

Education and Children's Services Committee Annual Effectiveness Report 2022/2023



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1. Introduction from Convener

- 1.1 This is the first annual effectiveness report for Aberdeen City Council's Education and Children's Services Committee (ECS). These reports inform the review of the Council's Scheme of Governance. They enable officers to identify any changes that are required, for example, to the Committee Terms of Reference.
- 1.2 The ECS Terms of Reference were considered earlier this year as part of the 2023 Scheme of Governance Review. No changes were made as a result of the 2023 review. The use of the Terms of Reference will be monitored in the coming year in order to continue the review process into 2024.
- 1.3 Over the reporting period, the Committee has worked together in an effective and constructive way. It is important to recognise and appreciate the powerful spirit of cooperation that is shared by everyone involved in the care of young people in the city. Thank you.

Councillor Martin Greig

Convener – Education and Children's Services Committee

2. The Role of the Committee

PURPOSE OF COMMITTEE

To advise on and discharge the Council's functions as:

- an education authority as set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and all other relevant legislation and regulations where not otherwise delegated; and
- a social work authority as set out in the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 and all other relevant legislation and regulations where not otherwise delegated, in relation to children.

The Committee will also:

- monitor the delivery of educational services undertaken as education authority (including community learning and development) and children's services provided by Integrated Children's and Family Services;
- receive assurance on the statutory and regulatory duties placed on the Council for Child Protection and Corporate Parenting;
- make recommendations in respect of school property matters to the Finance and Resources Committee;
- scrutinise performance; and
- agree changes such as school zoning arrangements (within set budgets), or make recommendations to another committee, for improvements to functions related to education in order to ensure best value and delivery of the Council's agreed outcomes, commissioning intentions, service specifications and service standards.

REMIT OF COMMITTEE

1. Service Delivery and Performance

1.1 The Committee will, in respect of educational services (early years, schools and community learning and development) and children's services provided by Integrated Children's and Family Services and services delivered within the school estate:-

- 1.1.1 oversee, and make decisions relating to, service delivery (such decisions including those relating to population changes);
- 1.1.2 approve options to improve/transform service delivery relative to the functions of the Council as education authority and social work authority;
- 1.1.3 scrutinise operational performance and service standards in line with the Performance Management Frameworks and consider recommendations for improvements where required;
- 1.1.4 receive the cluster risk registers relative to its remit and scrutinise to ensure assurance of the controls in place;
- 1.1.5 approve all policies and strategies relative to its remit; and
- 1.1.6 receive reports on school inspections and peer reviews in order to ensure best practice and note any resultant improvement actions arising from those inspections and reviews.

- 1.2 In undertaking the aspects at 1.1, the Committee will ensure that it is acting within the budget set by Council and is supporting the delivery of the Council's agreed outcomes, commissioning intentions and service standards.
- 1.3 The Committee may make recommendations to the appropriate committee(s) or sub committee(s) on matters affecting its remit where the authority to approve sits within the remit of another committee or sub committee.

2. Child Protection

The Committee will receive assurance from the Child Protection Committee and the Children's Services Board on:

- 2.1 Services delivered to children and young people in need of care and protection including care experienced young people, including:
 - 2.1.1 delivery of national initiatives and local implications;
 - 2.1.2 learning from learning reviews;
 - 2.1.3 quality assurance;
 - 2.1.4 training and development; and
 - 2.1.5 local evidence-based initiatives;
- 2.2 effective working across child protection; and
- 2.3 statistics relating to the Child Protection Register and children and young people for whom the Council has Corporate Parenting responsibilities, whilst noting that it has no remit to challenge entries.

The Committee will also:

- 2.4 receive assurance on the Council's compliance with statutory duties in respect of child poverty; and
- 2.5 consider the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report.

EXTERNAL MEMBERSHIP

3. The Committee's membership will include seven persons who are not members of the Council but who have full membership of the Committee and voting rights in connection with advising on and discharging the functions of the Council as Education Authority only. The seven external members will be appointed by the Council at its statutory meeting (or other meeting as appropriate) as follows:-
 - 3.1 three persons representing religious bodies in accordance with the requirements of s124(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973; and
 - 3.2 in accordance with the discretion conferred by s124(3) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:

