

MINUTE of MEETING of the EDUCATION EXECUTIVE of WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LoTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 20 AUGUST 2013.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), David Dodds, Stuart Borrowman, Tony Boyle, Harry Cartmill, Tom Conn, Alexander Davidson, Carl John, Peter Johnston, Dave King, Danny Logue, John McGinty, Anne McMillan, Andrew Miller, Angela Moohan, George Paul and Frank Toner; Appointed Representatives Lynne McEwen and Eric Lumsden

Apologies – Councillor Jim Walker and Appointed Representative Graham Stormont

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

2. MINUTES

The Minute of the meeting of the Education Executive held on 4 June 2013 was approved as a correct record.

The Minute of the meeting of the Education Executive held on 27 June 2013 was approved as a correct record.

3. REVIEW OF EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY INSURANCE COVER LIMIT REQUIRED FOR SCHOOL WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMMES

The Education Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) which provided clarification on the impact of increasing the Employers' Liability Insurance cover requirement to £10 million for the School Work Experience programme.

West Lothian Council had provided periods of work experience for S4 students for several years, which contributed towards helping young people make decisions about their future careers and develop skills that were vital in the modern labour market. Work experience is deemed to be an integral part of schools' wider programme of careers education and work related learning.

The Education for Work Officer advised that at a previous meeting of the Education Executive held on 4 June 2013, officers were asked to submit further information to clarify the implications of increasing the Employers' Liability Insurance cover to £10 million on employers providing work experience placements to secondary school students.

The report provided details of the research carried out and the implications on the availability of work experience placements should the Employers' Liability Insurance limit be increased to £10 million. An Employers' Liability Insurance level of £10 million would not be

supportable by many local businesses or voluntary organisations and would impact on the availability of work experience placements. It was also highlighted that most local authorities and also Skills Development Scotland set no Employers' Liability Insurance levels or set a limit of no more than £5 million.

In conclusion, West Lothian Council has in place robust risk assessment arrangements to manage work experience placements for secondary school students. This involved identifying potential risks and mitigation or removal of risk as appropriate. Given the research and the impact on the availability of work experience placements by increasing the Employer Liability Insurance limit it was proposed that the limit remain at £5 million with a recommendation made that a further review be carried out in June 2014.

It was recommended that the Education Executive agree to retain the current Employers' Liability Insurance cover limit of £5 million with a recommendation that a further review be carried out in June 2014.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.

4. WEST LOTHIAN SCHOOLS - PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The Education Executive noted a presentation carried out by Paul Durkin, Senior Phase Development Officer, West Lothian Council and Margaret Forisky, West Lothian College, on the partnership work carried out between West Lothian Schools and West Lothian College.

Information was provided on the current college provision. Effective collaborative planning between West Lothian College and West Lothian secondary schools created significant developments designed to meet the needs of all young people across the authority with an enhanced curriculum now available to provide greater choice for secondary students.

It was noted that young people reported that the partnership approach helped to develop their self confidence and supported their transition into HE/FE. This approach also provided a strong foundation for raising attainment and supporting young people into positive post-school destinations. Further opportunities were also available for students through joint college/school delivery with the introduction of Higher National Certificates (HNC) in Computing and Engineering systems. From 2013/14 pupils entering S5 would be able to study Higher National Certificates in Computing or Engineering at West Lothian College as part of their school curriculum.

The Journey 2 Employment partnership approach between education, college staff and West Lothian Youth Action Project helped to engage young people and enable them to improve their core skills profile and prepare them for a positive post 16 destination. It was reported that a total of 130 students had engaged in the project with an increase in positive

destinations reported.

Following the conclusion of the presentation the Education Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) providing details of the productive and developing partnership between West Lothian schools and West Lothian College which resulted in a positive impact on attainment and achievement.

Results for the academic session 2011/12 were detailed in the report. In academic session 2012/13, ninety S5 and S6 students from across the eleven secondary schools studied at West Lothian College as part of the West Lothian Campus. The college offered nine part time courses to school students, ranging from Skills for Work, Intermediate 2 to Advanced Higher grade options. A further 300 S3-S6 students were able to access the college outside the Campus afternoons which included a Friday afternoon. Results for academic session 2012/13 were pending.

The report outlined the options on offer by the college for students in S4, S5 and S6 as part of the campus provision for session 2013/14. Details of the introduction of a Joint Higher National Certificate in computing or engineering was provided with pupils entering S5 able to study at West Lothian College as part of their school curriculum. The courses would run for two afternoons a week for two years. Upon successful completion of the course, West Lothian students would attain a level of qualification which very few school students across the country would have achieved by their school leaving date enabling them to be more attractive to employers.

Details of courses offered to pupils at risk of falling into a negative destination were also outlined in the report. The following courses were available:

- Get Ready for College; and
- Journey 2 Employment.

In conclusion, the report emphasised the value of the partnership and collaborative planning between West Lothian College and West Lothian secondary schools. The courses on offer continued to attract students in greater numbers into an expanding range of relevant vocational and academic options. The partnership made a valuable contribution to raising attainment and supporting positive post-school destinations.

The report recommended that the Education Executive note the productive and developing partnership that was on-going between West Lothian schools and West Lothian College resulting in a positive impact on attainment and achievement.

Decision

To note the presentation and terms of the report.