

MINUTE of MEETING of the EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL of WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LoTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 17 MARCH 2015.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), David Dodds, Stuart Borrowman, John McGinty, Andrew Miller and Jim Walker; Appointed Representatives Elsie Aitken, John Hendrie and Myra MacPherson; Parent Council Forum Representative Steve Salvini

Apologies – Appointed Representatives Lynne McEwen, John MacKinnon and Eric Lumsden.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

2. MINUTE

The Panel confirmed the minute of the meeting held on 3 February 2015 as being a correct record. The Chair thereafter signed the minute.

3. RELATIONSHIPS, SEXUAL HEALTH AND PARENTHOOD EDUCATION IN WEST LoTHIAN SCHOOLS

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Schools with Education Support providing details of the new statutory guidance for the Conduct of Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood Education in schools (RSHP Education) and the implications for practice in schools, a copy of which was attached as appendix 1 to the report. Health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes – Curriculum for Excellence was attached as appendix 2 to the report.

The Education Services Quality Improvement Manager advised that West Lothian Council has a well-established Sexual Health and Relationships Education (SHARE) network in secondary schools which enabled advice and guidance to be shared. The new guidance and its implications for practice would be discussed and taken forward in this forum. SHARE training for trainers in West Lothian provided ongoing capacity to develop confidence in school staff to deliver all aspects of RSHP education in partnership with NHS Scotland and other agencies in schools.

To accompany the new guidance there would also be guidance on effective consultation with parents and carers alongside a leaflet for parents. The new guidance would be shared with schools and relevant partners and groups to enable them to further develop practice to reflect the new guidance.

The report concluded by highlighting that recent local authority school

reviews and Education Scotland inspections indicated that the ethos and climate in West Lothian schools was positive and that they provided a safe environment for learners. This provided a sound base for equipping learners with the skills, knowledge and values to form positive and respectful relationships and to make healthy life choices. West Lothian Council welcomed the new guidance on RSHP education and schools were well placed to build on good practice in the delivery of RSHP Education.

Officers then responded to questions from members of the Panel advising that regular workshops were held and updates provided with a strong network available across the authority for sharing good practice.

Decision

Noted the contents of the report.

4. TRAFFIC SAFETY IN AND AROUND SCHOOLS

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Schools with Education Support providing details of the proposed changes to the Traffic Safety in Schools policy, details of which were attached as an appendix to the report.

The Customer and Performance Manager advised the Panel that the council's policy on school transport supervision was contained, in part, in the Traffic Safety in School Policy. This matter was now addressed in the Transport To and From Schools Policy. The consolidation of all policy on this matter in one document was designed to increase clarity for council staff, parents/carers and other stakeholders. The opportunity was taken during the review to increase clarity in the wording of the rest of the policy on traffic safety in and around schools.

During the course of the question and answer session the Panel was informed that the policy also advised headteachers on how to raise concerns regarding road conditions around schools and on road safety education. The Panel recommended that the policy should also include details relating to incidents where unsafe road use and parking occurred to enable headteachers to report this to Police Scotland and seek enforcement action where appropriate.

The Panel was asked to recommend to the Education Executive approval of the revised Traffic Safety in and around Schools policy.

Decision

1. Noted the contents of the report;
2. Recommended that the policy should include details relating to unsafe road use and parking as outlined above; and
3. Agreed that a report be submitted to the Education Executive for approval, subject to the amendment being included.

5. TRANSPORT TO AND FROM SCHOOLS - MAINSTREAM

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Schools with Education Support providing details of the proposed changes to the Transport To and From Schools – Mainstream policy, a copy of which was attached as an appendix to the report. The Panel was advised that there was a typographical error in the numbering within the policy which would be amended.

The Customer and Performance Manager advised the Panel that a review of the policy on supervision of the arrival and departure of transport to and from mainstream schools was agreed following an incident involving a primary school pupil and a school bus in May 2014. The opportunity was also taken during the review to increase clarity in the wording of the policy.

The proposed draft policy addressed the outcome of the review into the arrival and departure of school transport. It also provided parents/carers with a more clear and comprehensive statement of the council's existing policy and practice.

During the course of the discussion the Panel recommended that further clarity be provided regarding point 3:5 of the policy in relation to the role of playground supervisors on the arrival of pupils on transport to schools.

The Panel was asked to recommend to the Education Executive approval of the revised Transport To and From Schools – Mainstream policy.

Decision

1. Noted the contents of the report, subject to the amendments being made to the numbering within the policy;
2. Recommended that further clarity be provided to point 3:5 of the policy in relation to the role of playground supervisors on the arrival of pupils on transport to schools; and
3. Agreed that a report be submitted to the Education Executive subject to the amendments recommended above.