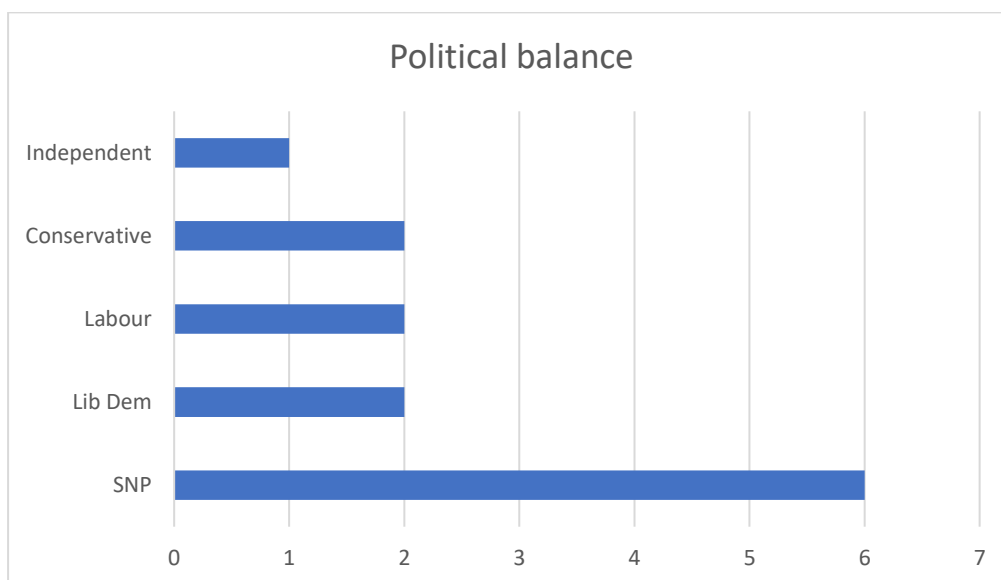
- 3.2.1 two teachers employed in educational establishments managed by the Council and nominated by the Teachers' Consultative Forum, comprising one representative from primary (including nursery) and one representative from secondary; and
- 3.2.2 two parent representatives, selected by the Aberdeen City Parent Council Forum from within its own membership, comprising one representative from primary (including nursery) and one representative from secondary.

Executive Lead: Interim Director of Children's and Family Services

3. Membership of the Committee during 2022/2023

3.1 The Education and Children’s Services Committee has 20 members - 13 Elected Members and 7 External Members.

3.2 The Committee composition is presented below:-



3.3 The Committee has seven External Members (who have full voting rights) as set out below:-

Mrs Frances Cardno	Parent Representative (Primary / ASN)
Mir Michael Crawford	Parent Representative (Secondary/ASN)
Mr John Murray	Roman Catholic Representative
Mr Mike Paul	Teacher Representative (Secondary)
Mr Madhav Regmi	Third Religious Representative
Miss Pamela Scott	Teacher Representative (Primary)
Mrs Hilda Smith	Church of Scotland Representative

4. Membership Changes

- 4.1 Councillor Macdonald was a member of the Committee until the meeting of 24 January 2023, following which Councillor Lawrence joined the Committee. Councillor Lawrence stepped down from the Committee following the meeting of 4 July 2023. Councillor Boulton joined the Committee from the meeting of 12 September 2023.

