

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, 18 April 2007 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Denis Agnew, George Black, Dennis Brogan, Jackie Maceira, Martin Rooney, and Mrs Barbara Barnes, Ms Jan Cleife, Ms Anne Hair, Ms Ellen McBride and Miss Sheila Rennie.

Attending: Liz McGinlay, Director of Education and Cultural Services; Terry Lanagan, Head of Service for the Schools' Estate; Lynn Townsend, Head of Service; Jim Watson, Section Head, Childcare, Social Work Services; Alan Douglas, Manager of Best Value and Special Projects and Lorraine Beveridge, Administrative Assistant, Legal and Administrative Services.

Apologies: Apologies were intimated on behalf Provost Alistair Macdonald, Councillors Geoff Calvert, Gail Casey, Jim Flynn, James McCallum, Connie O'Sullivan and Andy White and Ms Olean Allison, Mr Charlie Rooney and Mrs Lesley Robertson.

Councillor Jackie Maceira in the Chair

PRESENTATION – EXCLUSION STATISTICS FOR THE SCHOOL SESSION 2005/2006

Ms Townsend, Head of Service, gave a presentation on the exclusion statistics for West Dunbartonshire schools during the session 2005/2006. In this respect, a report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing information on the factors relating to pupil exclusion.

After discussion and having heard Ms Townsend in answer to Members' question, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that the results of the pilots, which were being carried out in West Dunbartonshire schools on a range of strategies under the Better Behaviour – Better Learning implementation framework, would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee;
- (2) that six monthly progress reports on exclusions, would be submitted to the Committee; and
- (3) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

The Convener, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Ms Townsend for her informative presentation.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Children's Services Committee held on 14 February were submitted and approved as a correct record, subject to the date in the item under the heading of Minutes of the Previous Meeting being amended to read '13 December 2006'.

THE LOCAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR TEACHERS

The Minutes of Meeting of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) held on 13 March 2007 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

After hearing Ms Cleife in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed that final agreed documents would be appended to the Minutes of the LNCT.

CHILDCARE CHARGES IN EARLY EDUCATION & CHILDCARE CENTRES

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 28 March 2007 (Page xxxx, paragraph xxxx refers), there was submitted an excerpt from the Minutes of that Meeting together with a report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing information on the proposed revised charges for childcare provision within Council operated Early Education & Childcare Centres (EECC) and making recommendations thereon.

After lengthy discussion and having heard the Manager of Best Value and Special Projects and Ms Townsend in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, on the motion of Councillor Black, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that in accordance with the motion submitted and agreed at a meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 28 March 2007, the proposal to remove nursery discounts within Council operated EECCs should be continued to allow a consultation to be carried out; and
- (2) that following the aforementioned consultation, a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration.

RATIONALISATION OF PRE-SCHOOL PLACES WITHIN THE DUMBARTON AREA

Submit report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services seeking approval for the further rationalisation of pre-school places within the Dumbarton area through the restriction of new entries to the Dumbarton Academy Early Education & Childcare Centre.

After discussion and having heard Ms Townsend in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve the adoption of Option 2 as detailed within the report, that is:-

- (1) to continue to provide a service in the Early Education & Childcare Centre until June 2008 to allow the current children in their ante pre-school year to remain in the centre until they were ready to transfer onto school in August 2008; and
- (2) that those children on the waiting list for ante pre-school places would be offered a place in another centre.

SPEND OF ADDITIONAL FUNDS ALLOCATED BY THE SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services advising of the actual spend of the additional funds provided by the Scottish Executive.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to welcome the opportunity provided by the additional allocation of funds to support capacity building in the use of ICT in West Dunbartonshire schools; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF EDUCATION: REPORT ON ST. JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing information on the inspection of St. Joseph's Primary School by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and the subsequent report, published by HMIE on 6 February 2007.

After discussion and having heard the Director of Education and Cultural Services and the Head Teacher of St. Joseph's Primary School in further explanation, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to congratulate the staff, parents and children of St. Joseph's Primary School for their achievements as recognised by HMle in the report published on 6 February 2007; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

UPDATE OF CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUILDING PROGRAMME 2006/2007

There was submitted and noted a report 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.

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION SCHEME FOR MUSEUMS AWARD OF FULL ACCREDITATION

A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services advising that West Dunbartonshire Council had been awarded Full Accreditation by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council as part of the National Accreditation Scheme for Museums.

After hearing the Manager of Lifelong Learning in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the achievement of the Culture Section in meeting the requirements of the National Accreditation Scheme standards and being awarded full accreditation;
- (2) to congratulate all those involved in the accreditation process;
- (3) to note the potential benefits to the authority's museum and heritage service as a result of the award; and
- (4) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

COSLA AWARD

A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services advising that the Sport Development Unit had received a prestigious COSLA gold award for health improvement at a ceremony held in St. Andrews at the end of March 2007.

After hearing the Convener and Mr Alan Crawford, Section Leader, Sports Development in further explanation, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to acknowledge the work of the Sports Development Team and to congratulate them for winning this prestigious award; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE'S INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN 2005-2008

A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services informing the Committee of West Dunbartonshire's Integrated Children's Services Plan 2005-2008.

After discussion and having heard Mr Watson, Section Head, Childcare, in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the Integrated Children's Services Plan and the development of better integration of Children's Services in West Dunbartonshire.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services:-

- (a) providing a progress report on Social Work Performance within Children's Services for the period ending 28 February 2007;
- (b) informing the Committee of recent performance of Social Work in the submission of Social Background Reports (SBRs) and Initial Assessment Reports (IARs) to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and on the proportion of children and young people who were seen within fifteen working days and who were made the subject of a supervision order;
- (c) advising that the remainder of the performance targets for Children's Services were best suited to annual reporting, for example, educational attainment and progress on the level of qualified staff in residential units; and
- (d) advising that, in line with Scottish Executive Best Value guidance and Audit Scotland recommendation, the report presents information for elected members and stakeholders as part of wide Public Performance Reporting.

After hearing the Convener, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report and that the Director of Social Work Services would continue to report on performance through the Quarterly Performance Reporting cycles to the Committee.

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD DRAFT CHILDREN'S SERVICES (SCOTLAND) BILL CONSULTATION

A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services informing the Committee of the consultation process being undertaken by the Scottish Executive in respect of the Draft Children's Services (Scotland) Bill which was part of the "Getting it Right for Every Child" policy initiative.

After hearing the Convener, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the important proposals for the future delivery of services to children; and
- (2) to approve, retrospectively, the response prepared by West Dunbartonshire Council and its partner agencies to the Scottish Executive's consultation.

THE YOUTH JUSTICE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services containing information on the Scottish Executive Youth Justice Improvement Programme.

After hearing the Convener, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that updates on the action plan would be submitted to future meeting of the Committee; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

THE INSPECTION BY THE CARE COMMISSION OF WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL'S FOSTERING AND ADOPTION SERVICES

A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services providing information on the outcome of the inspection of Fostering and Adoption Services by the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (The Care Commission).

After discussion and having heard the Section Head, Childcare, in further explanation, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to congratulate West Dunbartonshire Fostering and Adoption Team in achieving the National Standards for Fostering and Adoption Services; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

The meeting closed at 11.55 a.m.