

## **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

At a Hybrid Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 13 December 2023 at 10.00 a.m.

**Present:** Councillors Gurpreet Singh Johal, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, June McKay, John Millar, Lawrence O'Neill\*, Lauren Oxley, Martin Rooney, Gordon Scanlan and Hazel Sorrell, and Mrs Barbara Barnes, Mr Gavin Corrigan, Miss Ellen McBride and Ms Julia Strang.

\*Attended later in the meeting.

**Attending:** Peter Hissett, Chief Executive; Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; Alan Douglas, Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration (Legal Officer); Lauren Slavin, Chief Officer – Resources; Alison Bowers, Senior Education Officer – Early Learning & Childcare; 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; Michelle Lynn, Assets Co-ordinator; Richard Butler, Section Head – Corporate Admin Support; Joe Reilly, Business Unit Finance Partner (Education); and Scott Kelly, Committee Officer.

**Apologies:** Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Karen Murray Conaghan, Michelle McGinty, Clare Steel, and Reverend Ian Miller

**Councillor John Millar in the Chair**

### **STATEMENT BY CHAIR – AUDIO STREAMING**

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

Note: Councillor O'Neill entered the meeting at this point.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held on 27 September 2023 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

## **OPEN FORUM**

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

## **DELIVERY OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING (HWB) SURVEY**

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer informing of changes made to the original pupil Health and Wellbeing Survey and seeking approval to proceed.

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 Health and Wellbeing survey being completed by Primary 5 to S6 pupils which, it was noted, had been adapted to take account of the concerns raised by Council following the Scottish Government Census being rejected in December 2021.

## **EDUCATION LETS**

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an overview of the provision of lets across the Council's educational establishments and requesting consideration of a revision to the current pricing model.

After discussion and having heard the Section Head – Corporate Admin Support in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to thank officers for carrying out a thorough review of Educational lets for both Synthetic Pitches and Grass Pitches;
- (2) to note that over recent years, there had been significant investment in the quality of external sports facilities within the Schools Estate and it is only right that our communities are able to benefit from these;
- (3) that it is often a source of frustration to community groups that there is so much variance between the West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust Lets and the Learning Estates Lets;
- (4) that it is, however, worth noting that, based on quality of pitches, Educational Services pitches tend to be better;

- (5) to further notes that the West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust currently gives Under 18 Groups a significant discount, however, there are no discount rates for Under 18s Groups within Education facilities;
- (6) to better align our Learning Estates Let charges with the WD Leisure Trust;
- (7) that this means that the hourly let times should be comparable and a standard two-hour booking period applied for matches;
- (8) that in addition, the Under 18 Groups, discounts for the hire of Grass Pitches and Synthetic Pitches, should be extended to our Learning Estate pitches with the new rates coming into effect in April 2024; and
- (9) that this means that instead of applying a 10% discount, as detailed in the recommendations to the report, the new Under 18 Groups would receive a 50% reduction for the hire of Grass Pitches; and a 20% reduction for Synthetic Pitches.

### **STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY**

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on progress with implementing the service Strategy for Excellence and Equity 2023-2026.

Having heard the Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning in further explanation, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress made in the past three months with the Strategy for Excellence and Equity;
- (2) to note the service had produced a Strategy for Excellence and Equity (2023-2026) which replaced the Strategy for Attainment and Achievement reported to Committee from 2015 to September 2023; and
- (3) to note the range of external scrutiny and reporting on educational performance and practice.

### **SENIOR PHASE ATTAINMENT 2022/23**

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on the performance of West Dunbartonshire schools in Senior Phase Attainment for young people in 2022/23.

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

- (1) to note the contents of the report and its appendices;

- (2) to congratulate the pupils, parents and carers, staff in our establishments, and our partner providers for their achievements; and
- (3) the next steps contained in section 4.6 of the report to improve the consistency of the offer of the Senior Phase across all West Dunbartonshire schools.

### **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.

Having heard the Senior Education Officer – Early Learning & Childcare in further explanation and in answer to a Member's question, 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.

Having heard the Senior Education Officer – Services for Children & Young People in further explanation, the Committee agreed to note the progress on plans to continue developing and improving supports.

### **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 31 AUGUST 2023 (PERIOD 5)**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the financial performance of Education Services to 31 August 2023 (Period 5).

Having heard the Business Unit Finance Partner (Education) in further explanation, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the revenue account currently showed a projected annual adverse revenue variance of £1.460m (1.26% of the total budget); and
- (2) to note that projected expenditure on the capital account was lower than the 2023/24 budget by £0.112m (1.12% of budget), due to project re-profiling.

## **COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON**

Councillor Millar, Chair, wished everyone present a Merry Christmas and a happy, prosperous and healthy new year.

The meeting closed at 11.05 a.m.

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