5. Member Attendance

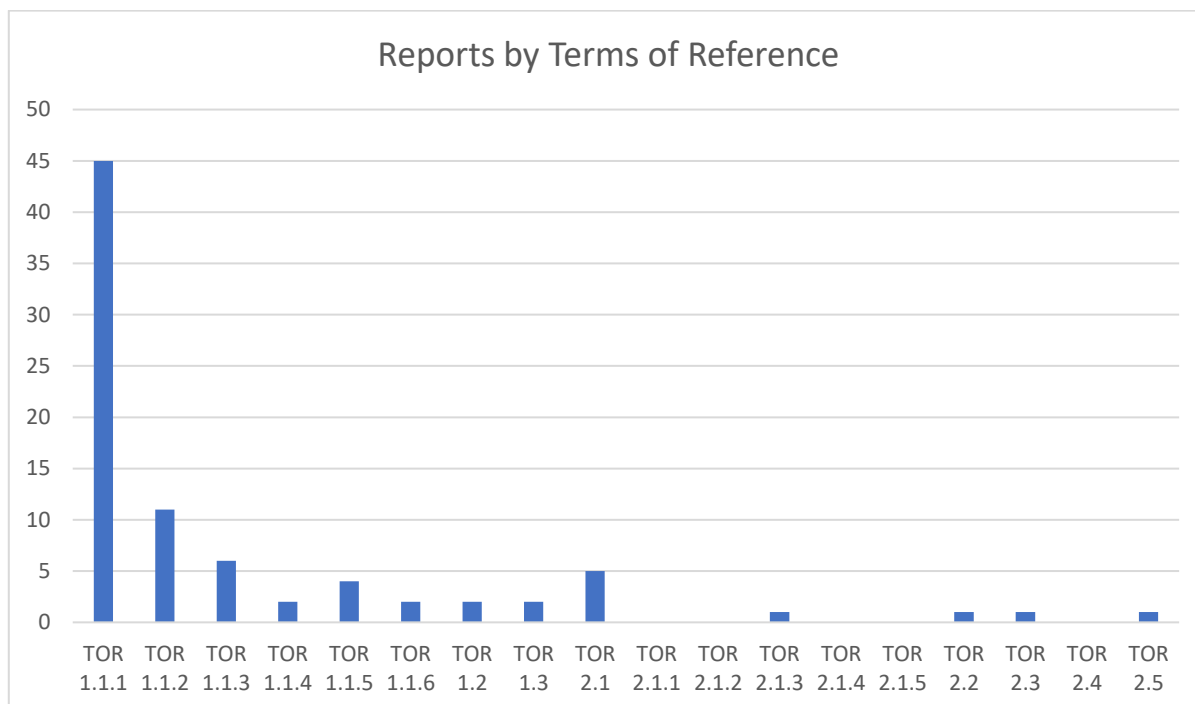
Member	Total Anticipated Attendances	Total Attendances	Substitutions
Councillor Martin Greig	7	7	
Councillor Jessica Mennie	7	7	
Councillor Gill Al-Samarai	7	6	Councillor Alex Nicoll
Councillor Kate Blake	7	7	
Councillor Marie Boulton	1	1	
Councillor Desmond Bouse	7	7	
Councillor Richard Brooks	7	7	
Councillor Hazel Cameron	7	7	
Councillor Ross Grant	7	6	Councillor Gordon Graham
Councillor Graeme Lawrence	4	3	Councillor Barney Crockett
Councillor Sandra Macdonald	2	2	
Councillor Neil MacGregor	7	7	
Councillor Ken McLeod	7	6	Councillor Emma Farquhar
Councillor Miranda Radley	7	7	
Councillor Kairin van Sweeden	7	5	Councillor Derek Davidson Councillor Alex McLellan
Mrs Frances Cardno	7	7	
Mr Michael Crawford	7	6	
Mr John Murray	7	6	
Mr Mike Paul	7	3	
Mr Madhav Regmi	7	6	
Miss Pamela Scott	7	5	Mr Doug Haywood
Mrs Hilda Smith	7	6	

6. Meeting Content

6.1 During the 2022/2023 reporting period (14 October 2022 to 14 October 2023), the Committee had 7 meetings and considered a total of 69 reports.

6.2 Terms of Reference

6.2.1 The following chart details how reports aligned to the Terms of Reference (set out at section 2 above) for the Committee.



6.2.2 During the course of 2022/2023 the Committee received reports under the majority of the main Terms of Reference which indicates that the Committee has discharged its role effectively throughout the course of the reporting period. The majority of reports fell under TOR 1.1.1 – “Oversee, and make decisions relating to, service delivery (such decisions including those relating to population changes)”, which is understandable given the nature of reports presented to Committee this year and the vast amount of work being undertaken by officers to review various aspects of Education and Children’s Services.

6.2.3 It is noted that a number of reports have been listed under more general Terms of Reference, for example, 1.1.1 as set out above, when some of the more specific TOR could have also applied. Officers have undertaken to monitor this next year to ensure that all applicable TOR are reflected. Although there are some TOR which have not been utilised this year, it is not anticipated that these require to be reviewed and altered, as the monitoring work should ensure that they are used in future.

6.2.4 As the committee structure was reviewed in late 2022, very few changes to the Terms of Reference (TOR) were made following the June 2023 Scheme of Governance review,

and no changes were made to the Education and Children’s Services Committee TOR. The new Terms of Reference will continue to be monitored throughout the year, in preparation for the 2024 Scheme of Governance review.

7. Reports and Decisions

7.1 The following information relates to the committee reports and Notices of Motion presented to Committee throughout the reporting period, as well as the use of Standing Orders and engagement with members of the public.