6. CONSULTATION ON DRAFT GUIDANCE FOR PARTS 4, 5 AND 18 OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2014

The Panel considered a joint report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) and the Head of Social Policy providing details of the combined Education and Social Policy response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the draft Statutory Guidance for Parts 4, 5 and 18 (Section 96) and related draft orders of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The Panel was advised that the report had also been submitted to the Social Policy PDSP at its meeting held on 12 March 2015 to ensure that due consideration was

given to the response.

The report explained that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 19 February 2014 and received Royal Assent on 27 March 2014. By facilitating a shift in public services towards early intervention whenever a family, child or young person needed help, the legislation encouraged preventative measures rather than crises responses. The ASN Manager then advised the Panel that the West Lothian GIRFEC Implementation Group comprised of representatives from all relevant professional agencies. The group worked together to ensure that the combined professional responsibilities of the Children and Young People's Act were implemented and embedded in practice. Representatives from this group produced a combined response to the consultation, details of which were attached as an appendix to the report. The consultation related to the draft Statutory Guidance on Named Person (Part 4), Child's Plan (Part 5) and Assessment of Wellbeing (Part 18) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. It also related to the draft Orders on the Named Person and the Child's Plan.

The deadline for responses to the consultation was 1 May 2015. The Panel was asked to note the consultation response and recommend that a report be submitted to the Education Executive to approve the submission as a suitable response to the Scottish Government consultation process.

Decision

Noted the contents of the report and agreed that the response be submitted to the Education Executive for approval as a suitable response to the Scottish Government consultation process.

7. WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL EDUCATION SERVICES: ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS REVIEW 2014

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) providing details of the response from the public consultation 'West Lothian Council, Education Services, Additional Support Needs Review 2014'.

The Head of Education (Quality Assurance) advised the Panel that a formal public consultation started on 16 October 2014 entitled "West Lothian Council, Education Services, Additional Support Needs Review 2014", which concluded on 18 December 2014. The proposals contained within the consultation document were summarised within the report to PDSP.

Following consideration of all the information and responses obtained through the consultation process it was proposed that further enhancement to the original proposals would be made in relation to collaborative and transition planning, refurbishment and parity of provision and also responsibility of promoted staff within a denominational school

setting. It was considered that the enhancements to the proposals would offer the delivery of the optimum educational environment and minimise educational disruption for pupils. It was also proposed that consideration be given to the feasibility of breakfast club provision at both Pinewood and Ogilvie school campuses.

Finally, it was noted that a report on the consultation, which included the response of Education Services to the Education Scotland reports and all other written and oral representations, was published in line with legislative requirements. The published document included changes to the original consultation proposals as a result of feedback from the consultation process.

The Head of Education (Quality Assurance) then responded to questions from members of the Panel. The Panel then recommended that further clarification was required within the report in relation to:

- the management responsibilities of the Principal Teacher of the ASD provision; and
- to confirm that the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh was satisfied with the management arrangements with regard to the ASD resource at St Mary's Polbeth.

The Panel was asked to note the outcome of the consultation process and agree that a report be submitted to the Education Executive for consideration at its meeting scheduled to be held on 24 March 2015.

Decision

1. Noted the contents of the report; and
2. Agreed that a report be submitted to the Education Executive at its meeting scheduled to be held on 24 March 2015, subject to the recommended amendments highlighted above.

8. SPORTSCOTLAND INVESTMENT AGREEMENT 2015-19

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) providing details of the proposed investment agreement with sportscotland for the period 2015-19.

The report explained that sportscotland, the Scottish national agency for sport, provided partnership investment to West Lothian Council for a range of programmes across Education and Area Services during 2011-15, which terminated in March 2015. Details of the proposed Partnership Investment Agreement for a new investment structure for 2015-19 to maintain and develop existing services was outlined within the report. This investment demonstrated significant financial and social return with services working in partnership to achieve a variety of outcomes as detailed within the Education and Area Services Management plans and contributed towards the key strategic aims of the council identified in the

Corporate Plan and Single Outcome Agreement (SOA)

Decision

The Panel noted the contents of the report and agreed that a report be submitted to the Education Executive to approve the sportscotland partnership agreement 2015-19.

9. TEACHER NUMBERS

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive providing details of a proposal to allocate the additional teaching resource required to maintain teacher numbers and the pupil teacher ratio at 2014/15 levels in financial years 2015/16 to 2017/18.

