

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Education Committee held within the Municipal Buildings, Station Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday 8th December, 1999.

**Present:** Provost Alistair Macdonald (LAB) and Councillors Daniel McCafferty (LAB), Mary Campbell (LAB), Anthony Devine (LAB), Mary Collins (LAB), Duncan McDonald (LAB), Linda McColl (LAB), Ronald McColl (SNP), Margaret McGregor (SNP), James Flynn (LAB) (substituting for Andrew White) and Connie O'Sullivan (LAB), Mr Ronald Alexander, Mrs Barbara Barnes, Miss Sheila Rennie, Father John McGorry and Ms Margaret Wallace.

**Attending:** Ian McMurdo, Director of Education and Leisure Services, David Logan, Principal Solicitor, Neil McKechnie and Frank Newall, Education and Leisure Services Managers, Anne Ritchie, Acting Head of Social Work and Donald Findlay, Manager - Property Services.

**Apologies for absence:** Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of James McElhill (SNP), Andrew White (LAB), John McCutcheon (SNP), James McCallum (LAB & CO-OP) and John Trainer (LAB).

**Councillor Daniel McCafferty in the Chair**

### MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of meeting of the Education Committee held on 27th October, 1999 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

### SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY RESULTS 1999

The Education and Leisure Services Department makes use of the services of the Education Management Information Service (EMIS) to evaluate and interpret the data provided on Scottish Qualifications Authority results. This data, used for comparison, is drawn from the results of fifteen authorities and therefore relates to a large and diverse sample. It also provides both the department and West Dunbartonshire schools with the opportunity to compare and interrogate their results with similarly achieving schools across Scotland taking into account the relevant social factors.

In this connection, Mr Bill Coyle, a member of EMIS, (in attendance for this item only), gave a presentation on West Dunbartonshire's results.

After hearing the Director and Mr Coyle in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions there was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Education and Leisure Services providing:-

- (1) an overview of the performance of pupils within West Dunbartonshire Council's schools in the Scottish Certificate of Education (SCE) examinations and in National Certificate modules in 1999; and
- (2) information on the performance of individual schools in the Scottish Certificate examinations and in National Certificate modules in 1999.

Thereafter, following discussion the Committee agreed:-

- (a) to note the Director's intention to submit a paper to a future meeting of the Committee outlining his plans on the way forward for identifying and disseminating good practice, with an inclusion of a data base which could be used as a springboard for discussions with teaching staff;
- (b) that the Director would make the necessary arrangements to hold a seminar for Members on the action taken to address the problems highlighted by the results obtained by EMIS;
- (c) that the Director would make the necessary arrangements to seek young people's views on the relevant issues within their schools before the aforementioned seminar took place; and
- (d) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

The Convener, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Mr Coyle in the appropriate terms. Mr Coyle then left the meeting.

### **YOUNG PEOPLE IN TROUBLE AND ALTERNATIVES TO EXCLUSION: A JOINT APPROACH**

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of Council held on 28th October, 1999 (**Volume pages 3951/52 refer**), there was submitted a joint report by the Director of Education and Leisure Services and the Acting Head of Social Work informing of progress made in addressing the problems of young people in trouble or at risk of exclusion from school through the implementation of the strategic joint approach by the Departments of Social Work and Housing and Education and Leisure Services.

Having heard Mr Newall and Ms Ritchie, Acting Head of Social Work in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the success of the initiative "Young People in Trouble and Alternatives to Exclusion: A Joint Approach"; and

- (2) to approve the continuation of the initiative and agree, in principle, the budgetary provision necessary to secure these resources in the longer term.

### **ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT INTO THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH SEVERE LOW INCIDENCE DISABILITIES**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Education and Leisure Services seeking approval to submit a response to the Advisory Committee Report, known as the Riddell Committee Report, into the education of children with severe low incidence disabilities which was published in September, 1999.

