

22 February 2022 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, Castles, Fisher, Fotheringham, Goldie, Graham, Hogg, C. Johnston, T. Johnston, Jones, Paul Kelly, Larson, Lennon, Linden, Loughran, Magowan, Masterton, McManus, McPake, McVey, Mooney, Shevlin, Stubbs, Watson and Woods; Mr. D. Hannan, L. McBride and Mr. I. Scott.

CHAIR

Councillor McNally (Convener) presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Executive Director (Education and Families); Head of Education (North) and Head of Education (Central); Head of Children and Families and Justice Social Work Services; Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions; Business Finance Manager (Strategy); Justice Manager, and Democratic Services Manager.

APOLOGIES

Councillors Anderson, Gallacher, Wilson, and G. Paterson.

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

1. Councillor Linden, by virtue of being a member of the Children's Services Partnership Board and the Integration Joint Board, declared a connection in respect of paragraph 7 and further declared that he believed that the connection was so sufficiently remote that it did not amount to an interest which precluded his participation in consideration of the item.

Councillor Watson, by virtue of being a member of the Children's Services Partnership Board and the Integration Joint Board, declared a connection in respect of paragraph 7 and further declared that he believed that the connection was so sufficiently remote that it did not amount to an interest which precluded his participation in consideration of the item.

Motion to Suspend Standing Orders

Following conclusion of the preceding item of business, Councillor Lennon, seconded by Councillor Larson, moved that Standing Order 15 be suspended to allow consideration of a matter which the Convener had ruled as not being urgent.

Thereon, in terms of Standing Order 39, the vote was taken by calling the roll.

On the roll being called, 12 Members voted for the suspension of Standing Orders as follows:-

Councillors Barclay, Fotheringham, Goldie, C. Johnston, T. Johnston, Larson, Lennon, Linden, Magowan, Masterton, McManus and Stubbs.

On the roll being called, 20 Members voted to not suspend Standing Orders as follows:-

Councillors Brannan-McVey, Burgess, Burrows, Campbell, Castles, Fisher, Graham, Hogg, Jones, Paul Kelly, Loughran, McNally, McPake, McVey, Mooney, Quigley, Shevlin, Watson, Woods and D. Hannan.

The motion for suspension of Standing Order 15 was supported by 12 votes and thus failed to obtain the necessary support of two thirds of the 32 Members present and voting.

The Convener exercised his discretion to vary the order of business as hereinafter minuted.

CONTRACTS AWARDED BELOW COMMITTEE APPROVAL THRESHOLD

2. There was submitted a report by the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions providing, within the Appendix to the report, details of a contract which had been awarded by him, under delegated authority, for works over £50,000 but not less than £500,000 in value during the period 1 October to 31 December 2021.

Decided: that the report be noted.

UNIVERSAL FREE SCHOOL MEALS 2022/23 UPDATE

3. There was submitted a report by the Head of Asset and Procurement Solutions (1) reminding Committee of the expansion programme of Universal Free School Meals to Primary 4 children in August 2021 and Primary 5 children in January 2022; (2) providing an update on the rollout of the programme within North Lanarkshire; (3) highlighting work successfully completed for the implementation of the roll out; (4) setting out the current and future revenue and capital spend, and (5) summarising the current position on the rollout of implementation of Universal Free Schools Meals for Primary 6 and 7 children, with the initial target date of August 2022 postponed until later in the parliamentary term.

Decided: that the report be noted.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE EDUCATION EMPLOYEES APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER AND 4 OCTOBER 2021 AND 20 JANUARY 2022

4. There was submitted the Minutes of the meeting of the Education Employees Appeals Sub-Committee held on 13 September and 4 October 2021 and 20 January 2022.

Decided: that the Minutes be approved.

RELIGIOUS REPRESENTATIVE

5. There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Solutions (1) advising of the resignation of the Roman Catholic Church representative, Mr William Cunningham, from the Education and Families Committee, and (2) informing that Mr Gerry McCormack had been nominated by the Diocese of Motherwell to fill the consequential vacancy, as an appointee by the Roman Catholic Church.

