

MINUTE of MEETING of the EDUCATION EXECUTIVE of WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LoTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 11 SEPTEMBER 2018.

Present – Councillors David Dodds (Chair), Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Stuart Borrowman, Harry Cartmill, Pauline Clark, Tom Conn, Carl John (substituting for Moira Shemilt), Charles Kennedy, Dave King, Sarah King, John McGinty, Andrew McGuire, Andrew Miller, Cathy Muldoon, George Paul, Kirsteen Sullivan and Damian Timson (substituting for Chris Horne); Appointed Representatives: Elsie Aitken, Heather Hughes, Myra Macpherson, Lynne McEwen and Margaret Russell.

Apologies – Councillors Peter Heggie, Chris Horne and Moira Shemilt; Parent Council Representative Eric Lumsden.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTE

The Education Executive confirmed the minute of its meeting held on 29 May 2018 as being a correct record. The Chair thereafter signed the minute.

3. NOTE CORRESPONDENCE ARISING FROM PREVIOUS DECISIONS

The Education Executive noted the correspondence arising from previous decisions.

4. NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK PROGRESS REPORT

The Education Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) providing an update on the progress made with the four national improvement priorities.

The report recalled that the Standards in Scotland's Schools, etc Act 2000, as amended by the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, required the preparation of an annual progress report and plan setting out the progress the council had made to achieve the four key priorities of the National Improvement Framework. Statutory guidance required the publication of the local plan by September 2018.

The four key priorities of the National Improvement Framework (NIF) were:

- To improve attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy;

- To close the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children;
- To improve health and wellbeing; and
- To improve employability skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations.

The report provided a summary of the progress made with improvement actions which were outlined in the West Lothian National Improvement Framework Improvement Plan (NIFIP) 2017-18.

The Education Executive was then given a presentation by the Senior Development Officer (National Improvement Framework and Pupil Equity Fund) highlighting West Lothian's Progress for session 2017-2018 across all four priorities outlined within the report. Members were advised that West Lothian has made significant progress in achieving the four key priorities. Future improvement actions were captured within the National Improvement Framework: West Lothian Improvement Plan.

It was recommended that the Education Executive approve the contents of the West Lothian Progress Report in driving forward the key priorities of the National Improvement Framework: raising attainment, closing the attainment gap, improving health and well-being and improving employability.

Decision

To approve the recommendation in the report.

5. WEST LOTHIAN NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Education Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) providing an update on the West Lothian National Improvement Framework Improvement Plan (NIFIP), a copy of which was attached to the report.

The report recalled that the Standards in Scotland's Schools, etc Act 2000, as amended by the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 required the preparation of an annual progress report and plan setting out:-

- The steps the council would be taking to achieve the four key priorities of the National Improvement Framework (NIF);
- The steps it would be taking to reduce inequalities of outcome

resulting from socio-economic disadvantage; and

- The steps it would be taking to involve a wide range of stakeholders, in the discharge of the new statutory duty (the socio-economic duty).

The West Lothian Council National Improvement Framework Improvement Plan sets out the West Lothian Council context, in line with the implementation of the Raising Attainment Strategy 2018-2023 and the transformational change achieved through the collaborative Moving Forward in Learning approach. It also set out the national context including the stretch aims agreed in partnership with Education Scotland in relation to literacy, numeracy and positive destinations.

The Plan also addressed each of the four key priorities of the National Improvement Framework in terms of the key drivers of improvement identified within the NIF. It was also noted that Statutory Guidance requires the publication of the local plan by September 2018.

The report concluded that the Plan demonstrated the strength of the existing coherent, strategic approach taken within West Lothian to achieving the four key priorities and set out how this would work.

It was recommended that the Education Executive approves the contents of the West Lothian Council's strategic approach to driving forward improvement in the key priorities: raising attainment, closing the attainment gap, improving health and well-being and improving employability.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.

6. SEPTEMBER CONFERENCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES

The Education Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration Services) seeking approval for the attendance of the three religious representatives to attend the 2018 September Conference for Local Authority Representatives in Glasgow on Thursday 20 September 2018.

The report advised that The Church of Scotland issued an invitation to the three religious representatives to the 2018 September Conference for Local Authority Representatives. Previous attendees found the conferences organised by the Church of Scotland to be a valuable

opportunity to discuss their role and contribution with representatives from other parts of Scotland.