	Total	Total Percentage of Reports
Confidential Reports	0	0%
Exempt Reports	0*	0%
Number of reports where the Committee amended officer recommendations	2	3%
Number of reports approved unanimously	63	96%
Number of reports or service updates requested during the consideration of another report to provide additional assurance and not in business planner	3**	N/A
Number of reports delayed for further information	0	0
Number of times the Convener has had to remind Members about acceptable behaviour in terms of the Code of Conduct	0	N/A
Late reports received (i.e. reports not available for inspection at least 3 clear days before the meeting)	1***	1%
Number of referrals to Council under SO 34.1	0	0

* There were no exempt reports, however there were two exempt appendices – the Newhills and Oldmachar business cases

** Three additional reports were requested – a report on the scope for an evaluation of the Early Learning and Childcare service; a follow-up report on the evaluation of Early Learning and Childcare; and a report back in relation to the MCR Pathways schools and Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) allocation

***The late report was presented to the Special Education and Children’s Services Committee meeting of 30 March 2023, and could not be issued in line with usual deadlines due to an embargo on the inspection report to be considered

Notices of Motion, Suspension of Standing Orders, Interface with the Public	
Number of Notices of Motion to Committee	3*
Number of times Standing Orders suspended	None
Specific Standing Orders suspended	N/A
Number of deputations requested	0
Number of deputations heard	N/A
Number of petitions considered	0

*The three notices of motion to Committee during the reporting period were as follows:-

Urgent Notice of Motion by Convener – Northfield Academy

Urgent Notice of Motion by Councillor Brooks and the Convener – Kingsford School

Urgent Notice of Motion by Convener – Dalguise Adventure Centre

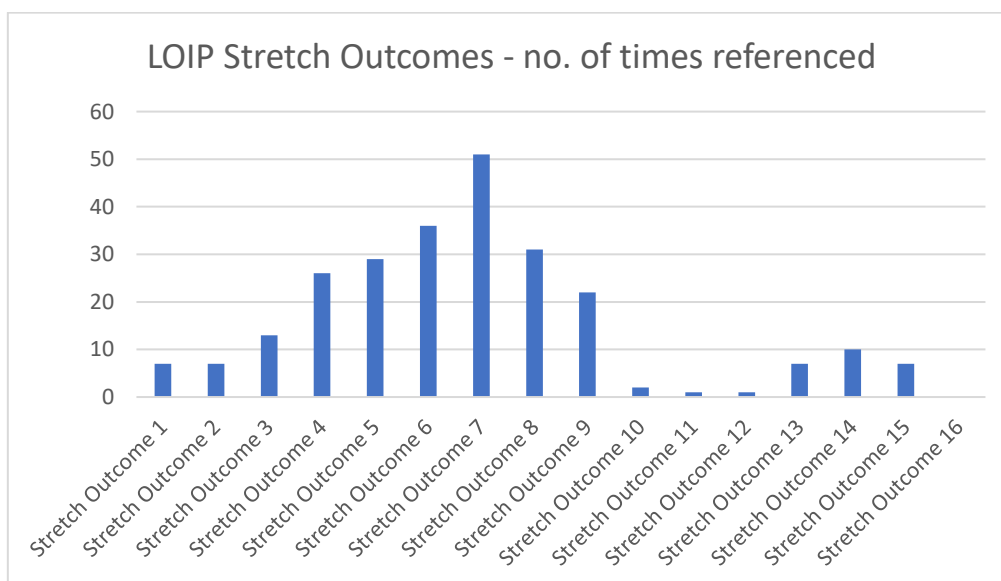
8. Reports with links to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan

8.1 The following table details of the 69 reports how each report linked to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP Stretch Outcomes are appended to this report for reference at Appendix 1). As can be seen from the chart below, reports to Education and Children’s Services Committee span across all of the Stretch Outcomes, although the greatest number of reports linked to the following, which would be expected for the nature of the business.

Stretch Outcome 6 - By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.

Stretch Outcome 7 - 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 & 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.

8.2 It is encouraging to see that the Stretch Outcomes have been used so frequently in reports presented, as it demonstrates that the reports are closely tied to meeting the objectives of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.



9. Training and Development

9.1 Training opportunities for Members during the reporting period were as follows:-

- A workshop on adolescent brain development
- A workshop to explore the findings of the SHINE data
- Integrated Children's Services Plan – briefing
- Child Protection Committee – briefing
- Health and Wellbeing data – briefing
- Invitation to meet with the Northfield Advisory Group
- Briefings were also given to Members at Committee meetings on the Aberdeen Computing Collaborative and ABZCampus
- A demonstration of data reporting / Power BI

9.2 As with previous years, officers have continued to support the Committee's External Members through hosting pre-Committee briefing sessions which enable them to ask officers questions about any aspect of education along with seeking clarity on reports within the committee business planner. This approach has strengthened the role of External Members and encouraged scrutiny through questioning at Committee.

9.3 Further development opportunities will be considered for next year based on Committee business throughout the year, Executive Lead proposals and Member feedback on what may be required to assist them in performing their roles.

