

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held by video conference on Wednesday, 23 September 2020 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Provost William Hendrie and Councillors Jim Brown, Karen Conaghan, Ian Dickson, Diane Docherty, Daniel Lennie, Caroline McAllister, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, John Mooney, Sally Page and Martin Rooney, and Mrs Barbara Barnes, Mr Gavin Corrigan, Miss Ellen McBride and Ms Julia Strang.

Attending: Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; John McDonald, Head Teacher, Gartocharn Primary School; Andrew Brown, Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources; Claire Cusick, Senior Education Officer – Pupil Support; Julie McGrogan, Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning; Kathy Morrison, Senior Education Officer – Education, Learning & Attainment; Michelle Lynn, Assets Co-ordinator; Joe Reilly, Business Unit Finance Partner (Education); Alan Douglas, Legal Manager; and Scott Kelly, Committee Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Jim Finn and Miss Sheila Rennie.

Councillor Karen Conaghan in the Chair

STATEMENT BY CHAIR – AUDIO STREAMING

Councillor Conaghan, 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.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held on 11 March 2020 were submitted for approval. Following discussion, the Committee agreed to approve the Minutes as a correct record.

LOCAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR TEACHERS

The Minutes of Meeting of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers held on 17 March 2020 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 TO RAISE ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT IN WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE – UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on service recovery planning for the Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement and the Scottish Attainment Challenge in line with the Scottish Government's 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on preparing for the start of the new school term in August 2020' and 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): strategic framework for reopening schools, early learning and childcare provision'.

Following discussion and having heard the Head Teacher, Gartocharn Primary School, and relevant officers in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report and the recovery planning to support the Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement to deliver excellence and equity in West Dunbartonshire.

SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (SQA) EXAMINATION RESULTS 2020

The Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources provided a verbal update in relation to the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Examination Results 2020, it being noted that a briefing in relation to this matter had been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. In so doing, he informed the Committee:-

- (a) that as a result of the Cabinet Secretary's instruction on 11 August 2020 that candidates should not receive a lower grade than had been estimated by their teachers and schools, 97.7% of young people in West Dunbartonshire received their estimated grade with 2.3% receiving a higher grade;

- (b) that compared to last year's results performances had improved by 18% at Advanced Higher, by 16% at Higher, by 9% at National 5 and by 5% at National 4;
- (c) that 92% of presentations resulted in a passing grade; and
- (d) that at all levels, West Dunbartonshire outperformed the national average.

Following discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer in answer to a Member's questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that a report providing a full analysis of young people's performances would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee; and
- (2) otherwise to note the position in respect of the results.

EARLY YEARS IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update of the plan for the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in West Dunbartonshire Council.

Following discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Education, Learning & Attainment and the Assets Co-ordinator in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of Appendix 1 to the report, 'Early Learning & Childcare Phasing Plan 2018 – 2021'; and
- (2) to note the contents of Appendix 2 to the report, 'The Early Learning & Childcare Financial Phasing Plan 2018 – 2022'.

SUMMER PROGRAMME EVALUATION

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer:-

- (a) providing an update on the impact of plans to reduce holiday hunger across West Dunbartonshire Council during summer 2020 in light of COVID restrictions; and
- (b) informing and updating on the governance of funding allocations, spend and impact of projects.

Following discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Pupil Support in further explanation of the report and in answer to a Member's question, the Committee agreed:-

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

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 31 JULY 2020 (PERIOD 4)

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on the financial performance of Educational Services to 31 July 2020 (Period 4).

Following discussion and having heard the Business Unit Finance Partner (Education) and the Assets Co-ordinator in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the revenue account currently showed a projected annual adverse revenue variance of £1.046m (less than 0.5%) of which £0.633m (over 61%) was COVID-related; and
- (2) to note that the capital account showed a projected in-year adverse variance of £0.128m (0.85% of the budget), which includes COVID-related delays to three projects of £0.670m.

The meeting closed at 11.50 a.m.