

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

At a Hybrid Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 20 March 2024 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Gurpreet Singh Johal, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Michelle McGinty, June McKay, John Millar, Karen Murray Conaghan, Lawrence O'Neill, Lauren Oxley, Martin Rooney, Gordon Scanlan and Hazel Sorrell, and Mrs Barbara Barnes, Mr Gavin Corrigan, and Ms Rebecca Ross MSYP.

Attending: 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 and Childcare; Andrew Brown, Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance and Resources; Claire Cusick, Senior Education Officer – Services for Children and Young People; Julie McGrogan, Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning; Iain Walker, Educational Psychologist; Michelle Lynn, Assets Co-ordinator; Joe Reilly, Business Unit Finance Partner (Education); and Scott Kelly and Nicola Moorcroft, Committee Officers.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Clare Steel, Reverend Ian Miller, Ms Julia Strang, Ms Ellen McBride and Ms Faith Bhardwaj MSYP.

Councillor John Millar in the Chair

Councillor Millar, Chair, welcomed Members to the meeting. He expressed a particular welcome to Ms Rebecca Ross, the new MSYP Member of the Committee.

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.

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 Council agreed that all votes taken during the meeting would be done by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held on 13 December 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 5 December 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.

PROPOSAL TO CONSULT ON AMENDING PRIMARY 1 ENROLMENT DATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer seeking approval for the Chief Education Officer to formally consult on the undernoted proposal under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Education Officer and the Senior Education Officer in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to formally consult on the proposal for the Primary 1 (P1) enrolment date for the start of the academic year to move from the second week in January to the second week in the proceeding November;
- (2) that Officers should explore the possibility of a formal public consultation meeting in Clydebank; and
- (3) to report the outcomes and recommendations resulting from the statutory consultation to Educational Services Committee in September 2024.

The Chief Officer – Regulation 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, be required, 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 prejudged.

STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on progress with delivering improved outcomes for attainment and equity; and implementing the service Strategy for Excellence and Equity.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Education Officer and the Senior Education Officer in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the strong attainment and equity performance of West Dunbartonshire in the Broad General Education against the national performance;
- (2) to note the range of improvement and development work delivered in the service to support improved attainment and a narrowing of the attainment gap; and;
- (3) that the Chief executive and Education Officer write to the Scottish minister for Education and Skills, requesting additional funding for west Dunbartonshire and invite her to a meeting of this Committee.

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE PROGRESS UPDATE

Reports were submitted by the Chief Education Officer informing of:-

- (a) progress on support to children, young people and families; and
- (b) revisions and implementation of policies relating to services for children and young people.

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

- (1) to note progress on plans to continue developing and improving supports; and
- (2) to note progress on revision and implementation of policies supporting children and young people.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Reports were submitted by the Chief Education Officer informing of:-

- (a) updates to the plans to support children and young people and their families with bereavement in West Dunbartonshire; and
- (b) seeking approval to proceed with the plans.

After discussion and having heard the Educational Psychologist in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
- (2) to approve the plans to continue developing and improving supports.

EDUCATION DELIVERY PLAN 2023/24 – MID-YEAR PROGRESS

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer setting out the mid-year progress of the 2023/24 Delivery Plan.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer in further explanation the Committee agreed to note the progress achieved.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 31 JANUARY 2024 (PERIOD 10)

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the financial performance of Education Services to 31 January 2024 (Period 10).

After discussion and having heard the Business Unit Finance Partner in further explanation the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the revenue account showed a projected annual adverse revenue variance of £3.059m (2.6% of the total budget); and
- (2) to note that projected expenditure on the capital account was lower than the 2023/24 budget by £5.998m (70% of budget) and, after project re-profiling, the variance was an overspend of £0.068m.

The meeting closed at 3.46 p.m.