

MINUTE of MEETING of the EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, LIVINGSTON, on 22 AUGUST 2023.

Present – Councillors Andrew McGuire (Chair), Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Stuart Borrowman, Pauline Clark (substituting for Councillor Moira McKee Shemilt), Tom Conn, Peter Heggie, Pauline Stafford; and Appointed Members Mark Bonallo, Peter Doolan, Heather Hughes and Lynne McEwen

Apologies – Councillor Moira McKee Shemilt; and Appointed Member Kent Ballantyne

In attendance – Pippa Plevin (Joint Forum of West Lothian Community Councils representative); and Raymond Branton (third sector representative)

Councillor Stuart Borrowman left the meeting following consideration of agenda item 6 (Review of Denominational Secondary Catchments at St Margaret's Academy and St Kentigern's Academy) and did not participate in the remaining items of business.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Appointed Member Heather Hughes stated that she was the Joint Chair of the Local Negotiating Committees for Teachers (LNCT) and, although the Secondary Schools Appointed Representative, she would speak on behalf of all teachers in West Lothian.

2. MINUTES

The panel confirmed the minute of its meeting held on held on 16 May 2023 as a correct record. The minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. S5 AND S6 SCQF EXAMINATION RESULTS 2023

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Secondary, Community Learning and Inclusion) providing members with an update on the performance of students in attaining Scottish Credit 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 report was accompanied by a presentation, which, in addition to detailing the stages and levels referred to within the report, also included results for the S4 stage Level 5 SCQF 5+ attainment.

Whilst noting the reported results, there were suggestions and requests for further information, including attainment at levels 4 and 5, student achievements, gender level detail, and a comparison of in-person and Virtual Campus teaching.

The panel were informed that attainment at levels 4 and 5 could be

provided, with the suggestion of reporting student achievement considered worthwhile. In addition to progressing this suggestion, it was confirmed that gender and subject level results would be reported to the panel, as had been the arrangement previously, together with an analysis of in-person teaching compared to the Virtual Campus provision.

It was recommended that the panel note the performance of:-

1. S5 and S6 students 1+ awards at SCQF level 6 had risen in the period shown;
2. S5 students 3+ and 5+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 had improved greatly in the five-year period;
3. S6 students in 5+ and 3+ Awards at SCQF Level 6 had risen in the five-year period; and
4. S6 students in 1+ Awards at SCQF Level 7 had shown improvement in the five-year period.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report and presentation;
2. To note achievement would be reported to the panel in addition to attainment; and
3. To note the Head of Education (Secondary, Community Learning & Inclusion) undertook to provide reports to the panel following further analysis of results achieved:-
 - i. at gender level;
 - ii. at subject level; and
 - iii. through in-person teaching compared to that provided via the Virtual Campus.
4. REVIEW OF DENOMINATIONAL SECONDARY CATCHMENTS AT ST MARGARET'S ACADEMY AND ST KENTIGERN'S ACADEMY

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Early Years, Primary and Resources) informing of the proposal to commence public consultation on the review of Denominational Secondary catchments at St Margaret's Academy and St Kentigern's Academy.

The panel was also presented with the draft Consultation Document prepared by Council officers.

It was recommended that the panel:-

1. consider the proposal to commence consultation on

denominational secondary catchments at St Margaret's Academy and St Kentigern's Academy; and

2. note that the proposal would be presented to Education Executive for consideration.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report; and
2. To agree that the report be forwarded to a future meeting of Education Executive for consideration.

5. 2022/23 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - MONTH 12 MONITORING REPORT

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services providing an update on the financial performance of the Education portfolio.

It was recommended that the panel note:-

1. the financial performance of the Education portfolio in 2022/23;
2. that the Education portfolio position at month 12 was part of the overall council budget position reported to Council Executive on 20 June 2023; and
3. actions to be taken by Heads of Service and budget holders to manage spend within available resources.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

6. ANNUAL PLAN AND REPORT - NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK AND REDUCING INEQUALITIES OF OUTCOME

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Heads of Service (Education) informing of the West Lothian Annual Report for 2022-23, and the Annual Plan for the National Improvement Framework (NIF) and Reducing Inequalities of Outcome 2023-24.

Officers responded to a question regarding the parent/carer and pupil survey responses relating to bullying and, in doing so, undertook to provide a report to the panel detailing the specific actions in place to address this.

It was recommended that the panel note:-

1. the progress made in West Lothian in Session 2022-23;

2. the key activities planned for Session 2023-24 to further improve outcomes for children, young people and families; and
3. that the Annual Plan and Report would be presented to Education Executive for its consideration.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report;
2. To agree that the report be forwarded to a future meeting of Education Executive for consideration; and
3. To note officers undertook to provide a report detailing specific actions relating to bullying.

7. WEST LoTHIAN CHILDREN'S SERVICE PLAN 2023-2026

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Secondary, Community Learning and Inclusion) informing of the development of the West Lothian Children's Services Plan 2023 - 2026 in compliance with the requirements of Part 3 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

It was recommended that the panel note the contents of the West Lothian Children's Services Plan 2023-26.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

8. EDUCATION SERVICES' RAISING ATTAINMENT STRATEGY END OF STRATEGY REPORT

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Service (Education) providing an end of strategy review of the Raising Attainment Strategy 2018/19 – 2022/23, including progress against the planned actions and an overview of the performance.

It was recommended that the panel note the:-

1. performance against the targets; and
2. progress made in implementing the key activities and actions.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

9. WORKPLAN

A workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

1. To note the workplan; and
2. To add reports regarding:-
 - i. achievement;
 - ii. results achieved at gender level;
 - iii. results achieved at subject level;
 - iv. analysis of in-person teaching compared to that provided via the Virtual Campus; and
 - v. specific actions relating to bullying.