The Scottish Catholic Education Services would charge a small fee to cover catering and administration costs. The Service Manager advised that the cost involved for each member attending the conference had been confirmed as £20.00.

It was recommended that the Education Executive approves the attendance of the three religious representatives at the 2018 September Conference for Local Authority Representatives in Glasgow on Thursday 20 September 2018.

Decision

To approve the recommendation in the report.

7. RAISING ATTAINMENT STRATEGY 2018/23

The Education Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) providing a draft of the new Raising Attainment Strategy which would support the council's Corporate Plan and strategic priorities during the period 2018/19 to 2022/23.

The draft Raising Attainment Strategy, a copy of which was attached to the report, outlined the outcomes and activities planned, which were in line with the 2018 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education. Ambitious and aspirational targets had been set to ensure that West Lothian continued to achieve excellence for its learners and continued to address the poverty related attainment gap.

The Raising Attainment Strategy built on previous strategies and had identified four specific outcomes as summarised:-

- Outcome One – Focus on increasing attainment and achievement for all West Lothian learners from early years to S3;
- Outcome Two – Focus on increasing equity, based on socio-economic factors, in educational outcomes across all West Lothian schools;
- Outcome Three – Focus on increasing attainment for all learners from S4-S6; and
- Outcome Four – Focus on increased equity, based on socio-economic factors, in educational outcomes for West Lothian learners in the senior phase.

Key measures of the success for the four outcomes had been identified and these would be used to track, monitor and report on performance

throughout the lifetime of the strategy. An annual review would also be undertaken and reported to the council's Corporate Management Team and to the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel. An end of strategy review would also be undertaken in the final year of the strategy to report on the achievement in the outcomes and final position in the performance indicators (against target) and the agreed actions.

The Quality Improvement Manager advised members of the Education Executive that a full Quality Impact Assessment had been undertaken.

It was recommended that the Education Executive approves the Raising Attainment Strategy 2018/23.

Decision

To approve the recommendation in the report.

8. MANAGING CRITICAL INCIDENTS IN SCHOOL

The Education Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources) providing a copy of the recently updated Managing Critical Incidents in School Policy, a copy of which was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The report explained that the policy had been in place in the council since 2009 and had last been reviewed in 2014 and updated again in the current format in line with the regular review cycle.

The focus of the policy was where a critical incident involved the school community directly and personally, which typically was an incident that involved an unexpected threat of serious injury or death to a member(s) of the school community. The aims of the policy were to:

- I. support school managers to deal effectively with the initial stages of a Critical Incident by providing a simple reference guide;
- II. help schools recognise the needs of the whole community for emotional support; and
- III. suggest ways in which these needs could be addressed in the immediate term and to signpost to resources for longer term support.

The Depute Principal Educational Psychologist advised the Executive that the policy had been updated to reflect the significant societal changes in relation to the use of social media and the implications that this had for managing critical incidents in schools. Renewed guidance for schools has been provided to give clear information on how best to manage this aspect of the Critical Incident process. Information relating to current

external support agencies and resources had also been updated.

During the course of the discussion it was noted that the Chaplain email address at page 12 of the Policy on Managing Critical Incidents was incorrect, which had previously been highlighted at the Education Policy, Development and Scrutiny Panel. The Depute Principal Educational Psychologist apologised as the version submitted for approval was not the most recent update and confirmed that this had been amended accordingly in the final version.

It was recommended that the updated Policy on Managing Critical incidents be agreed by the Education Executive as the final, updated version of this policy for all educational establishments.

Decision

To approve the recommendation in the report.

9. DYSLEXIA ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION

The Education Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources) providing an overview of practice in schools related to the assessment and identification of dyslexia.

The report recalled that at the request of Council, at its meeting held on 16 January 2018, a review of current practice in relation to the recording of assessment and identification processes for Dyslexia took place across West Lothian schools. Following this request a full consultation was undertaken by officers and all Head Teachers.

The consultation highlighted that the majority of schools were effectively implementing the Dyslexia Toolkit in line with Scottish Government guidance. The steps of assessing and putting supports in place were robust however the recording of the identification of dyslexia on SEEMIS records was not necessarily consistently applied across schools. Following the review a session with all Head Teachers was undertaken to re-visit the Dyslexia Toolkit and emphasise the importance of the recording aspects within SEEMIS. The existing guidance for schools was attached at appendix 1 to the report and was considered to be robust and in line with Scottish Government Guidance as outlined in the Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit which was a nationally recognised resource developed through multi agency liaison.

