

**EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

At a Hybrid Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 27 November 2024 at 10.00 a.m.

**Present:** Provost Karen Murray Conaghan and Councillors Fiona Hennebry, Gurpreet Singh Johal, David McBride, Michelle McGinty\*, Lauren Oxley, Martin Rooney, Gordon Scanlan, Hazel Sorrell, Clare Steel and Sophie Traynor, and Mrs Barbara Barnes, Mr Gavin Corrigan, Miss Ellen McBride, Ms Joanne McLaren\* and Ms Julia Strang.

\*Arrived later in the meeting.

**Attending:** 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, Asset Manager; 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 Councillors John Millar and Lawrence O'Neill, and Reverend Ian Miller.

**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 18 September 2024 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

## **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 implementing the service plan for excellence and equity.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note:-

- (1) the Service Excellence and Equity Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan 2024 (Appendix 1 to the report) aligned to statutory expectations for reporting and planning; and
- (2) the key activities delivered in session 2024/25 to further improve equity and excellence outcomes for children and young people.

## **SENIOR PHASE UPDATE**

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing updates on:-

- (a) the achievements of our young people through the Senior Phase curriculum for session 2023/24, and the progress with plans to ensure an equitable offer across all establishments; and
- (b) the recent Collaborative Improvement activity with the Association of the Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) and Education Scotland looking at work on skills frameworks.

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

- (1) to note the issue faced in presenting accurate data to the Committee on SQA attainment for session 2023/24;
- (2) to note progress with the development of a common Senior Phase timetable across all our secondary schools, and the provision of digital courses and Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) courses on offer in our schools; and
- (3) to note the findings and 'next steps' of the Collaborative Improvement report into the development of skills across the curriculum.

### **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 in further explanation and in answer to a Member's question, the Committee agreed to note progress to deliver the statutory entitlement of 1140 hours of high quality Early Learning and Childcare.

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

### **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 in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note progress on plans to continue developing and improving supports.

### **SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES – SCHOOLS COUNSELLING PROVISION IN WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL SCHOOLS**

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer informing on approaches to providing School Counselling Services and seeking approval to go to tender for these services.

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

- (1) to note approaches and need for counselling; and

- (2) the undertaking of procurement processes to secure a counselling provider to continue to support and meet the needs of our children and young people within West Dunbartonshire Council schools, and to delegate to officers the awarding of the contract, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

Note: Ms McLaren entered the meeting during consideration of this item.

### **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CAPITAL BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 31 AUGUST 2024 (PERIOD 5)**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the capital financial performance to 31 August 2024 of those services under the auspices of the Educational Services Committee.

After discussion and having heard the Business Unit Finance Partner (Education) and the Asset Manager in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that paragraph 3.2 of the report contained a typographical error and that the figure reported for the Revised Capital Budget applied to Period 5 and not Period 3;
- (2) to note the current position of the 2024/25 Educational Services capital budget; and
- (3) to note that the project life total was currently on track.

Note: Miss McBride left the meeting during consideration of this item.

### **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES REVENUE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 31 AUGUST 2024 (PERIOD 5)**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the revenue financial performance of Educational Services to 31 August 2024 (Period 5) and the forecast position at 31 March 2025.

Having heard the Business Unit Finance Partner (Education) in further explanation, the Committee agreed to note that the revenue account currently showed a projected annual adverse revenue variance of £0.134m, falling to £0.057m after use of an earmarked reserve for summer programme activities.

### **COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON**

Before closing the meeting, Councillor Steel, Chair, wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The meeting closed at 11.40 a.m.

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