

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 8 November 2022. Minute of Meeting of the EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Davidson (as substitute for Councillor van Sweeden), Grant, Henrickson (as substitute for Councillor Radley for part of the meeting), Macdonald, MacGregor, McLeod and Radley (for part of the meeting). External Members:- Mrs Frances Cardno (Parent Representative - Primary Schools/ASN) (for articles 1 to 12), Mr Michael Crawford (Parent Representative - Secondary / ASN) (for articles 1 to 12), Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative) (for articles 1 to 12), Mr Madhav Regmi (Third Religious Representative) (for articles 1 to 12), Miss Pamela Scott (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools) (for articles 1 to 12) and Mrs Hilda Smith (Church of Scotland representative) (for articles 11 and 12).

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.

DETERMINATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1. The Convener advised that he would shortly be circulating two notices of motion, the first in his own name, and the second a joint notice of motion with Councillor Brooks as a matter of urgency in terms of Section 50(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, noting that both items had significant recent public interest and therefore he felt both matters required to be considered at the meeting.

The Committee resolved:-
to note the position.

URGENT NOTICE OF MOTION BY CONVENER - NORTHFIELD ACADEMY

2. The Committee had before it the following urgent notice of motion by the Convener:-

“That the Committee:-

- (a) welcome the continued willingness of senior management in the Education Service to continue engagement and collaboration with EIS union colleagues;
- (b) welcome that the Education Service continues to work with the whole Northfield Academy school community, including the young people, to support further improvement in the best interests of all;
- (c) note and welcome the information that there have been zero incidents of harm reported at the school since August 2022;

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- (d) note and welcome that the young people at Northfield Academy are keen to work with senior staff to celebrate their many achievements; and
- (e) instruct the Chief Officer - Education to provide a verbal update to the next Committee on continued progress at Northfield Academy.”

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the notice of motion.

URGENT NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR BROOKS AND THE CONVENER - KINGSFORD NURSERY

3. The Council had before it the following urgent joint notice of motion by Councillor Brooks and the Convener in the following terms:-

“That the Committee:-

- (a) express sincere regret about the recent case at Kingsford Nursery and sympathise with the parents and family and others involved;
- (b) agree the safety of children in our care is of paramount importance;
- (c) note the involvement of the Care Inspectorate and their reported finding of a ‘failure to protect the toddler from risk of harm’;
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to ascertain the confidence of staff in following agreed Council policies designed to keep children safe;
- (e) instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to review door security arrangements at all early years settings; and
- (f) instruct a report back on the above at the next Education and Children's Services Committee detailing the outcome of the above instructions.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the notice of motion.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

4. In relation to item 10.2 (School Estate Plan – Implementation Plan), the following statements of transparency were noted, with all Members considering that these did not amount to interests which needed to be declared, nor which would prevent them from participating in that item of business:-

- Mrs Frances Cardno advised that she had children who attended Forehill School and Oldmachar Academy which were referred to within the report.
- Mr Michael Crawford advised that he had children at Airyhall School and Cults Academy, and his wife was an Active Schools Assistant supporting Cults and Lochside ASG schools.

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- Councillor Blake advised that she had children who attended Cults School and Cults Academy.
- Councillor Brooks advised that he had a child who attended Cults Academy.
- Councillor Grant advised that he had children at Riverbank School.
- The Vice Convener advised that she had a child who attended the Early Learning and Childcare provision at Gilcomstoun School.

In relation to item 10.3 (Update of Gaelic Medium Education), the Vice Convener advised that although her child attended the Early Learning and Childcare Provision at Gilcomstoun School, she did not attend the GME provision and so the Vice Convener did not consider that this amounted to an interest which required to be declared and which would prevent her from participating in that item of business.

MINUTE OF EDUCATION OPERATIONAL DELIVERY COMMITTEE OF 8 SEPTEMBER 2022

5. The Committee had before it the minute of the Education Operational Delivery Committee meeting of 8 September 2022 for approval.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

6. The Committee had before it the planner of committee business, as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to agree to remove item 12 (National Hub for Reviewing and Learning from the Deaths of Children and Young People) from the planner;
- (ii) in relation to item 31 (Pupil Climate Change Group - Impact of Funding), to note that the Chief Officer – Education would include detail of the ideas and solutions provided by schools, for example, through their eco-committees, as part of the report back in March 2023;
- (iii) in relation to item 46 (Free School Meals Annual Update), to note that the Chief Officer – Education would liaise with the Chief Officer – Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to ascertain if either a report or a service update could be provided in relation to the work that was being done around the cost of living crisis, separate to the work around providing free school meals; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the planner.