The Convener, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Mr Cunningham for his work whilst a member of the Committee.

Decided:

- (1) that the resignation of Mr William Cunningham, as the appointee of the Roman Catholic Church on the Education and Families Committee, be noted, and
- (2) that the Council be recommended to approve the appointment of Mr Gerry McCormack as the new appointee by the Roman Catholic Church on the Education and Families Committee, in place of Mr Cunningham.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER 2020/21

6. There was submitted a report by the Head of Children, Families and Justice Social Work Services/Chief Social Work Officer (1) advising that the Chief Social Work Officer of each local authority is required to provide an annual report; (2) attaching, as an Appendix to the report, the North Lanarkshire Chief Social Work Officer report for 2020/21, providing information on the delivery of statutory functions and performance and improvement activity across the range of Social Work services over that year; (3) explaining that the report also provides information on the wider governance and planning of Social Work provision within North Lanarkshire, including its key role in local partnerships, on both the national and local challenges impacting on the delivery of Social Work services, including those arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, which had a significant impact on the delivery and demand, and (4) highlighting that the report reflects Social Work's contribution to the Programme of Work, underpinning the "Plan for North Lanarkshire" and "Delivery for Communities", together with measures taken to ensure the coherence of service delivery and planning for Social Work following structural changes.

Decided:

- (1) that the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for 2020/21 be approved;
- (2) that it be noted that approval of the report would also be sought through the Adult Health and Social Care Committee, and
- (3) that the report be remitted to the Integration Joint Board.

Councillors Linden and Watson, prior to consideration of the following item of business, each having declared a connection by virtue of being a member of the Children's Services Partnership Board and the Integration Joint Board, further declared that they believed that they considered the connections so sufficiently remote that they did not preclude their participation in consideration of the matter.

KEEPING THE PROMISE: SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

7. There was submitted a report by the Head of Children, Families and Justice Social Work Services (1) detailing improvement activity to the Intensive Family Support Services; (2) providing an update on three key strands of work, namely Contextual Safeguarding, Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Support and Services Framework, and Youth Justice; (3) advising that these strands of work are routed in the Council's values and its approach to supporting families, parents and carers, who have been impacted by adversity, and (4) outlining the next steps to be undertaken on each of the strands of work that contribute to the wider work on health and wellbeing being taken forward within Health and Social Care.

Decided: that the report be noted.

TACKLING DOMESTIC ABUSE - UPDATE ON IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

8. There was submitted a report by the Head of Children, Families and Justice Social Work Services (1) providing an update on a range of improvement activity targeted at addressing domestic abuse and the structural inequalities that remain a key challenge within North Lanarkshire; (2) highlighting the impact on the lives of women, girls and the wider communities; (3) outlining partnership delivery arrangements and current work undertaken through the Violence Against Women Partnership to develop a comprehensive strategy and workplan, ensuring coherence of approach to improvement; (4) advising that this work addresses effective services for safety, support and recovery as well as prevention, early intervention and tertiary intervention, all critical steps towards addressing the underlying causes of domestic abuse, and (5) seeking approval for the development of the refreshed Violence Against Women Strategy and Action Plan.

Decided:

- (1) that the improvement activity and approach to developing a strategy and revised work plan including the next steps, as outlined within the report, be approved, and
- (2) that the development of a new Violence Against Women Strategy and Action Plan be approved.

COMMUNITY PAYBACK ORDER ANNUAL REPORT

9. There was submitted a report by the Head of Children, Families and Justice Social Work Services (1) advising of the Community Payback Order Annual Report for the financial year 2020/21; (2) informing that the Criminal (Procedure) Scotland Act 1995 placed a duty on local authorities to prepare an annual report outlining the operation of Community Payback Orders; (3) detailing within the report the progress made in delivery of the Services' statutory responsibilities for Community Payback Orders, particularly the associated unpaid work requirements within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic; (4) describing the Service adaptations and innovations made to continue to deliver support, and (5) attaching, as the Appendix to the report, the Annual Report.

Decided:

- (1) that the next steps outlined within the report be noted, and
- (2) that it be agreed that any further opportunities to support and partner with the Restorative Justice Service to maximise the benefits of Community Payback be considered.

