressure on governments
- Preventing students taking more days off was threatening young person's rights risking the progress which had been made and was morally wrong as they would be most affected by climate change.
- Pupils who needed unauthorised absence were not getting support, which meant that young people could not express their views.

Decision

- 1) To note the issues raised.
- 2) To advise the deputation of the decision (see item 4 below).

The full presentation can be viewed via the link below.

https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/438646

3. Reducing Child Poverty

Details were provided of the new responsibilities for Local Government and Health Boards arising from the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act. These included new requirements for publication of an annual report describing existing and new planned actions, or measures taken, to reduce and mitigate the effects of Child Poverty.

Decision

- 1) To agree the Local Child Poverty Action Report submitted to Scottish Government in July 2019

- 2) To agree to receive a six monthly report to Committee from the Child Poverty Action Unit to effectively scrutinise progress and actions to mitigate/reduce child poverty.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 9 October 2018 (item 15); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

4. Climate Change Strikes

The Committee had authorised the absence of children attending schools in the City of Edinburgh who had take part in a climate change strike on 14 March 2019.

Following a further strike on 24 May 2019, the Council had examined the legal position and the newly published national guidance which encouraged children to attend school be supported to express their views in ways that would support, not diminish their attendance and attainment.

Motion

- 1) To note the national policy on ensuring children attend school.
- 2) To note the links to child protection and raising attainment, attached to attendance
- 3) Notwithstanding the information contained within the report, Committee acknowledged the benefits of children taking part in demonstrations and marches which highlighted climate change and the detrimental effect on our future environment.
- 4) Given the general political consensus on the need to tackle climate change, Committee agreed to authorise a single day of action per academic year for those pupils who wish to take part.
- 5) The pupil's absence would only be considered authorised with parental consent which would be required to be sent to the school, in writing, in advance of any absence. Where consent was provided, the school was absolved of any responsibility for that pupil during the day of action.
- 6) Any other absences in relation to climate change would be recorded by the school as unauthorised.
- 7) Committee would also like to encourage schools to support pupils in any school-led initiatives and the production of any material which informed about climate change as detailed in paragraph 4.13 of the report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families.
- 8) To call for all schools to take part in Rights Based Learning to show support for action against climate change
 - moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Dickie.

Amendment

- 1) To note the national policy on ensuring children attend school.
- 2) To note the links to child protection and raising attainment, attached to attendance
- 3) To notes that in October 2018 the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reported that to mitigate severe impacts of climate change, average global temperature increases need to stay below 1.5 degrees centigrade and that greenhouse gas emissions would need to reduce by 45% globally by 2030. Thus setting a 12-year time frame for action and giving rise to the term 'Climate Emergency.
- 4) To note that in response to this Climate Emergency an international movement of school students had developed under the banner 'Fridays 4 Future', who were deciding not to attend school on Fridays and instead take part in demonstrations to demand action to prevent further global warming and climate change.
- 5) To note that the contribution of the global movement of young people was widely acknowledged to have hugely influenced the response to the Climate Emergency, including the First Minister of Scotland citing a meeting with school climate strikers and their demand for governments to declare a climate emergency with her declaration of a Climate Emergency in Scotland.
- 6) To note that in May 2019 City of Edinburgh Council also agreed to set a 2030 target for achieving carbon neutrality in response to the Climate Emergency but had yet to produce a carbon reduction plan for achieving this target;
- 7) To recognise that whilst, in accordance with its duties, the City of Edinburgh Council aims to promote good attendance at school:
 - a) That in Council schools, 'satisfactory attendance' did allow for a number of absences. That the extent of any disruption to learning would clearly be in proportion to the extent of absence. That the number of days absent from school for climate strikes represented a very small proportion of the whole school year, that school strikes took place on Friday which was normally a short, 3.5 hour school day, and that therefore disruption to learning was limited. That absences approved by the committee in support of school climate strikes to date had amounted to only two half-days in the previous school year.
 - b) That absences from school for climate strikes had a hugely significant influence on the global response to the Climate Emergency so far and that their continuation would be influential in driving further action;
 - c) That school children and young people coming together to take part in Climate Strikes had considerable educational value and was supported by educational experts.