The Depute Chief Executive advised the Panel that on 29 January 2015 West Lothian Council set its financial strategy for the three year period 2015/16 – 2017/18 following extensive public consultation. Education Services were confident that the budget provided sufficient resource to continue to raise attainment given the development of robust collaborative strategies and focussed school support. On 5 February 2015 the Deputy First Minister of Scotland wrote to the President of COSLA, with copies sent to all local authority leaders, setting out a revised offer and commitment with regard to teacher numbers. The report went on to outline the net cost to the council of this commitment. Based on the assumptions set out in the report, the council faced additional cost pressures over the next three years totalling £2.28million in relation to the teacher numbers commitment. It was estimated that the council would receive £382,000 from the £10million teachers funding and £160,000 funding for fully funded probationers, resulting in a net additional budget gap of £1.738million.

The Depute Chief Executive went on to advise that there would be challenges in securing sufficient numbers of teachers from a limited national pool and therefore a risk to the council receiving funding from the Scottish Government. It was critical and of urgent importance therefore, to secure permanent contracts for existing high quality probationers and temporary teaching staff in West Lothian.

During the course of the discussion the Panel recommended that an update report be submitted to the Education PDSP in the course of the new school session 2015/16 providing details on how the allocation of the teacher resources was disseminated. The Panel also requested information on teacher numbers and pupil teacher ratios in recent years, which the Depute Chief Executive agreed to provide following the meeting.

The Depute Chief Executive recommended that a report be submitted to the Education Executive amended as follows:

- To add an additional paragraph at the end of point D5 to read as

follows:

“Arrangements to ensure accurate monitoring of teacher numbers and pupil/teacher ratios are in place to deal with the annual census and will be developed to meet government monitoring requirements”; and

- To amend the conclusion in the report to read as follows:

“In order to deliver the commitment on teacher numbers by maintaining teacher numbers and the pupil/teacher ratio at 2014/15 levels over the next 3 years would require an additional 57 FTE teaching resource. It is proposed that this resource is used to enhance the nurture approach in the primary sector and targeted in secondary schools to narrow the attainment gap.”

Decision

1. Noted the contents of the report;
2. Agreed that a report be submitted to the Education Executive, subject to the amendments outlined above;
3. Agreed that an update report would be submitted to the Education PDSP in the course of the new school session 2015/16; and
4. Agreed that the Depute Chief Executive would provide members of the Panel with details relating to teacher numbers and pupil teacher ratios in recent years following the meeting.

10. WIDENING SENIOR PHASE CURRICULAR PROVISION

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) providing details of the widening senior phase curricular provision being offered across all secondary schools in school Session 2015/16 which supported local and national priorities.

The report advised that in academic session 2015/16 the senior phase curricular provision available to all secondary schools across the authority would be further expanded to include a number of innovative curricular options developed and delivered in collaboration with the council's partners at West Lothian College, Queen Margaret University (QMU), NHS Lothian, Fife College and The Wood Foundation. These curricular options involved a number of new partnerships and also added to the number of industry recognised qualifications offered to pupils across West Lothian, making them more work ready, providing career pathways to employment. The new courses also offered clear progression routes into further and higher education and were clearly aligned to the recommendations made in Developing Scotland's Young Workforce and supported West Lothian Council's strategic priorities for young people.

The Senior Phase Officer then provided members of the Panel with an update on the senior phase curricular provision available to all secondary

schools across the authority. He highlighted the Foundation Modern Apprenticeship (FMA) in Civil Engineering offered to pupils entering S4. Thirty-two pupils embarked upon this ground breaking course in July 2014 and the attainment levels were very encouraging. This high profile pilot project has received considerable national attention and was likely to be rolled out across the country in the coming years.

The Panel was asked to note that the widening senior phase curricular provision was strategically planned and delivered to meet local and national labour market trends, raise attainment and positive destinations figures across the local authority and delivery best value.

Decision

Noted the contents of the report.

11. PRIMARY SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION - REFURBISHMENT OF KIRKNEWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL - UPDATE

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Schools with Education Support providing an update on the arrangements to decant the pupils at Kirknewton Primary School for the academic year 2015/16 to East Calder Primary School, in order to facilitate the refurbishment of Kirknewton Primary School building.

The Head of Schools with Education Support advised the Panel that in order to facilitate the safe refurbishment of Kirknewton Primary School, the Education Executive agreed in December 2014 that it was necessary to decant the pupils from Kirknewton Primary School for an academic year from August 2015 to enable the project to be completed.

The report provided an update on the progress made in relation to the decant arrangements for Kirknewton Primary School to East Calder Primary School as well as the decant arrangements for the Kirknewton Nursery class to accommodation to be located at the recreation park in Kirknewton.

Decision

Noted the contents of the report.

12. EDUCATION PDSP TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2015-2016

The Panel considered the contents of the timetable of meetings 2015-2016 (copies of which had been circulated).

Decision

Noted the timetable of meetings 2015-2016.

13. WORKPLAN

The Panel considered the contents of the workplan (copies of which had been circulated)

Decision

Noted the contents of the workplan.