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2021-22 ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT DATA PERFORMANCE REPORT - CUS/22/240

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Executive which provided Members with oversight of 2021-22 Senior Phase data, Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) outcomes, and current in year progress towards the targets outlined in the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan 2022/23.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the content of the report presenting the 2021-22 pre-review Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and Insight Tool outcomes, provisional Curriculum for Excellence data for the same period and live attendance and exclusion data;
- (b) note the content of Appendix A, outlining the progress of actions supporting delivery of the National Improvement Framework Plan 2022/23; and
- (c) provide comment on the approach taken to presenting the live data within the report to inform future reporting styles.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in relation to page 58 of the report and senior and middle leadership development, to note that the Chief Officer – Education would include figures as to the numbers taking up the opportunity to engage with quality professional learning in the next report due to Committee in January 2023; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

CLUSTER RISK REGISTERS - EDUCATION AND INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S & FAMILY SERVICES - CUS/22/233

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Executive which presented the Cluster Risk Registers and Assurance Maps in accordance with the Education and Children's Services Committee Terms of Reference to provide assurance that risks were being managed effectively within each Cluster.

Members asked a number of questions in relation to the risks relating to child migration.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the Cluster Risk Register and Assurance Maps set out in Appendices A, B and C.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in relation to the Child Migration risk, to note that the Chief Officer – Integrated Children's and Family Services would provide further detail to Members outwith the meeting, to include information on the work being done by Community Planning Aberdeen; and
- (ii) to note the risk registers and assurance maps.

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HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUMMIT - OPE/22/249

9. With reference to article 9 of the minute of the meeting of the Education Operational Delivery Committee of 8 September 2022, the Committee had before it a report by the Chief Executive which addressed the instruction that the Chief Officer – Education consider the data shared at that meeting in relation to health and wellbeing and plan next steps by holding a multi-agency Health and Wellbeing Summit, with a report back to Committee on the outcomes.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the approach taken to delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Summit held on 14 October 2022;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to establish a Mental Health Collaborative to focus on positive mental health from birth to end of life;
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to establish an aligned Youth Taskforce to inform the work of the Mental Health Collaborative; and
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to report on progress within one calendar year.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in relation to section 3.8 of the report, and the development of materials to support an improved, collective understanding of adolescent brain development, to request that these materials also be shared with the Committee, and that a workshop be arranged for Members; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

SCHOOL ESTATE PLAN - IMPLEMENTATION PLAN - RES/22/242

10. With reference to article 14 of the minute of the meeting of the Education Operational Delivery Committee of 8 September 2022, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Resources which presented the draft timeline for implementing the recommended actions from the School Estate Plan, agreed by the Education Operational Delivery Committee at its meeting in September.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to implement the School Estate Plan in accordance with the timeline presented at Appendix 1 of the report.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would incorporate an overview of previous instructions and schools where work had already commenced in the annual update of the School Estate Plan to ensure that Members had oversight of all projects;

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- (ii) to note that officers would look at the language used in consultation documentation to ensure that it was easily accessible for parents, and that they would meet with the Aberdeen City Parent Forum ahead of consultation being undertaken;
- (iii) to note the request from the Aberdeen City Parent Forum that officers provide further detail at its meeting in December around the accessibility of schools and how this will be assessed;
- (iv) to note that the Chief Officer - Education would issue further communication to schools and Parent Councils to promote the School Estate Plan consultation link;
- (v) to thank officers for the considerable effort in preparing the next stage of the School Estate Plan, and note the proposed Implementation Plan and timescales;
- (vi) to agree that the 38 separate instructions within the implementation plan will be reported back to future meetings of the Education and Children's Committee as a combination of updates to the plan and separate standalone reports; and
- (vii) to note that the approved motion in September 2022 included an instruction to officers to report on the feasibility study to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools in the Northfield ASG and Oldmachar ASG areas and to agree that officers should fully explore and exhaust all options in order to avoid any such school closures where possible.