- 8) To note that the latest Scottish Government guidance 2019, 'Included, Engaged and Involved' Part 1, stated that reasons for authorised absence could include '*participation in non-school debates, sports, musical or drama activities agreed by the school.*' and noted that this guidance recognised the value of external events and allowed for authorised absence, which could include school climate strikes.
- 9) Therefore, believed that children and young people should be encouraged and supported to demonstrate that their future was at stake because of the Climate Emergency and should not be penalised for unauthorised absence when taking part in school climate strikes.
- 10) To agree that requests by school climate strikers for authorised absence would continue to be considered by the Council
- 11) To call for all schools to take part in Rights Based Learning to show support for action against climate change
- moved by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Mary Campbell.

Voting

The voting was as follows:

For the motion	-	8 votes
For the amendment	-	2 votes

(For the motion: Councillors Bird, Dickie, Griffiths, Key, Laidlaw, Perry, Rust and Young.)

For the amendment: Councillors Burgess and Mary Campbell.)

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Perry.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 5 March 2019 (item18); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted.)

5. Minute

Decision

- 1) To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 21 May 2019 as a correct record.
- 2) To approve the minute of the additional Education, Children and Families Committee of 17 June 2019 as a correct record.

6. Rolling Actions Log

The Rolling Actions Log for May 2019 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:

- Action 1 – Breakfast Club Development Fund Update
 - Action 6 – Digital Learning in Schools
 - Action 8 – Supporting Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools
 - Action 10 – Educational Attainment in Primary and Secondary Schools 2017
 - Action 14 – Year of Young People 2018
 - Action 16 – Schools and Early Years Playground Development
 - Action 30 – Violence at Work Survey – Motion by Councillor Young
- 2) To ask the Executive Director for Communities and Families to circulate a briefing note to members on Action 2 (Policy and Guidance on Sponsorship) and Action 3 (Lifelong Learning Service Officers).
 - 3) To update the rolling actions log to reflect the decisions taken at this meeting.
 - 4) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log – 16 August 2019, submitted).

7. Business Bulletin

The Business Bulletin for August 2019 was presented.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted).

8. Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in Need of Care and Protection in the City of Edinburgh

An outline was provided of the positive outcome of the Care Inspectorate’s report of services that were delivered by the Edinburgh Children’s Partnership. The child protection work of the Partnership, was highly recommended, along with its leadership and the successful work undertaken in maintaining children safely within family-based care and the strength-based approach it adopted in its work with children and families.

Motion

To note and agree the Care Inspectorate’s external scrutiny report of services provided by Edinburgh Children’s Partnership’s, published in June 2019.

- moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Dickie

Amendment

- 1) To note and agree the Care Inspectorate’s external scrutiny report of services provided by Edinburgh Children’s Partnership’s, published in June 2019.

- 2) To note that the Edinburgh Children's Partnership Improvement Plan, covering the areas for improvement identified by the inspection would be submitted to the Care Inspectorate.

- moved by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Mary Campbell

In accordance with Standing Order 21(11), the amendment was accepted as an addendum to the motion.

Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Perry:

- 1) To note and agree the Care Inspectorate's external scrutiny report of services provided by Edinburgh Children's Partnership's, published in June 2019.
- 2) To note that the Edinburgh Children's Partnership Improvement Plan, covering the areas for improvement identified by the inspection would be submitted to the Care Inspectorate.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

9. Children's Partnership Arrangements

Agreement was sought to a review of current arrangements for the planning and oversight of children's services in Edinburgh. It was proposed that a short-term working group be established to submit proposals for consideration by the Committee and the NHS in December 2019.

Decision

- 1) To agree that the City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian lead a review of the current oversight arrangements to make sure children's services in Edinburgh:
 - (a) were planned and commissioned to best effect to deliver high quality care and support;
 - (b) were designed and evaluated by the children, young people, families and communities they served;
 - (c) had effective governance and accountability.
- 2) To agree that the work should take into account Scottish Government guidance on Community and Children's Services planning, best practice on participation and the principles that currently underpinned children's services development in Edinburgh.
- 3) To agree that the review should bring forward any proposals for new arrangements by December 2019.
- 4) To note that any changes to current arrangements should be agreed by the Education, Children and Families Committee, Lothian Health Board and the Edinburgh Partnership.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 11 September 2014 (item 11); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

10. Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2018-19

Details were provided on the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2018-19 which summarised the work of the multi-agency strategic partnership within the past year. It highlighted the core business of the Child Protection Committee as well as areas of strength and good practice, alongside identified priority areas for the coming year.

