

**15 September 2020 at 2 pm.**

A Remote Meeting of the **EDUCATION AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE**

**PRESENT**

Councillor McNally, Convener; Councillor Quigley, Vice-Convener; Councillors J. Ashraf, Barclay, Brannan-McVey, Burgess, Burrows, Campbell, Carragher, Douglas, Feeney, Fisher, Fotheringham, Gallacher, Goldie, Graham, Hogg, C. Johnston, T. Johnston, Jones, Kelly, Larson, Lennon, Linden, Logue, Magowan, Masterton, McKendrick, McLaren, McManus, McPake, McVey, Mooney, Stephen, Stocks and Wilson; Mr. D. Hannan, and Ms. L. McBride and Mr. I. Scott.

**CHAIR**

Councillor McNally (Convener) presided.

**ALSO PRESENT**

In accordance with Standing Order 64(A), Councillor Gourlay attended as a substitute for Councillor Castles.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

The Executive Director (Education and Families); Head of Children, Families, Justice and Social Work Services; Head of Education (Central); Head of Education (North); Head of Education (South); Business Finance Manager (Strategy); Continuous Improvement Officer and Democratic Services Manager.

**APOLOGIES**

Councillors Castles, Kerr, Shevlin, and Woods.

**CONVENER'S REMARKS**

The Convener, on behalf of the Education and Families Committee, expressed his gratitude to the employees of the Council, particularly those in the Education and Families service, who have worked in difficult circumstances, throughout the pandemic to ensure vital services and resources had been delivered.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN TERMS OF THE ETHICAL STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE ETC. (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000**

1. There were no declarations.

**COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY - EDUCATION AND FAMILIES**

2. There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Families) (1) highlighting the challenges presented to the Education and Families Service by the Covid-19 pandemic; (2) outlining the emergency response that the Council implemented following the closure of schools on 23 March; (3) informing of the development of recovery in services, in line with the evolving national guidance; (4) detailing a number of significant achievements during the lockdown period; (5) setting out the Service's recovery approach as part of the National Strategic Route Map; (6) enclosing, within Appendices to the report (a) Head Teacher/Head of Centre (HT/HOC) guidance document V5; (b) pan-Lanarkshire School's Agreement; (c) strategic framework for reopening schools and early

learning childcare provision, and (d) coronavirus (Covid-19) guidance on preparing for the start of the new school term in August 2020.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Education and Families Service response to the Covid-19 emergency be noted;
- (2) that the Services approach to the recovery of services, as Part of Phase 3 of the National Strategic Route Map be noted;
- (3) that the contents of the HT/HOC Guidance document V4 be noted;
- (4) that the pan-Lanarkshire Schools Agreement be noted;
- (5) that the excellent work of staff through the lockdown and recovery periods be endorsed, and
- (6) that the report be otherwise noted.

**CLUB365 MODEL AND RECOVERY PHASE**

3. There was submitted a report by the Head of Education (South) (1) detailing the background to the Council's Club365 initiative; (2) highlighting that the pandemic has caused more families than previously to experience poverty due to a number of issues; (3) informing that guidance published by the Scottish Government to assist local authorities to plan for the start of the new school term, outlines that many restrictions and actions would have a direct impact on the delivery model of Club365; (4) intimating that the Club365 activity, which brings children together from across the school communities does not comply with Government Guidance for Phase 3 of the recovery; (4) setting out alternative arrangements to ensure the continued delivery of Club365, and (5) proposing to implement a voucher scheme for Club365 on an interim basis for the financial year, as determined in the Council's budget setting process.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the proposed interim Club365 voucher scheme, as detailed within the report, be approved, and
- (2) that the report be otherwise noted.

**PROGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE IN EDUCATION AND FAMILIES**

4. There was submitted a report by the Head of Education (South) (1) providing an update on the organisational change to bring together Education, Children Services, Social Work and Criminal Justice as part of a new Education and Families Service, agreed by the Council in 2018; (2) reminding Committee that the key purpose of the Service had been to establish integrated systems and structures to improve services and outcomes for children, young people and families; (3) highlighting the progress, and implementation of new workforce structures - namely the restructuring and streamlining of central services, revision of management structures in schools and the implementation of an operating model facilitating critical collaborative practice across all parts of the Service; (4) emphasising the importance of collaborative work to ensure that all children have the opportunity to achieve their full potential, and (5) advising that the redesign of service activity has been achieved in line with outcomes required as part of the budget decisions previously taken by the Council.

**Decided:** that the report be noted.

**PO30.1 1140 EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE EXPANSION PROGRAMME UPDATE**

5. There was submitted a report by the Head of Education (North) (1) providing an update on the 1140 Hours Early Learning Centre (ELC) Expansion Programme within North Lanarkshire; (2) informing that the implementation of the expansion programme had been delayed due to Covid-19; (3) advising that the programme is now in the implementation stage; (4) intimating that, following a meeting of Gold Command in June 2020 the Council was proceeding towards implementation of 1140 Hours for all eligible children by September 2020; (5) detailing that a revised and updated cross boundary protocol had been agreed and signed off by the West Partnership; (6) highlighting that a higher than usual level of requests for places for vulnerable children had been received and is expected to continue; (6) seeking approval for the increase in the rate, per cohort, for day care provision in line with the equivalent service as outlined within the report; (7) summarising the financial position and (8) enclosing, within Appendices to the report, the supporting documentation.

