

MINUTE of MEETING of the EDUCATION EXECUTIVE of WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LoTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE on 17 DECEMBER 2013.

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

Apologies – Councillor Peter Johnston; Appointed Representatives Eric Lumsden and Graham Stormont.

1. OPENING COMMENTS

The Chair provided the Education Executive with an update in relation to agenda item 12 at the Education PDSP held on 8.10.13 regarding SQA Exam Results and the concerns highlighted in relation to personal assistance being available to pupils in exams. COSLA had been alerted to issues concerning SQA changes to assessment of literacy units at national 3 and 4 and matters were being addressed by SQA. COSLA would continue to observe the progress and further information would be provided when available.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Agenda Item 6 – Child Protection Procedures

Councillor Miller declared an interest in that he was a member of the Board of the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration. Councillor Miller participated in consideration of the item of business.

3 MINUTE

The Education Executive confirmed the minute of its meeting held on 12 November 2013 as being a correct record. The Chair thereafter signed the minute.

Matters arising: Minute Item 3 – Review of Additional Support Needs (ASN) Provision; page 68.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Miller in relation to the process followed to extend the closing date of the consultation process for the proposed review of provision of ASN, the Depute Chief Executive, Education, Planning and Area Services, stated that due to concerns raised during the consultation and the fact that this was carried out over the Christmas holiday period, approval was given by the Executive Councillor for Education, supported by members of the Administration and

the Education Management Team, to extend the closing date of the consultation by two weeks. This enabled additional time for council officers to meet with parents or parent groups.

The Chief Legal Officer stated that although it would have been more appropriate for this matter to be brought back to the Education Executive for approval, due to the urgency of the matter he advised the Education Executive that he agreed that officers took the correct course of action.

4. RAISING ATTAINMENT TEAM - UPDATE

The Education Executive noted a presentation by Lorna MacDonald and Allison Phillips, Raising Attainment Project Coordinators. Information was provided regarding the background of the project and the key development aims. A time limited investment funding was used to establish the Raising Attainment team. The team's focus was to support schools in raising attainment through improved curricular continuity in transition from primary into secondary school. Key aspects of the work carried out by the Development Officers Raising Attainment (DORAs) Team Leaders centred on developing a shared approach to raising attainment by building capacity of staff at all levels.

Details of the impact of the project to date were provided which included improved collaboration and collegiate working at all levels across sectors and across clusters to improve the quality of learning experiences for pupils. Training to enhance learning and teaching was provided with increased opportunities for cluster working to establish agreed standards through assessment and moderation. Factors influencing the successful work carried out by the team included:

- Input from Psychological Services who provided research materials to support staff training;
- Advice from Education Scotland;
- West Lothian Literacy Framework; and
- Cluster priorities and identified training needs.

Continued joint working within clusters to build capacity and effective leadership at all levels would ensure that quality learning and teaching remained at the heart of the work of all schools. In conclusion, raising attainment improved life chances and enabled all our children and young people to make good progress and to develop the essential skills for learning, life and work.

Following conclusion of the presentation the Chair, on behalf of the Education Executive, thanked the Project Coordinators for attending the meeting and for their commitment to the project.

The Education Executive then considered the report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) which

provided details of the progress of the Raising Attainment team. The report advised that a key priority of the council was to improve attainment and achievement for all within the framework of Curriculum for Excellence. The report then outlined the key points and aspects of the work carried out by the Raising Attainment team during 2012-2013, further details of which were attached as an appendix to the report.

Raising attainment remained a key focus in schools and continued efforts would be made to promote effective learning communities and to build on the work of the Raising Attainment team. Sustained improvement would come through building the capacity of teachers and promoting effective leadership at every level. It was essential that teaching staff continued to embrace change and make the effective interventions that would meet the needs of young people in West Lothian.

During the course of the discussion the Education Executive was advised that a report would be submitted to a future meeting providing details of the proposed allocation of the remaining funding available for the school session 2014-2015 to ensure the greatest impact from the investment to raise attainment. A report would also be submitted providing details of the review of the QA process in the use of Validated Self Evaluation (VSE).

The Education Executive was asked to note the contents of the report and the presentation.

Decision

1. Noted the presentation;
2. Noted the contents of the report;
3. Noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Education Executive providing details of the proposed allocation of the remaining funding available for the Raising Attainment project for the school session 2014-2015; and
4. Noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Education Executive providing details of the review of the QA process in the use of Validated Self Evaluation.

5. CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

The Education Executive noted a presentation by Anne Craig, Child Protection Officer and Iain McDermott, Child Protection Tutor.

Information was provided on Child Protection processes and procedures followed by members of staff within West Lothian Education Services to ensure that staff received relevant training and had the knowledge, understanding and support to ensure procedures were implemented to safeguard our children and young people. Details were provided on how members of staff were expected to behave in their relationships with pupils and colleagues to ensure that the Code of Professionalism and

Conduct was adhered to.

Designated members of staff (DMS) for Child Protection were supported by the Child Protection Officer and Child Protection Tutors who were linked to each cluster. The Child Protection Officer and Tutor Groups met regularly to identify staff development and training needs providing support and advice to clusters.

The Child Protection Officer then provided details of the basic principles members of staff should follow when responding to a child raising allegations of abuse or concerns. Members of the Education Executive were given an aide-memoire card which provided information relating to the "Golden Rules" staff should follow when faced with an allegation or concern. All members of staff had the responsibility to follow the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2010), copies of which was available electronically. Action procedures for managing an allegation were also available in the school Child Protection Policy.

In conclusion, it was noted that the role of education staff was to be alert to the possibility of abuse and follow the Child Protection Procedures.

Following the conclusion of the presentation the Chair, on behalf of the Education Executive, thanked the Child Protection Officer and Child Protection Tutor for attending the meeting and providing a very informative presentation.

The Education Executive then considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) which advised that all agencies in West Lothian followed Edinburgh and Lothian Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures (revised 2012). These procedures ensured effective multi-agency communication and joined up collaborative working through the provision of a consistent framework for practice.

Child Protection training was delivered to designated members of staff in the summer term each year to build on skills, increase awareness and develop understanding in the area of child protection. Annual training was also provided which included the procedures all staff should follow when they had child protection concerns both during and after the school day. Details of the contents of the Child Protection folder provided to members of staff were attached as an appendix to the report. Multi agency training in aspects of child protection supported by West Lothian Child Protection Committee was also offered to members of staff on a regular basis.

In conclusion, the information provided demonstrated that Child Protection processes and procedures in West Lothian Education Services complied with national guidance and local procedures. The child protection framework ensured staff received relevant training and had the knowledge, understanding and support to ensure processes and procedures were implemented to safeguard our children and young people.

During the course of the question and answer session the Education

Executive recommended that a further presentation should be provided to all elected members and appointed members not in attendance at the meeting, as this was found to be very informative.

The Education Executive was asked to note the presentation and contents of the report.

Decision

1. Noted the presentation;
2. Noted the contents of the report; and
3. Agreed that a further presentation would be offered to all elected members and appointed members not in attendance at the meeting.