

## EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 18 February 2025. Minute of Meeting of the EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Allard, Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Fairfull, Grant, MacGregor, McLeod, Radley and Mrs Stewart. External Members:- Ms Danielle Barclay (Parent Representative - Nursery / Primary), Mr Doug Haywood (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools), Ms Jacqueline Munro (Teacher Representative - Secondary Schools), Dr Alison Murray (Parent Representative - Secondary), Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative) and Mrs Hilda Smith (Church of Scotland representative) (External Members for articles 1 to 7 only).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

1. Ms Munro made a transparency statement in respect of item 9.2 (Inspection Reporting), advising that she was employed at Harlaw Academy which was mentioned in the report but that she did not consider that the content of the report required her to make a declaration of interest. She therefore would remain in the meeting for that item.

### MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

2. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 26 November 2024 for approval.

#### **The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the minute as a correct record.

### COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

3. The Committee had before it the business planner as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance.

#### **The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) in relation to item 31 (Northfield Asset Review), to note that the Executive Director Families and Communities would liaise with the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to ensure that the Community Council were included in the engagement;
- (ii) in relation to the School Streets pilot which had been considered at the recent Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee meeting, to note that the Executive Director Families and Communities had undertaken to provide a service update to

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Members of Education and Children's Services Committee on the progress of the pilot; and

(iii) to otherwise note the planner.

**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK/NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK PROGRESS UPDATE - CORS/25/035**

4. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Corporate Services which presented (a) the status of key quarterly and annual performance measures relating to the Education and Lifelong Learning and Children's and Families Clusters, (b) early reflections against the initial release of Curriculum for Excellence data pending further releases through the Broad General Education Benchmarking Tool, and (c) a Progress Update in respect of Aberdeen City Council's National Improvement Framework Plan 2024/25.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the information contained in the report appendices.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) in relation to page 39 of the report, to note that officers would ascertain where apprenticeships sat within the data and provide this information to Members outwith the meeting;
- (ii) in relation to page 46 of the report and the deep dive being undertaken in relation to the reasons for not bringing cases to a Child Protection Planning meeting within the expected timescales, to note that an update on this work could be provided in the Bairns Hoose report, due to Committee in June 2025; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the report.

**INSPECTION REPORTING - F&C/25/029**

5. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which detailed the outcome of inspection reports published by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) and The Care Inspectorate since the last meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee.

Members asked a number of questions of officers and the Head Teachers in attendance, particularly in relation to the action plans appended to the report, and the continued liaison between Aberdeen City Council officers and Little Clouds Nursery following a recent incident.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

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- (a) note the content of the report;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to continue to support Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings and schools to implement continuous improvement in keeping with agreed Quality Improvement Frameworks approved at Committee in July 2024; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to utilise learning from the National Thematic Report: Local authority approaches to support school improvement to inform the development of the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Plan and Quality Improvement Framework for 2025/26.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that officers would circulate the more detailed plan for Dyce Academy to Members outwith the meeting;
- (ii) to note that the Executive Director Families and Communities would liaise with the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord in respect of a briefing for Members in advance of the next Committee meeting to provide an update on the various works being undertaken in schools, such as the work due to commence in Harlaw Academy;
- (iii) to note that there was an error in the report and that recommendation (c) was to be removed; and
- (iv) to otherwise approve the recommendations.

**OPTIONS TO RATIONALISE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE SETTINGS - F&C/25/001**

6. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which presented options in respect of rationalising Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings in order to meet demand, maximise resources and achieve best value.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee consider the options presented and approves the amended Early Learning and Childcare delivery models, set out in Appendix 2 of this report, from August 2025, based on demand.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that officers had undertaken to provide detail to Members outwith the meeting on what the percentage split was between term-time, full day and fully flexible placements across the city; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendation.

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**UNCRC PLAN - F&C/25/024**

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which presented a refreshed Local Authority Plan for implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) following publication of Statutory Guidance on Parts 2 and 3 of the Act.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) endorse the UNCRC Plan to support the Council's ongoing compliance with the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to routinely update the Plan based on an ongoing review of legal judgements and advise Committee of any required changes to the Plan through a service update.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning had undertaken to make contact through the ASN network to ascertain if there was good practice available in other areas which could be taken on board in Aberdeen in respect of advocacy for children and young people who were not care experienced/part of the child protection process; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

**At this juncture, the External Members left the meeting.**

**THE CHILDREN (CARE AND JUSTICE) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2024 - F&C/25/011**

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which sought to provide assurance that as far as was currently possible the relevant planning and scoping activity was being progressed to fully consider the implementation of the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee –

- (a) note the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 received Royal assent in June 2024;
- (b) note the implications on systems, processes and resources, as far as they were currently known, of the enactment of the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024;
- (c) note the action plan document attached as Appendix 1 to the report;
- (d) note that the ending of placing children in Young Offender Institutions came into effect in August 2024; and

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- (e) instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to provide Committee with a service update in the planning for implementation of the Act once the plan for enactment and associated funding was made known by the Scottish Government.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to approve recommendations (a) to (d);
  - (ii) to instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to write to Natalie Don-Innes, Minister for Children, Young People and The Promise, following consultation with the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee and the Convener of the Education and Children's Services Committee, requesting an update on the implementation plan and required funding; and
  - (iii) to instruct the Chief Officer – Children's Social Work and Family Support to report to this Committee once the plan for enactment and associated funding was made known by the Scottish Government.
- **COUNCILLOR MARTIN GREIG, Convener**