Finally, it was noted that schools in West Lothian were supported through a range of guidance tools, specific support services and training to assess and identify Dyslexia. The guidance relating to the recording of these

decisions within SEEMIS has been amended to ensure that the data held centrally within SEEMIS was accurate. This amendment has been implemented through correspondence with all Head Teachers at the Head Teacher Leadership meeting on 19 April 2018. Ongoing monitoring and review of processes would take place through annual Quality Improvement activities.

It was recommended that the Education Executive notes the overview of the review of practice in schools relating to the assessment and identification of Dyslexia.

Motion

To agree the recommendation in the report.

- Moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick.

Amendment

Further investigation work should be carried out by WLC Education Department and a report brought back to Education PDSP and Education Executive providing details of the differences in data recorded by Dyslexia Scotland in 2015 for West Lothian compared to the 7.3% recorded within the report and that methods to improve the identification of those with dyslexia should be made and brought to those committees.

- Moved by Councillor Damian Timson and seconded by Councillor Charles Kennedy.

A Roll Call Vote was taken which resulted as follows :-

Motion

Harry Cartmill

Tom Conn

David Dodds

Lawrence Fitzpatrick

Dave King

John McGinty

Andrew McGuire

Cathy Muldoon

George Paul

Kirsteen Sullivan

Amendment

Stuart Borrowman

Pauline Clark

Carl John

Charles Kennedy

Sarah King

Andrew Miller

Damian Timson

Elsie Aitken

Heather Hughes

Myra Macpherson

Lynne McEwen

Margaret Russell

Decision

Following a roll call vote the motion was successful by 15 votes to 7 and it was agreed accordingly.

10. EDUCATION SERVICES MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Education Executive considered a joint report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) and the Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources) presenting a copy of the Education Services Management Plan for 2018-19, a copy of which was attached to the report.

The plan provided an overview of:-

- The services and activities that Education Services provided;
- The aims and objectives of the service that were to be communicated to elected members, staff and partners;
- How success would be measured and the targets that were to be achieved; and
- The improvement activities that the service was committed to completing in order to change or improve services.

The Management Plan would be utilised by the management team and stakeholders to assess and gauge performance and improvement.

The Education Executive was asked to note the Education Service Management Plan for 2018-19.

Decision

To note the contents of the report and Education Services Management Plan.

11. S5 AND S6 SCQF EXAMINATION RESULTS 2018

The Education Executive considered a presentation and accompanying report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) providing an update on the performance of students in attaining Scottish Curriculum and Qualification Framework (SCQF) Awards at Level 6 (Higher or equivalent) in the S5 and S6 stages and at Level 7 (Advanced Higher or equivalent, including HNC) in the S6 stage.

The Education Executive was advised that the attainment of 5+, 3+ and 1+ SCQF Awards at Level 6 by students at the S5 stage and 1+ SCQF Award at Level 7 by students at the S6 stage remained important measures of school performance and for this reason they would continue to be reported to members on an annual basis. For completeness the attainment of 5+, 3+ and 1+ SCQF awards at Level 6 by students at the S6 stage had also been included in the report.

It was noted that over the five year period 2014 to 2018 the percentage of students attaining 5+, 3+ and 1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 (Higher or equivalent) in S5 had improved. This included West Lothian schools and students outperforming both the national average and the virtual comparator, details of which were summarised in a table in the report.

With regards to the percentage of students attaining 5+, 3+ and 1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 in S6 these had also improved over the five year period 2014 to 2018.

Finally, over the five year period 2014 to 2018 the percentage of students attaining 1+ Awards at SCQF Level had also improved however at this stage the 2018 1+ Award at SCQF Level 6 did not include all college based HNC candidate results. The Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) advised that a more detailed analysis of the examination results, on a school-by-school basis would be reported to Education PDSP in October and Education Executive in November 2018.

It was recommended that the Education Executive notes:

1. That performance of S5 students in 5+, 3+ and 1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 (Higher or equivalent) had risen in the five year period;
2. That performance of S6 students in 5+, 3+ and 1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 (Higher or equivalent) had risen in the five year period;

3. That SCQF examination performance of S6 students in 1+ Awards at Level 7 (Advanced Higher or equivalent, including HNC) had risen in the five year period; and
4. That further detail of school-by-school performance would be presented to a future meeting of the Education Executive.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To congratulate all the staff and the pupils for their hard work in achieving such excellent examination results.