

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Children's Services Committee held in the Council Chambers, Municipal Buildings, Station Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 13 December 2006 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Denis Agnew, George Black, Dennis Brogan, Geoff Calvert, Gail Casey, James McCallum, Martin Rooney, Andy White and Ms Olean Allison, Mrs Barbara Barnes, Mrs Jan Cleife, Ms Ellen McBride and Miss Sheila Rennie.

Attending: Terry Lanagan, Head of Service for the Schools' Estate; Sandra Love, Head of Service, Education and Cultural Services; Anne Ritchie, Head of Social Work (Operations); Dave Clarke, Manager, Schools' Estate; Alan Douglas, Manager of Best Value and Special Projects and Lorraine Beveridge, Administrative Assistant, Legal and Administrative Services.

Also Attending: Lesley Robinson, Head Teacher, Aitkenbar Primary School and Charlie Rooney, Our Lady & St. Patrick's High School.

Apologies: Apologies were intimated on behalf of Provost Alistair Macdonald and Councillors Jim Flynn, Jackie Maceira and Connie O'Sullivan.

Councillor Agnew in the Chair

CONVENER'S REMARKS

10878 Before commencing with the business of the Meeting, Councillor Agnew, Convener welcomed Ms Sandra Love, Head of Service, Education and Cultural Services to her first meeting of the Committee.

PRESENTATION BY HEAD TEACHER OF ST. COLUMBA'S HIGH SCHOOL ON MEASURES TAKEN TO PROMOTE AND RAISE ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT FOR PUPILS

10879 With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Children's Services Committee held on 16 November 2005 (Page 2048, paragraph 7549(3) refers), Councillor Agnew invited Mr William McLaughlin, Head Teacher of St. Columba's High School (present for this item only) to give a presentation on taking forward attainment and achievement for all pupils of St. Columba's High School.

10880 In so doing, Mr McLaughlin informed the Committee of the work that had taken place in the school year on year in order to ensure that pupils attain the necessary qualifications required for their next steps in either the world of work or further/higher education.

10881 In this respect, a report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing information on the work of St. Columba's High School in taking forward attainment and achievement for all pupils.

10882 After discussion and having heard Mr McLaughlin in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

(1) to note the wide range of pupils' achievements which extended beyond academic attainment; and

(2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

10883 The Convener, on behalf of the Committee then congratulated Mr McLaughlin on the excellent work being carried out in the school and for his very informative presentation. The Convener also took this opportunity to wish Mr McLaughlin a long and happy retirement.

Note: Councillor Black arrived during the above presentation.

“WRITE TO THE TOP” – A TEACHER RESOURCE PACK FOR IMPROVING STANDARDS IN WRITING

10884 Councillor Agnew, Convener, invited Ms Linda Booth, Quality Improvement Officer (present for this item only) to give a presentation on the Improving Standards in Writing Initiative within primary and secondary schools across West Dunbartonshire

10885 In so doing, Ms Booth informed the Committee that in line with 'A Curriculum for Excellence' the Education and Cultural Service Department aimed to improve pupil performance in core literacy skills whilst simultaneously developing young people as confident individuals, successful learners, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

10886 Ms Booth further advised that every primary and secondary school in West Dunbartonshire was implementing the new approach to writing during session 2006-2007 and that plans were underway to extend the approach into Early Education and Childcare Centres.

10887 In this respect, there was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing information on the above Initiative.

- 10888 After discussion and having heard Ms Booth in answer to Members' questions, the Convener, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Ms Booth for her informative presentation and congratulated everyone involved in the Initiative.

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME – PRESENTATION

- 10889 Councillor Agnew, Convener, invited Ms Vicky McGraw, Additional Support for Learning Development Officer (present for this item only) to give a presentation on the education component of the Disability Equality Scheme.
- 10890 In so doing, Ms McGraw informed the Committee of the Council's approach to the delivery of its services in a way which met disabled people's needs and priorities and their right to equality of opportunity. Ms McGraw advised the Committee that the Disability Equality Scheme 2006-2009 had been developed from the Disability Equality Strategy 2005 which had been extended to respond to the requirements of new legislation and was part of a framework of policies that addressed equality issues.
- 10891 In this respect, there was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services containing information on the education component of the Disability Equality Scheme.
- 10892 After discussion and having heard Ms McGraw in answer the Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the report and the contents of the Disability Equality Scheme, attached as an appendix to the report, which had been approved by the Social Justice Committee on 8 November 2006 (Page 2798, paragraph 10508 refers).
- 10893 Thereafter, the Convener on behalf of the Committee thanked Ms McGraw for her informative presentation.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- 10894 The Minutes of the Meeting of the Children's Services Committee held on 11 October 2006 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