10. Code of Conduct Declarations and Transparency Statements

- 10.1 0 declarations of interest and 29 transparency statements were made by Members during the reporting period. Information in respect of declarations of interest and transparency statements is measured to evidence awareness of the requirements to adhere to the Councillors' Code of Conduct and the responsibility to ensure fair decision-making.

11. Civic Engagement

- 11.1 During the reporting period, the Service has engaged in a wide variety of engagement and consultation. The following bullet points list some, but not all, of the engagement undertaken to give a flavour of the work throughout the year.

- An online consultation on the School Estate Plan, aimed at children and young people, was launched.
- Statutory consultation undertaken with the public on proposals to establish a city-wide catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education
- Consultation on 'Let's Talk Scottish Education', undertaken with children, young people, families and wider communities; school communities; Head Teachers; and Committee members and wider stakeholders.
- Consultation with school communities on the Hayward Review to reform qualifications and approaches to assessment
- Engagement with parents and carers in respect of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and the biannual review of ELC.
- Collaboration with children and young people in relation to how the Council supports and promotes Children's Rights
- Engagement with children and young people and stakeholders for the production of the Integrated Children's Services Plan
- Statutory public consultation on proposals in relation to Greenbrae School / Glashieburn School Catchment Areas and Walker Road School Relocation
- Engagement with young people, staff and the school community following the inspection at Northfield Academy, as well as engagement with staff involved in other inspections
- Regular engagement between officers and the Aberdeen City Parent Forum

- Promotion of the Aberdeen Computing Collective through engagement, curriculum support and professional learning
- Consultation with pupils, parents, staff and partners in relation to the naming of Greyhope School
- Consultation with children and young people, parents and carers, Grampian Regional Equality Council, and staff on the Anti-Bullying Policy
- Consultation and engagement in respect of the Edge of Care Pilot
- Consultation with learners, children’s services staff, voluntary organisations and a range of Council functions on the review of the Accessibility Plan.

12. Executive Lead to the Committee - Commentary

- 12.1 Officers have presented a wide range of reports to the Education and Children’s Services Committee over the year, highlighting the very broad range of work undertaken by Education, Children’s Social Work and most recently by Community Learning and Development.
- 12.2 It has been particularly pleasing to see how areas of work, such as the development of the Music Service, work to support mental health and wellbeing and on-going delivery of The Promise have progressed over successive reports to Committee demonstrating the clear and positive impact of the Education and Children’s Services Committee. Work to address variation in education outcomes remains a key priority with Head Teachers now attending Committee to respond to questions from Members on published HMIe and Care Inspectorate Inspection reports. This is thought to be a very positive step.
- 12.3 Officers continue to respond to feedback from Members of Committee to ensure that reports presented provide information and analysis in a transparent and accessible format. Officers continue to appreciate both the scrutiny and high level of interest in our work with children and young people across the city.

13. The Year Ahead

- 13.1 Although there were no changes to the ECS Terms of Reference in 2023, in accordance with the usual practice of an annual review of the Scheme of Governance, the Terms of Reference will be reviewed and officers will reflect on whether any areas require further refinement moving forward to ensure the continued efficient operation of the Committee.
- 13.2 Aside from the regular annual reports and performance reports received for assurance, a selection of the business for the next year is listed below:-

- Autism Strategy and Action Plan
- A progress report on Keeping the Promise
- An update on the Secure Care Pathway Review inspection
- An update on the Inspection of Regulatory Care Services
- Various business cases and reports as a result of the School Estate Plan
- Continued updates on Education and Children's Services Reforms
- A report back on the impact of the arrangements on evaluations of core Quality Indicators over school session 2023/24
- An update on ABZCampus

Appendix 1 – Local Outcome Improvement Plan Stretch Outcomes

Economy	
1.	No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026
2.	400 unemployed people supported into fair work by 2026
3.	500 people skilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026
People (Children & Young People)	
4.	95% of children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026
5.	90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026
6.	By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026
7.	95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 & 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026
8.	83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026
9.	100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination
People (Adults)	
10.	25% fewer people receiving a first ever Court conviction and 2% fewer people reconvicted within one year by 2026
11.	Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026
12.	Rate of harmful levels of alcohol consumption reduced by 4% and drug related deaths lower than Scotland by 2026
Place	
13.	Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate
14.	Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026
15.	Addressing the nature crisis by protecting/ managing 26% of Aberdeen's area for nature by 2026
Community Empowerment	
16.	100% increase in the proportion of citizens who feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026