

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

At a Hybrid Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 8 March 2023 at 10.05 a.m.

Present: Councillors Karen Conaghan, Gurpreet Singh Johal, Daniel Lennie, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Michelle McGinty, June McKay, John Millar, Lawrence O'Neill, Lauren Oxley, Martin Rooney, Gordon Scanlan, Hazel Sorrell and Clare Steel, and Mrs Barbara Barnes, Ms Kirsty Connolly, Mr Gavin Corrigan, Miss Cara Cusick MSYP, Ms Julia Strang and Miss Tian Qi Yu MSYP.

Attending: Peter Hessematt, Chief Executive; Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; Alan Douglas, Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration (Legal Officer); Andrew Brown, Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources; Claire Cusick, Senior Education Officer – Services for Children & Young People; Julie McGrogan, Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning; Kathy Morrison, Senior Education Officer – Early Learning & Childcare; Michelle Lynn, Assets Co-ordinator; Joe Reilly, Business Unit Finance Partner (Education); and Scott Kelly, Committee Officer.

Apology: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Miss Ellen McBride.

Councillor Clare Steel in the Chair

STATEMENT BY CHAIR – AUDIO STREAMING

Councillor Clare Steel, Chair, advised that the meeting was being audio streamed and broadcast live to the internet and would be available for playback.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Councillor Steel, Chair, welcomed all those present and in particular Miss Cara Cusick MSYP and Ms Kirsty Connolly, Parent Representative, who were attending their first meeting of the Committee, having recently been appointed as members of the Committee.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest in any of the items of business on the agenda.

RECORDING OF VOTES

The Committee agreed that all votes taken during the meeting would be carried out by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held on 14 December 2022 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

LOCAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR TEACHERS

The Minutes of Meeting of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers held on 12 December 2022 were submitted and all decisions contained therein were approved.

OPEN FORUM

The Committee noted that no open forum questions had been submitted by members of the public.

RESPONSE ON THE CONSULTATION PROPOSAL TO OPEN AN ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS SCHOOL AT FORMER RIVERSIDE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CENTRE (ELCC)

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer informing of the outcome and findings of the statutory consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the formal consultation on the proposal to open a new additional support needs school at the site of the former Riverside ELCC on the St Martin's Primary School site.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10.15 a.m. in order that technical difficulties could be resolved. The meeting reconvened at 10.30 a.m. with all those Members listed in the sederunt in attendance with the exception of Ms Connolly.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Services for Children & Young People in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed the findings from the statutory consultation exercise and noted the content of the associated Education Scotland report.

PROPOSAL PAPER AND LAUNCH OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION TO DISCONTINUE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF TRANSPORT FOR PUPILS ATTENDING CATCHMENT SCHOOLS

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer seeking approval for the launch of the statutory consultation document by the Chief Education Officer under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on the proposal to discontinue arrangements for the provision of transport for pupils attending catchment schools.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources, in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, and the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration (Legal Officer), in clarification of certain matters, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the launch of the statutory consultation document by the Chief Education Officer under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on the proposal to discontinue arrangements for the provision of transport for pupils attending catchment schools, subject to the following amendments:-
 - (a) section 7.3 – change 'the constituency MSP' to 'constituency MSPs' (there being two), and add 'regional list MSPs' and 'all active Community Councils' to the list of consultees; and
 - (b) section 7.4 – add 'Clydebank Town Hall' to the list of West Dunbartonshire Council buildings;
- (2) to agree that the consultation period should run from Thursday, 9 March 2023 until Tuesday, 9 May 2023, a total of 31 days when the schools are open for pupils; and
- (3) to agree that a report outlining the results of the consultation and making appropriate recommendations be presented to a meeting of the Educational Services Committee on a date to be confirmed in conjunction with the Chair, the Chief Officer and Elected Members.

The Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration (Legal Officer) then advised the Committee that, in view of its decision to launch the statutory consultation, and because Members would in due course require to make a decision based on the evidence presented during the consultation process, Members who wished to participate in the decision-making should exercise caution when making any public comment, and in particular should avoid any comment which may lead members of the public to consider that the issues have been pre-judged.

STRATEGY TO RAISE ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT IN WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on progress with implementing Educational Services' improvement priorities for attainment and equity.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources and the Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the Committee will be provided with regular update reports advising of progress; and
- (2) the achievement of West Dunbartonshire's schools to increase attainment in the Broad General Education for our most disadvantaged children and young people.

ADJOURNMENT

Having heard Councillor Steel, Chair, the Committee agreed to adjourn the meeting at 11.30 a.m. for a short period of time. The meeting reconvened at 11.37 a.m. with all those Members listed in the sederunt in attendance with the exception of Ms Connolly.

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE PROGRESS UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on progress made to provide high quality Early Learning and Childcare in West Dunbartonshire Council.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Early Learning & Childcare and the Chief Education Officer in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the progress to deliver the statutory entitlement of 1140 hours of high quality Early Learning and Childcare.

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES UPDATE REPORT

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer informing of progress on supports to children, young people and families.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Services for Children & Young People and the Chief Education Officer in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the progress on plans to continue developing and improving supports.

EDUCATION DELIVERY PLAN 2022/23 – MID-YEAR PROGRESS

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer setting out the mid-year progress of the Education Delivery Plan 2022/23.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources in further explanation of the report, the Committee agreed to note the progress achieved.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 31 JANUARY 2023 (PERIOD 10)

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the financial performance of Education Services to 31 January 2023 (Period 10).

After discussion and having heard the Business Unit Finance Partner (Education) in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the revenue account currently showed a projected annual adverse revenue variance of £1.284m (1.16% of the total budget) which declined to £0.839m (0.76% of the total budget) after application of COVID funds; and
- (2) to note that the capital account showed a projected in-year favourable variance of £2.110m which was budget being re-profiled to 2023/24.

The meeting closed at 12.25 p.m.