

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

At a Hybrid Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 18 September 2024 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Fiona Hennebry, Gurpreet Singh Johal, David McBride, Michelle McGinty, John Millar, Lawrence O'Neill, Lauren Oxley, Martin Rooney, Gordon Scanlan, Hazel Sorrell, Clare Steel, and Mrs Barbara Barnes, 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; Laurence 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; Michelle Lynn, Assets Co-ordinator; Joe Reilly, Business Unit Finance Partner (Education); Alan Douglas, Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration (Legal Officer); and Scott Kelly, Committee Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Provost Karen Murray Conaghan and Reverend Ian Miller.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Legal Officer invited the Committee to make nominations for a Chair for the meeting and it was agreed that Councillor Steel be appointed as Chair. Accordingly, Councillor Steel assumed the Chair.

Councillor Clare Steel in the Chair

STATEMENT BY CHAIR – AUDIO STREAMING

Councillor 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 12 June 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 11 June 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.

RESPONSE ON STATUTORY CONSULTATION TO MOVE THE PRIMARY 1 (P1) ENROLMENT DATE FOR THE START OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR FROM THE SECOND WEEK IN JANUARY TO THE SECOND WEEK OF THE PRECEDING NOVEMBER

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer informing of the outcome from the statutory consultation exercise under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 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 preceding November.

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

- (1) to note the findings from the statutory consultation exercise and the content of the associated Education Scotland report; and

- (2) to move the Primary 1 (P1) enrolment date for the start of the academic year from the second week in January to the second week in the preceding November, commencing this year for enrolments due to start school in August 2025.

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.

Having heard the Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning in further explanation and in answer to a Member's questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the Excellence and Equity Improvement Plan 2023-2026;
- (2) to note the Stretch Aims Improvement Plan 2024-2025; and
- (3) to note the Strategic Equity Fund tapered reduction 2022-2026.

SENIOR PHASE ATTAINMENT 2023/24

The Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance and Resources provided a verbal update in relation to the Senior Phase Attainment for young people in 2023/24 and in this regard there was submitted (tabled) a document summarising the key statistics relating to examination results.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the content of the verbal update and the document which had been submitted; and
- (2) to note that a report providing detailed analysis of the performances of each learning establishment would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

EARLY YEARS SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing information on how an appropriate sport and physical activity programme can be delivered within Early Years.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Early Learning and Childcare in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed to note that Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) staff are skilled in delivering appropriate sport and physical activities in line with early level national guidance, specifically, the Curriculum for Excellence, Early Level, Health and Wellbeing (Physical).

SUMMER HOLIDAY 2024 PROGRAMME EVALUATION

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer:-

- (a) providing an update on plans to reduce holiday hunger and provide childcare support across West Dunbartonshire Council during summer 2024; and
- (b) informing and updating on the additional Scottish Government funding allocations, the governance of funding and impact of projects.

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

- (1) to note the progress and impact of authority-wide plans by partners to reduce holiday hunger and provide summer activities; and
- (2) to note the ways in which the fund had been administered and governed.

Note: Mr Corrigan entered the meeting during consideration of this item.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CAPITAL BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO PERIOD 3 (30 JUNE 2024)

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the capital financial performance to 30 June 2024 of those services under the auspices of the Educational Services Committee.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning and the Assets Co-ordinator in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the current position of the 2024/25 Educational Services capital budget;
- (2) to approve the revised completion dates detailed in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (3) to note an in-year variance of £0.206m due to reprofiling of projects; and
- (4) to note that the Business Unit Finance Partner (Education) may provide further information by email to Members on questions they had raised, in view of the technical difficulties which had been experienced during this part of the meeting.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES REVENUE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO PERIOD 3 (30 JUNE 2024)

A report was submitted by Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the revenue financial performance of Educational Services to 30 June 2024 (Period 3).

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer – Resources in further explanation, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the revenue account currently showed a projected annual adverse revenue variance of £0.423m, falling to £0.365m after use of an earmarked reserve for summer programme activities; and
- (2) to note that the Business Unit Finance Partner (Education) may provide further information by email to Members on questions they had raised, in view of the technical difficulties which had been experienced during this part of the meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.05 a.m.