1140 EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE EXPANSION PROGRAMME UPDATE

10. There was submitted a report by the Head of Education (North) (1) providing an update on the 1140 Hours Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme in North Lanarkshire; (2) setting out the stages of the infrastructure projects at Cumbernauld Village Family Learning Centre, Forgewood Family Learning Centre and Heathery Park Family Learning Centre, and (3) summarising the financial update as of period 9 in so far as it relates to the project.

Decided:

- (1) that the 1140 project update be noted;
 - (2) that the progress of Forgewood Family Learning Centre, Cumbernauld Village Family Learning Centre and Heathery Park Family Learning Centre be noted, and
 - (3) that the Early Learning and Childcare core function update be noted.
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GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD (GIRFEC)

11. There was submitted a report by the Head of Education (North) (1) informing of the implementation and development of the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) process; (2) providing an update on the results of the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire for children and young people from groups of specific interest; (3) outlining the process of identifying and monitoring progress for children with additional and intensive needs; (4) highlighting the wellbeing equality framework and progress in developing it on a multi-agency basis across the Children's Service Partnership, and (5) confirming that, recognising the importance of physical activity on wellbeing, an update report would be provided to a future meeting of the Committee on the proposals for outdoor education developments at Strathclyde Park.

Decided: that the contents of the report be noted.

PROPOSED RELOCATION OF BOTHWELLPARK HIGH SCHOOL TO ESTABLISH AN INTEGRATED 0-18 OFFERING FOR CHILDREN WITH COMPLEX NEEDS

12. There was submitted a report by the Head of Education (North) (1) summarising the outcome of the statutory consultation process for the relocation of pupils from Bothwellpark High School, Motherwell to the Edward Lawson Centre, Wishaw; (2) detailing formal feedback from Education Scotland addressing the educational aspects of the new proposals; (3) outlining that the Service responses to the key points raised by Education Scotland were included as part of the formal outcome report; (4) seeking approval to proceed with the relocation proposals, as outlined within the report, and (5) attaching a number of appendices supporting the narrative contained within the report.

Decided:

- (1) that a review of the statutory consultation outcome report be noted, and
- (2) that the relocation of secondary age pupils from Bothwellpark High School to the Edward Lawson Centre, Wishaw be approved.

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

13. There was submitted a report by the Executive Director, Education and Families providing a summary of the financial performance of the Education and Families Service for the period 1 April 2021 to 7 January 2022 (Period 10) illustrating the projected outturn as at 31 March 2022, with major outturn variances highlighted and explained as per the Council's approved financial regulations.

Decided:

- (1) that the financial position of the Education and Families Revenue Budget be noted, and
- (2) that the content of the report be otherwise noted.

REVIEW OF THE NORTH LANARKSHIRE SCHEME OF DEVOLVED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

14. There was submitted a report by the Executive Director, Education and Families (1) providing an update on work undertaken by the Service to review and implement an updated Scheme of Devolved School Management; (2) intimating that the review of the scheme be completed, in accordance with Scottish Government and COSLA guidelines, by April 2022; (3) outlining the steps taken so far and the areas of activity already shaped by prior decisions made by this Committee; (4) highlighting themes being explored along with timescales in order to comply with the requirements, and (5) stating that the

scheme would require to be updated in the near future, following implications of changes to a number of funding arrangements made by the Scottish Government in its Programme for Government.

Decided:

- (1) that the actions taken by the Service, in preparation for the roll-out of an updated Scheme of Devolved School Management from 1 April 2022, be noted, and
- (2) that a further progress report in relation to the further development of devolved school management be submitted to the Committee in due course.

CONTRACTS AWARDED UNDER CHIEF OFFICER APPROVAL

15. There was submitted a report by the Head of Education (North) providing, within the appendices to the report, details of the contracts which had been awarded by him, under delegated authority, during the period May to December 2021.

Decided: that the report be noted.

VALIDECTORY

The Convenor gave thanks on behalf of himself and the Vice Convenor to all Committee members and staff for their hard work and support and wished the Vice Convenor well on her retirement.