Motion

- 1) To note the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2018-19.
 - 2) To note the positive contribution made by services across the City in keeping children safe.
- moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Dickie

Amendment

- 1) To note the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2018-19.
 - 2) To note the positive contribution made by services across the City in keeping children safe.
 - 3) To note that the areas for improvement as highlighted by the Child Protection Committee Annual Report, to be taken forward over the coming year, would be incorporated into the Child Protection Committee improvement plan, the next version of which would be considered by the Child Protection Committee in September 2019.
 - 4) To request that the views expressed by families about the child protection system be specifically responded to in the Improvement Plan.
- moved by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Mary Campbell.

In accordance with Standing Order 21(11), the amendment was accepted as an addendum to the motion.

Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Perry:

- 1) To note the content of the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2018-19.
- 2) To note the positive contribution made by services across the City in keeping children safe.
- 3) To note that the areas for improvement as highlighted by the Child Protection Committee Annual Report, to be taken forward over the coming year, would be incorporated into the Child Protection Committee improvement plan, the next version of which would be considered by the Child Protection Committee in September 2019.

- 4) To request that the views expressed by families about the child protection system be specifically responded to in the Improvement Plan.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families submitted).

11. Schooling Options for Children Living in Edinburgh – Follow up report

The Committee had considered a report on “Schooling Options for Children Living in Edinburgh” which provided details of the schooling options outside of those offered by City of Edinburgh Council for school aged children living Edinburgh and set out how this information was captured in the current roll projection methodology used by City of Edinburgh Council to forecast future school rolls.

Details were provided on children who were home schooled and how children who had never engaged in the education system were recorded.

Decision

- 1) To note the report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families.
- 2) To note that home education was a parental choice with 56 children currently registered in Edinburgh as being home schooled.
- 3) To further note that the parents of a child who had attended a public nursery or school must seek consent to withdraw for home schooling, however those who had never attended nursery or school, or who had not registered with a GP, were unknown to Council, NHS and wider support services.
- 4) To acknowledge this loophole and the discussions underway between the Council and NHS to partly address this through health visitor checks.
- 5) To further acknowledge, however, registration with a GP was key to health visitors being involved in the first place with younger children.
- 6) To instruct therefore, the Vice-Convenor to write to the Scottish Government on the Committee’s behalf to request that national policy be amended to obligate parents to ensure children not enrolled in schools/educated at home were registered with the appropriate authority and a GP.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 5 March 2018 (item 9); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

12. 2020/23 Communities and Families Grants to Third Parties Programme

Details were provided of proposals for making clearer and more robust the application process and funding decisions relating to the 2020/23 Communities and Families Grants to Third Parties Programme.

Decision

- 1) To approve the actions and changes set out in section 4 of the report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families.
- 2) To ask for a report in March 2020 which would detail the process and outcome of the funding programme and make recommendations for awards.
- 3) To note that officers had been tasked with developing a formula to mitigate the risk of imbalanced distribution of grants and that the Convener, Vice-Convener and Opposition Group Spokespersons would meet to discuss this in advance of the issue of the report back to Committee in March 2020.

(References – Education, Children and Families 17 June 2019 (item 1); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

13. Statutory Consultations Proposing to Establish a new Maybury Primary School, Replace Newcraighall Primary School and undertake catchment changes at Edinburgh Park and Curriemuirend

The Committee had agreed that three draft statutory consultation papers for the replacement of Newcraighall Primary School, the establishment of a new Maybury Primary School and the realignment of catchment areas to take account of new developments in Edinburgh Park, be submitted in August 219 ahead of publication.

Details were provided on the draft consultation papers for each of the three proposals and approval sought to finalise these papers ahead of publication and the commencement of the statutory consultation processes.

Decision

- 1) To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Communities and Families to finalise and publish the draft statutory consultation paper in Appendix 1 of the report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families which proposed the establishment of a new primary school in the 'Maybury' development incorporating any changes agreed by the Committee.
- 2) To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Communities and Families to finalise and publish the draft statutory consultation paper in Appendix 2 of the report which proposed the relocation of Newcraighall Primary School to a new building in the 'New Brunstane' development incorporating any changes agreed by this Committee.
- 3) To delegated authority to the Executive Director of Communities and Families to finalise and publish the draft statutory consultation paper in Appendix 3 of the report which proposed the realignment of primary and secondary school

catchment boundaries encompassing the proposed new development sites within Edinburgh Park and at Curriemuirend incorporating any changes agreed by this Committee.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 21 May 2019 (item 7); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

14. Transfer of Management of Secondary School Sport Facilities to Edinburgh Leisure

The Committee had agreed the development of a strategy in partnership with clubs that supported the inclusion agenda and enabled access to Council facilities without additional charges being imposed.