THE LOCAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR TEACHERS

- 10895 The Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers held on 26 September 2006 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WORK RELATING TO THE CLOSURE OF
BRAIDFIELD HIGH SCHOOL AND THE TRANSFER OF PUPILS, STAFF
AND RESOURCES TO CLYDEBANK HIGH SCHOOL**

- 10896 With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Children's Services Committee held on 17 May 2006 (Page 2447, paragraph 9069 (7) refers), a report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing a final progress report on work relating to the closure of Braidfield High School in June 2006 and the transfer of pupils, staff and resources to Clydebank High School in August 2006.
- 10897 After hearing Members, the Committee noted that there were still some outstanding issues and concerns which required to be resolved in Clydebank High School, namely; (i) inadequate toilet facilities; (ii) movement of staff and pupils between classes; (iii) cramped accommodation; (iv) cleaning of classrooms; (v) flooding in those rooms with flat roofs; and (vi) the new dropping off zones.
- 10898 In response, the Head of Service for the Schools' Estate, advised the Committee that discussions were ongoing with the Acting Director of Housing and Regeneration & Environmental Services (Land & Environmental Services) to address issues (i), (iv) and (v) above and that the problem of movement of staff and pupils between classes and cramped accommodation would be alleviated by the next school session through timetabling improvements. In relation to the new dropping off zones, whilst traffic congestion remained an issue, it would appear that as no complaints have been received by the local authority in the last two months, more parents were cooperating with the new arrangements.
- 10899 After discussion, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to recognise the amount of work carried out by all members of staff who had been involved in the closure of Braidfield High School and the transfer of pupils and staff to Clydebank High School;
 - (2) that the Director of Education and Cultural Services would write to the Acting Director of Housing and Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land & Environmental Services) expressing concern about the above issues;
 - (3) that prior to the next meeting of the Committee the Director of Education and Cultural Services would take the above issues forward and apprise Members and the local teachers' union representative on how they were being addressed; and
 - (4) that reports on the up to date position would be submitted to the Committee on a regular basis.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- 10900 A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services providing a progress report on Social Work Performance within Children's Services for the period 1 July to 30 September 2006.
- 10901 After discussion and having heard Councillor Rooney in further explanation and Ms Swanson, Research and Information Manager, Social Work Services, in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) that the Director of Social Work Services would submit a report on progress to the next meeting of the Children's Services Committee; and
 - (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE NEET ACTION PLAN

- 10902 A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services presenting for information and seeking retrospective approval for the West Dunbartonshire Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) Action Plan prepared for submission to the Scottish Executive by 31 October 2006.
- 10903 After discussion and having heard the Head of Service for the Schools' Estate in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note that a response from the Scottish Executive for the 2006/07 Spending Plans, as outlined in the Action Plan, would be received next week;
 - (2) to note that it was hoped that the additional funding from the Scottish Executive would enhance existing good practice, successful programmes and interventions to reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training in West Dunbartonshire;
 - (3) to approve retrospectively the West Dunbartonshire NEET Action Plan, as appended to the report; and
 - (4) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

Note: Councillor White left at this point in the meeting.

PROTECTING VULNERABLE GROUPS (SCOTLAND) BILL

- 10904 A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing information on West Dunbartonshire's submission of written evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Education Committee on the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Bill.
- 10905 After hearing the Convener in further explanation, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to approve retrospectively the written evidence submitted to the Scottish Parliament's Education Committee on the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Bill; and
 - (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

CHILDCARE CHARGES IN EARLY EDUCATION & CHILDCARE CENTRES

- 10906 A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services seeking approval for new revised charges for the provision of childcare in Council operated Early Education & Childcare Centres.
- 10907 After discussion and having heard Ms Goldie, Section Head (Pre-School and Childcare) in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to approve the increase in childcare charges to a flat rate of £3.00 per hour;
 - (2) to approve the increase in out of school care charges to a flat rate of £2.50 per hour;
 - (3) that new charges be introduced from April 2007; and
 - (4) that information on the range of support families could receive to offset childcare costs should be included in the West Dunbartonshire Council Newspaper.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT TENDERING PROCEDURES SESSION 2007/2008

- 10908 A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services:-
- (a) advising of the proposed timetable for the processing of tenders for mainstream school contracts and for pupils with additional support needs; and
 - (b) seeking approval to proceed with the proposed timetable in order to secure contracts for school transport for session 2006/2007 and up to session 2011/2012 where contracts were for 3 or 5 years' duration.