Following consideration the Committee agreed :-

- (1) to approve the contents of the report; and
- (2) that the report be forwarded to the Scottish Executive as West Dunbartonshire Council's response to the Advisory Committee Report.

### **SURPLUS PROPERTY**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Education and Leisure Services seeking approval to declare surplus the existing infant block of St. Mary's Primary School, Duntocher, at the completion of the current building works.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that the current infant block of St. Mary's Primary School, Duntocher, be declared surplus to the requirements of the Education and Leisure Services Department at the completion of the rationalisation of the school on one site; and
- (2) that the matter be remitted to the Policy and Resources Committee to determine the future of the said property.

### **SALE OF JANITORS' HOUSES**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Education and Leisure Services seeking approval to declare surplus the undernoted janitors' houses for the sole purpose of selling the properties to the sitting tenants:-

- (a) Knoxland Primary School, Leven Street, Dumbarton; and
- (b) St. Andrew's High School, Whitecrook Street, Clydebank.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to declare the aforementioned properties surplus to the requirements of the Education and Leisure Services Department with the sole purpose of selling the properties to the sitting tenants;
- (2) that, as a result of these specific circumstances, the normal procedures of offering the properties to other Council Departments be set aside in this instance;
- (3) that the Estates Section of the Economic; Planning and Environmental Services Department be instructed to carry out an open market valuation in terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 with the purpose of sale of these houses to the sitting tenants; and
- (4) to approve the deletion of the 'tied house' clause from the janitors' contracts, if the sale goes ahead.

Provost Macdonald left the meeting.

#### **NEW DEAL FOR SCHOOLS: CAPITAL GRANT 2000/2001**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Education and Leisure Services seeking approval for the Department's proposals for the New Deal for Schools Capital Grant 2000/2001.

Following discussion the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the projects to be funded from the New Deal for Schools Capital Grant 2000/2001, as detailed in the Appendix to the report; and
- (2) to note that investigations are under way as to the possibility of using New Deal Funds as matched funding in applying for a SportsScotland Lottery Grant.

#### **UPDATE ON CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUILDING PROGRAMME 1999/2000**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Education and Leisure Services providing up-to-date information on the status of Education Capital and Revenue Building Projects for 1999/2000 within the Education and Leisure Services Department and drawing attention to significant issues or problems with the progress of any particular project.

Having heard the Director of Education and Leisure Services and Mr Findlay, Manager - Property Services, in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

#### **EDUCATION SERVICE REVENUE BUDGET 1999/2000 VARIANCE REPORT TO 31 OCTOBER 1999**

There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Education and Leisure Services providing an update on the financial status of the Education Service Revenue Budget and providing details of performance up to 31st October, 1999.

### **CONSULTATION ON THE RE-STRUCTURING AND DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES WITHIN WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL: INTERIM REPORT**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Education and Leisure Services containing information on the progress of the informal consultation regarding the restructuring and development of Early Childhood Services within West Dunbartonshire Council.

Following discussion and having heard the Convener in further explanation, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

### **HMI INSPECTION REPORT - STANDARD INSPECTION OF LEVENVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALEXANDRIA**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Education and Leisure Services advising of a report published by the HM Inspectors of Schools following their Standard Inspection of Levenvale Primary School, Alexandria.

The Convener introduced Ms Isobel Leman, Head Teacher of Levenvale Primary School, to the meeting. Following discussion during which the Director advised that the issues highlighted in the inspection report would be addressed through normal channels, the Committee, agreed to note the report and joined the Convener and the Director in offering sincere congratulations to the staff and all associated with Levenvale Primary School for the high quality of their work as reflected in the report.

### **VALEDICTORY**

As this would be the last meeting of the Committee to be attended by Ms Angela McCulloch, Head of Section, Planning and Resources, the Convener, on behalf of the Committee took this opportunity to wish Ms McCulloch well in her new life in Spain and thanked her for her valuable contribution to the Department of Education and Leisure Services.

