

MORAY COUNCIL

Minute of Special Meeting of the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee

Wednesday, 27 March 2024

Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX

PRESENT

Councillor James Allan, Councillor Tracy Colyer, Councillor John Cowe, Mrs Anne Currie, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Juli Harris, Councillor Sandy Keith, Councillor Scott Lawrence, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Ms Jillian MacKellar, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Paul McBain, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Bridget Mustard, Councillor Kathleen Robertson, Reverend Tembu Rongong, Councillor Derek Ross, Mrs Susan Slater, Councillor Sonya Warren

APOLOGIES

Mrs Sheila Brumby, Mr Alfie Harper, Mrs Emma Tunnard

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive; Head of Education; Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance; Programme Manager (Learning Estate); Quality Improvement Officer (ASN) and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer.

1. Chair

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Kathleen Robertson.

2. Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests *

In terms of Standing Orders 21 and 23 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, there were no declarations from Group Leaders or Spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how Members will vote on any item on the agenda or any declarations of Member's interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

3. Resolution

The meeting resolved that in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting for Item 7 of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Para Number of Minute	Para Number of Schedule 7A
8	Para 1 Information relating to staffing matters

4. Congratulations

The Committee joined the Chair in congratulating the Active Schools Team for organising a successful Moray primary school cross country championship at Gordon Castle on Saturday 23 March along with the schools who supported their pupils to attend.

The Committee further joined the Chair in noting this was Alfie Harper's last meeting having been the pupil representative for the last 2 years and wished him all the best on his journey.

5. Learning Estate Programme - Future Forres Academy Project Update

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informing the Committee of the current status of the Future Forres Academy project and seeking approval to progress to Full Business Case.

The Programme Manager (Learning Estate) apologised for late identification of a key error in the report relating to recommendation (iv) and associated paras which had resulted in the late upload of an updated version in the Additional Meeting Documents section of the Committee papers.

In response to a question from Councillor Lawrence relating to whether the financial spend element would require to be a recommendation to Moray Council from this Committee following consideration at the meeting on 14 May 2024, the Programme Manager (Learning Estate) confirmed it would require to be reported to Moray Council in relation to additional capital funds following approval by this Committee.

The Chair moved an amendment to recommendation (iii) to include "and thereafter referred to Moray Council for approval".

Following consideration and there being no one otherwise minded the Committee unanimously agreed:

- i) to note the evidence to support a New Build project option (para 3.3);
- ii) that public engagement is undertaken regarding the location of a new school (para 4.1);
- iii) determination of the preferred site following public engagement will be at the Education, Children's and Leisure Services (ECLS) Committee on 14 May 2024 (para 4.1) and thereafter referred to Moray Council for approval; and
- iv) to approve the procurement strategy and associated costs for next stage to progress the project towards Full Business Case (FBC) (para 4.7-4.10).

6. Federation Policy for Schools

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) seeking Committee approval to scrutinise the reviewed policy and adopt this for future vacancies across schools.

In terms of Standing Order 85, the Chair sought agreement from the Committee to suspend Standing Order 77 and continue beyond 12.45pm in order to conclude consideration of this item.

This was unanimously agreed.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to:-

- i) acknowledge work to date and agree the reviewed Federation Headteacher Policy to be adopted for schools;
- ii) delegate authority to the Chief Education Officer, working with the Business Support Team Manager and the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers, to create a linear formula for management structure and staffing for any federation models and to review this regularly;
- iii) adopt this policy for any future vacancies across schools from 1 April 2024;
- iv) adopt option 6 management structure for the new pairing for St Sylvester's and East End;
- v) adopt option 2 management structure for the new executive model for Newmill, Botriphnie and Rothiemay; and
- vi) instruct officers to review the current pilot across Milne's High School and Milne's Primary to bring back a report by the end of the academic session 2024/25 regarding 5-18 campus model.

7. Briefing Report: Receipt of Petition to request a review of the Policy and Procedures for the allocation of ELC Places in Moray

The meeting had before it a briefing report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advising the Committee of a petition entitled 'To request a review of the policy and procedures for the allocation Early Learning and Petition Childcare places in Moray' received on 12 January 2024 from Clare Stables, the terms of which stated:-

"We, the undersigned, call on The Moray Council to review the policy and procedures for allocation of Early Learning and Childcare places in Moray to ensure: [a] there is adequate provision within each secondary school area to enable families living in that area to access appropriate ELC within their 20 minute neighbourhood. [b] that, where reasonably practicable, children can receive their funded entitlement at times and locations that best support their learning and development, and fit with the needs of their parents/carers. [c] that the criteria used to allocate places takes particular account of the needs of vulnerable families and children with additional support needs, including minimizing travel time and cost, enabling siblings to attend the same provision, and ensuring smooth transition to Primary School."

The Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance apologised to the Committee and Petitioners for omission of an important procedural step in the process meaning the Petitioners had not been invited to attend to speak to the petition. He advised it would be prudent to defer consideration of the report until the next Committee meeting to allow the Petitioners to be invited to attend.

There being no one otherwise minded, the Committee unanimously agreed to defer the report until the next Committee meeting to allow the Petitioners to be invited to attend.

8. Additional Support Needs Allocations [Para 1]

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advising Committee of the proposed allocations based on moderation for Additional Support Needs (ASN) (teachers and support staff) for session 2024/25.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed:-

- i) to acknowledge the work to date to bring allocations in line with available budget and ensure demand is contained within budget year on year in future;
- ii) the options that have been assessed based on moderation as well as allocations so far;
- iii) Option 3 based on proportional allocation of funding available and determined by need through moderation;
- iv) to the change management process beginning with immediate effect for Teacher allocations; and
- v) to the change management process for support staff allocations as soon as practical based on information from the system.