10909 After discussion and having heard Ms Meikle, Administrative Officer, Education and Cultural Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that the Director be given approval to proceed with the necessary arrangements to secure tenders for the transport of children with additional support needs for session 2007/2008 and beyond for contracts of 3 years duration; and
- (2) that the Director be authorised to make the necessary arrangements in liaison with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) to renew mainstream contracts for session 2007/2008, and beyond for contracts of 3 or 5 years duration.

ADJOURNMENT

10910 It was agreed that the meeting be adjourned for a short period.

10911 The meeting was reconvened with all members and officers on the Sederunt present with the exception of Councillor White. The business on the agenda was dealt with as follows.

HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF EDUCATION: REPORT ON GARTOCHARN PRIMARY SCHOOL

10912 A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing information on the inspection of Gartocharn Primary School by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and the subsequent report published by HMIE on 24 October 2006.

10913 After discussion and having heard the Ms Anderson, Head Teacher, Gartocharn Primary School in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to congratulate staff, parents and children of Gartocharn Primary School, for their achievements as recognised by HMIE in the report published on 24 October 2006; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

**HEY MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF EDUCATION: REPORT ON
GOLDENHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

- 10914 A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing information on the inspection of Goldenhill Primary School by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and the subsequent report published by HMIE on 3 October 2006.
- 10915 After discussion and having heard the Head of Services for the Schools' Estate and Ms Stewart, Head Teacher, Goldenhill Primary School, in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note that the "excellent" rating for Pastoral Care in Goldenhill Primary School was the first "excellent" achieved in any category by a school in the authority since the introduction of the new 6-point scale in August 2005;
 - (2) to congratulate staff, parents and children of Goldenhill Primary School, for their achievements as recognised by HMIE in the report published on 3 October 2006; and
 - (3) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

**INTEGRATED INSPECTIONS OF EARLY EDUCATION & CHILDCARE
CENTRES – UPDATE**

- 10916 There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services containing information on the integrated inspections carried out in Early Education & Childcare Centres since April 2006.

**UPDATE OF CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUILDING PROGRAMME
2006/2007**

- 10917 A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing up-to-date information on the status of Education and Revenue Building Projects within the Education and Cultural Services Department and drawing the Committee's attention to significant issues or problems with the progress of any particular project.
- 10918 After discussion and having heard the Head of Service for the Schools' Estate and the Manager of the Schools' Estate in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) that, in future, information contained in the comments column within the report should be as up to date as possible; and
 - (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

**2006-07 REVENUE ESTIMATES – BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT FOR
THE PERIOD 1 APRIL TO 15 OCTOBER 2006**

- 10919 There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing up-to-date information on expenditure and income to date within the Education and Cultural Services approved budget for 2006-2007.

QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 10920 There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services highlighting the Department of Education and Cultural Services' performance for the period April to September 2006 across all relevant areas.

**REVISED MUSEUM COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

- 10921 A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services containing information on the National Accreditation Scheme for Museums and the requirement to adopt a revised Collections Management and Development Plan to govern Clydebank Museum's collecting strategy.
- 10922 The Manager of Best Value and Special Projects confirmed that the aforementioned Plan, appended to the report, followed a particular format required for registration but that all decision making processes must be in line with Standing Orders, and that the policy must be read subject to such Standing Orders and such powers as the Director of Education and Cultural Services from time to time delegated to the Museum's professional.
- 10923 It was noted that the Head of Legal and Administrative Services had expressed some concerns regarding the restrictive nature of the disposal provisions and that this would be monitored.
- 10924 After discussion and having heard Officers in answer to Members' questions, in particular in relation to any monies received by the museum governing body for the disposal of items, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the contents of the report and the progress being made by the collections service toward the National Accreditation Scheme standards; and
 - (2) that the Manager of Best Value and Special Projects together with the Head of Finance, after taking the Section Head, Museums' comments into consideration, would make necessary changes to the policy, as appended to the report, before submission to the Scottish Museums Council in January 2007.

COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON

10925 The Convener, Councillor Agnew, wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The meeting closed at 12.50 p.m.