

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

At a Hybrid Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 21 June 2023 at 10.00 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, Mr Gavin Corrigan and Ms Julia Strang.

*Arrived later in the meeting.

Attending: 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; and Scott Kelly, Committee Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Miss Cara Cusick MSYP and 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.

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 8 March 2023 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 14 March 2023 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.

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 – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning and relevant officers in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the strong record of progress maintained in academic session 2022/23 achieved by the young people and staff;
- (2) that the Committee was provided with regular update reports advising of progress with improvements to deliver excellence and equity; and
- (3) that Councillor Steel, Chair, would write to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills or the Cabinet Secretary for Finance to express the Committee's concerns in relation to the funds provided by the Scottish Government to support Holiday Hunger activities having been reduced in comparison to previous years, and for the delay in this being communicated to local authorities.

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 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 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 in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note progress on plans to continue developing and improving supports.

SCHOOL LEAVER DESTINATIONS 2021/2022

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on our partnership approach to improve the number of our young people leaving school and entering a positive destination.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the improvement in school leaver destinations.

Note: Councillor Rooney entered the meeting during consideration of this item.

SUPPORTING LGBT+ PUPILS IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer informing of:-

- (a) practices supporting (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) LGBT+ children and young people; and
- (b) the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in ensuring adherence to guidance.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Services for Children & Young People in further explanation of the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note Educational Services' Guidance on supporting LGBT+ children and young people. (Appendix 1 to the report);
- (2) to note Educational Services' support practices contained within the guidance; and

- (3) to note this guidance reflects the national guidance on supporting transgender young people in schools: guidance for Scottish Schools.

DEBT MANAGEMENT IN EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS POLICY

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer seeking approval for the introduction of a debt management policy in West Dunbartonshire's Education establishments.

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

- (1) to approve the introduction of the debt management policy (Appendix A to the report) in West Dunbartonshire's Education establishments in August 2023; and
- (2) to write off historic debt accumulated in pupil accounts by parents and carers until the introduction of the debt management policy, but to continue to pursue staff debt.

Note: Mrs Barnes left the meeting at this point.

EDUCATION DELIVERY PLAN 2023/24

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer setting out the Education Delivery Plan for 2023/24.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources and the Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning in further explanation of the report and in answer to a Member's question, the Committee agreed the new Plan.

VALEDICTORY

Councillor Steel, Chair, informed the Committee that this was the last meeting of the Educational Services Committee that Kathy Morrison would attend as she was retiring from Council service.

On behalf of the Committee, Councillor Steel thanked Mrs Morrison for all her years of service, her hard work, particularly in relation to the successful implementation of 1,140 hours of funded early learning and childcare a year, and wished her a happy retirement.

Councillor Conaghan concurred with Councillor Steel's remarks and also wished Mrs Morrison well in retirement.

In response, Mrs Morrison thanked the Committee for its kind words.

The meeting closed at 11.35 a.m.