Councillor McNally, seconded by Councillor Kelly, moved that the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

Councillor Gallacher, seconded by Councillor Douglas, moved that the report be approved with the inclusion of two additional recommendations, namely:-

- (a) agree that a full review of NLC 1140 Hours Programme is undertaken to identify potential issues with the policy; request that management respond to each issue identified to ensure that lessons are learned and to improve working relationships between the Council, funded providers and parents/guardians, and
- (b) agrees that the Convener of Families and Education writes to the Minister for Children and Young People on behalf of the Education and Families Committee to ask if there are limitations to the Scottish Government's Early Learning and Childcare Policy, in relation to "Funding Follows the Child" and if so, for the Minister to outline what these limitations are.

Thereon, in terms of Standing Order No. 39, the vote was taken by calling the roll.

On the roll being called:-

3 Members voted for the amendment as follows:-

Councillors Douglas, Gallacher and Wilson.

29 Members voted in favour of the motion, as follows:-

Councillors J. Ashraf, Barclay, Brannan-McVey, Burgess, Burrows, Campbell, Carragher, Fisher, Fotheringham, Goldie, Gourlay, Graham, C. Johnston, T. Johnston, Jones, Kelly, Larson, Linden, Logue, Magowan, Masterton, McManus, McNally, McPake, McVey, Mooney, Quigley, Stocks; D. Hannan.

3 Members having voted for the amendment and 29 Members having voted for the motion, the motion was accordingly declared carried.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the progress of the 1140 Hours ELC expansion programme be noted;
- (2) that the Council's plan to proceed with delivery of 1140 Hours by September 2020 be noted;
- (3) that the West Partnership Cross Boundary Protocol Agreement be noted;
- (4) that the change in policy, with regard to the rate applicable for day care provision, as detailed within the report be approved, and
- (5) that the current financial position of the programme be noted.

**At 5.10 pm, the meeting adjourned until 5.18 pm**

**IMPROVING DIGITAL LEARNING AND TACKLING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE**

6. There was submitted a report by the Head of Education (Central) (1) informing of the progress made in improving digital learning and tackling the digital divide; (2) highlighting the challenges to be addressed in order to achieve success; (3) advising that as a response to the Covid-19 emergency, plans had been accelerated for the development of digital education; (4) detailing the progress and development of digital education during the lockdown period; (5) seeking approval for the digital school plans and expansion of the digital classroom programmes, as part of the emerging recovery of education services in the Covid-19 period.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the progress made in the Digital School and Digital Classroom be noted;
- (2) that the progress in developing Digital Education during the lockdown period be noted, and
- (3) that the plans for the Digital School and the expansion of the Digital Classroom Programme as part of the emerging recovery of Education Services in the Covid-19 period, be approved.

**PO32.1 MENTAL HEALTH, WELLBEING AND RESILIENCE DELIVERY PLAN**

7. There was submitted a report by the Head of Education (North) (1) highlighting the need for the launch of a Mental Health Wellbeing and Resilience Delivery Plan to increase the focus on early intervention and prevention; (2) detailing that the Plan encompasses four key strands, namely (a) nurture and resilience, (b) positive mental health and suicide prevention, (c) mental health curriculum and (d) staff wellbeing, promoting positive mental health and emotional resilience; (3) informing that due to the impact of Covid-19, there had been a delay in the delivery of some actions, with some work streams being taken in a different direction than originally envisaged, and (4) attaching, as Appendices to the report, a number of documents supporting the information contained within the report.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the progress in relation to the delivery of the Mental Health Wellbeing and Resilience Delivery Plan, be noted, and
- (2) that the contents of the report be otherwise noted.

**IMPROVING FAMILY SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE EDGES OF CARE/REVIEW OF INTENSIVE SERVICES**

8. There was submitted a joint report by the Head of Children, Families and Justice Social Work Services/Chief Social Work Officer (1) providing an overview of key strands of work to improve local family support systems, particularly those designed to transform pathways and establish more effective preventative interventions and support for children and young people on the edges of care; (2) advising that the review identified key areas for improving service delivery, with 17 recommendations grouped under the overarching themes (a) strengthening the service framework; (b) meeting need and (c) enhancing linked education provision, and (3) summarising a range of actions and recommendations proposed to update and enhance the support highlighted in the recently completed review of intensive services.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the recommendations, as outlined in the report be approved, and
- (2) that a further progress report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

**ANNUAL BAD DEBT WRITE-OFF EXERCISE**

9. There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Families) (1) summarising the outstanding debtor accounts which were deemed uncollectable, following all attempts at recovery, or were considered uneconomically viable to continue pursuing, and (2) advising that the Head of Financial Solutions, in terms of her delegated authority, had written off debts with a value under £500, amounting to £11,047.50.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the decision of the Head of Financial Solutions, under delegated authority to write off debts with a value under £500, totalling £11, 047.50 be noted, and
- (2) that the report be remitted to the Finance and Resources Committee.

**REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

10. There was submitted an amended report by the Executive Director (Education and Families) (1) providing a summary of the financial performance of the Education and Families Service for the period 1 April 2020 to 24 July 2020 (Period 4); (2) highlighting major outturn variances; (3) advising of the projected outturn for the period 1 April to 24 July, and (3) informing that the overall projected outturn position for the Service included forecasted net additional cost as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, as detailed within Appendix 6 of the report.

**Decided:** that the report be noted.

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE EDUCATION AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE - RELIGIOUS REPRESENTATIVES**

11. There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Solutions (1) informing of the resignation of P.J. O'Maoil Mheana as the Third Religious Representative on the Committee; (2) outlining arrangements to fill the vacancy following his resignation, and (3) advising that a further report on the response to the public notice for nominations would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Convener, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Rev. O'Maoil Mheana for his Membership of the Education and Families Committee.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the resignation of Rev. P.J. O'Maoil Mheana, as the Third Religious Representative on the Committee be noted;
- (2) that the arrangements to fill the vacancy be noted, and
- (3) that a report detailing the response to the public notice for nominations be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.