An update was provided on the work to date on the strategy to enable access without additional charges and delivering a service within the available budget.

Decision

- 1) To note the options developed and measures taken to reduce the budget pressure for the project.
- 2) To approve the introduction of an additional charge for lets outside of the new opening hour framework as detailed in paragraph 4.3 of the report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families.
- 3) To note the first local Child Poverty Action Plan at item 7.4, the establishment of the new Child Poverty Action Unit, and the work underway to reduce child poverty.
- 4) To request the Culture and Communities Committee ask for a report from Edinburgh Leisure on how they, as a partner, were helping to reduce child poverty and the cost of living for families in the city through:
 - An increased range of free and affordable activities for children and families experiencing poverty.
 - Equitable access to activities and opportunities in high SIMD areas.
 - Ensuring that the priority in the use of school premises was given to local community groups working with local children and families.
- 5) To request that this report be referred to the Education, Children and Families Committee and Child Poverty Action Unit for information.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 11 December 2018 (item 10); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

15. Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 - Update

An update was provided on the implementation of the Carer's Scotland Act 2016 and approval sought for the implementation plan for young carers.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress in implementing the requirements of the Carer's (Scotland) Act 2016 in respect of Young Carers.
- 2) To approve the draft implementation plan for Young Carers which would also be discussed by the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board (Health and Social Care Partnership) on 20 August 2019.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 5 March 2019 (item 6); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

16. Revenue Monitoring 2019/20 – month three position

Details were provided on the projected month three revenue monitoring position for the Communities and Families Directorate, based on analysis of actual expenditure and income to the end of May 2019, and expenditure and income projections for the remainder of the financial year.

The total projected full year unfunded budget pressure was currently £7.95m, partially offset by mitigations totalling £5.2m, and resulting in a net residual unfunded budget pressure of £2.75m.

Decision

- 1) To note the net residual budget pressure of £2.75m which remained at month three.
- 2) To note that approved savings and operational efficiencies in 2019/20 totalled £4.334m, with £3.175m on track to be delivered in full and £1.159m assessed as amber, pending further detailed implementation plans.
- 3) To note that the Executive Director of Communities and Families was taking measures to reduce budget pressures and progress would be reported to the Finance and Resources Committee on 6 December 2019 and to the meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee on 10 December 2019.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

17. Changes to the Operational Property Estate Lifecycle Costs Forecast – referral from the Finance and Resources Committee

The Finance and Resources Committee had referred a report which highlighted that every change to the Council's operational property portfolio had implications for the construction and running costs for that property over its lifetime, to the Education, Children and Families Committee for information.

The size of the Council's operational estate was increasing significantly, and this was putting pressure on revenue budgets to accommodate these lifecycle costs.

Decision

To note the report.

(Reference –Finance and Resources Committee 23 May 2018 (item 22); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted).

18. Motion by Councillor Burgess – Global Climate Strike September 2019

The following motion by Councillor Burgess was submitted in terms of Standing Order 16:

“Committee:

Notes the ‘Global Climate Strike’ (<https://globalclimatestrike.net/>) being held 20-27 September 2019 - expected to be the largest ever global action on the Climate Emergency which is being organised by young people and backed by NGOs, unions and organisations in 150 countries around the world;

Notes the Global Climate Strike is being led by young people of ‘Fridays for Future’ this time calling on adults to support them in a general strike;

Notes that the Global Climate Strike is taking place during the United Nations Emergency Climate Change Summit being held in New York;

Notes that ‘Scottish Youth Climate Strikers’ have notified the Council of their intention to march and hold a rally on Friday 20 September as part of this Global Climate Strike;

Therefore agrees, to allow school students to take part in this Global Climate Strike 2019, that this day should be considered by the authority as an authorised absence from school as long as a parent/carer has sent prior written permission to their child’s school with a clear statement that the parent/carer will be responsible for their child during the absence from school.”

Decision

To note the Councillor Burgess had withdrawn his motion.