

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

At a Hybrid Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 12 June 2024 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Gurpreet Singh Johal, Daniel Lennie, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Michelle McGinty*, June McKay, John Millar, Karen Murray Conaghan, Lawrence O'Neill, Lauren Oxley, Martin Rooney and Hazel Sorrell, and Miss Faith Bhardwaj MSYP, Mr Gavin Corrigan, Miss Ellen McBride, Ms Joanne McLaren and Ms Julia Strang.

*Arrived later in the meeting.

Attending: Peter Hessett, Chief Executive; Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; 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; Michelle Lynn, Assets Co-ordinator; Joe Reilly, Business Unit Finance Partner (Education); Michael McDougall, Manager of Legal Services; and Scott Kelly, Committee Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Clare Steel and Gordon Scanlan, and Mrs Barbara Barnes and Reverend Ian Miller.

Councillor John Millar in the Chair

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Councillor Millar, Chair, welcomed Joane McLaren, Parent Representative, and Faith Bhardwaj MSYP to their first meeting 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 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 20 March 2024 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 March 2024 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 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 Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning and the Chief 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; and
- (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.

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

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE PROGRESS UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer informing of 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 and Childcare and the Assets Co-ordinator in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the progress to deliver the statutory entitlement of 1,140 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 and Young People, the Chief Education Officer, and the Chief Executive in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the progress on plans to continue developing and improving supports.

INCREASE SUSTAINABLE RATE PAID TO FUNDED EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer requesting consideration of a proposal to increase the hourly rate paid by West Dunbartonshire Council to contracted private providers for funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC).

Following discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Early Learning and Childcare in further explanation and in answer to a Member's questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the guidance for setting sustainable rates contained in the 'Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard for Early Learning and Childcare Providers – Guidance for setting sustainable rates for the delivery of funded early learning and childcare (ELC) in 2024-25', published in March 2024;
- (2) to increase the hourly rate paid to Early Learning and Childcare private providers, including childminders, for the provision of funded ELC from £5.84 to £6.43 for eligible two-year-olds and from £5.84 to £6.28 for all children aged from three to pre-school age from 1 April 2024, it being noted that this was an increase of 10% for the eligible two-year-old provision and 7.6% for all three-year-olds and above; and
- (3) to note the external factors influencing the sustainability of the hourly rates paid to contracted providers of funded ELC in West Dunbartonshire, including rising costs and to enable payment of the Real Living Wage to those childcare workers delivering the funded entitlement.

SENIOR PHASE CURRICULUM

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on the offer of courses and awards to young people through the Senior Phase curriculum for session 2024/25, and setting out plans to ensure an equitable offer across all establishments.

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

- (1) to note the breadth of the offer to young people by our schools and partner providers;
- (2) to note the next steps to explore development of a common Senior Phase timetable across all of our secondary schools, and that a proposal would be submitted to the Educational Services Committee in March 2025; and
- (3) to develop the use of digital courses and Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) courses on offer in our schools.

EDUCATION DELIVERY PLAN 2024/25

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer setting out the Education Delivery Plan for 2024/25.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance and Resources in further explanation and in answer to a Member's question, the Committee agreed the new Delivery Plan.

The meeting closed at 11.45 a.m.