UPDATE OF GAELIC MEDIUM EDUCATION - OPE/22/241

11. With reference to article 8 of the minute of the meeting of the Education Operational Delivery Committee of 26 January 2022, the Committee had before it a report by the Chief Executive which presented the outcomes of an evaluation of the current approach to the delivery of Gaelic Medium Education in order to understand the relatively low demand for provision in Aberdeen City with a view to taking action to increase uptake.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the outcome of the online survey conducted contained in Appendix A and high level evaluation undertaken by the Education Service contained in Appendix B;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to review and enhance how Gaelic Medium Provision was promoted across the city;
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to continue to work with partners to fill the vacant posts in Gaelic Medium provision;
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to undertake a statutory public consultation commencing 16 January 2023 on the proposal to change the catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education provision at Hazlehead Academy and Gilcomstoun School, to align with the boundaries of Aberdeen City (i.e. to propose a city wide catchment area for GME provision); and
- (e) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report back to the Committee on the outcomes of the consultation at its next available meeting following conclusion of the consultation process.

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The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the assurance from officers that there would be monthly meetings, involving GME parents and learners, to learn from their experience and to promote the service more widely; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

INSPECTION REPORTING - OPE/22/234

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Executive which detailed how Aberdeen City schools and Early Learning and Childcare settings had engaged with His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) and The Care Inspectorate since July 2022.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the content of the report;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to continue to support Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings and schools to implement continuous improvement in keeping with the Quality Frameworks; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to monitor progress against the action plans put in place to realise improvements at Stompers and Flexible Childcare and report progress towards achieving the actions within two committee cycles.

At this juncture, it was noted that recommendation (c) should also have referred to Walker Road School, as the action plan for that school was appended to the report.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations, subject to adding 'and Walker Road School' at recommendation (c).

At this juncture, the External Members of the Committee departed the meeting.

CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22 - OPE/22/246

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Executive which presented the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for year 2021/22. The report informed Members of the role and responsibilities exercised by the Chief Social Work Officer; provided information on statutory decision making in the period; and gave a progress report on key areas of social work provision within Aberdeen City.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the content of the Annual Report, as attached at Appendix 1.

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The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

KEEPING THE PROMISE - YEAR ONE OF PLAN 21-24 - OPE/22/244

14. With reference to article 7 of the minute of the Operational Delivery Committee minute of 18 November 2021 the Committee had before it a report by the Chief Executive which provided an update on progress with the Council's implementation of the Scottish Government's Plan 21-24 to #KeepThePromise.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note and endorse progress and activities against the national Plan 21-24 to #KeepThePromise;
- (b) note the local progress made in Year One of Plan 21-24 as outlined in the appendix report (Appendix 1);
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Integrated Children's and Family Services to provide a progress report in Autumn 2023 in relation to the partnership's implementation of Plan 21-24; and
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer – Integrated Children's and Family Services to provide a report in July 2023 in relation to the partnership's plans for the use of Aberdeen City's share of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR CHILD PROTECTION IN SCOTLAND 2021 - OPE/22/243

15. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Executive which provided an update on progress with the implementation of the new National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021.

The report recommended:-

that Committee note the progress of the implementation of the National Guidance to date and be assured that the Child Protection Committee (CPC) would continue to oversee the implementation of the identified areas requiring local development.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

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SECURE CARE - CHILDREN'S RIGHTS - OPE/22/245

16. With reference to article 10 of the minute of the meeting of the Public Protection Committee of 7 December 2021, the Committee had before it a report by the Chief Executive which provided an update on the use of Secure Care and compliance with the Secure Care regulations.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the report;
- (b) note the 'Secure Care Pathway Review' thematic inspection currently being undertaken by the Care Inspectorate and instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to report back to Committee on the findings of the inspection when it was published in Autumn 2023 and learning for Aberdeen City; and
- (c) request that the Chief Social Work Officer report to Committee on the provisions of the Children's Care and Justice Bill and their implications for practice in Aberdeen City.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

- **COUNCILLOR MARTIN GREIG, Convener**