

MORAY COUNCIL

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

Tuesday, 28 November 2023

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

PRESENT

Councillor James Allan, Mrs Sheila Brumby, Councillor Tracy Colyer, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor John Divers, Mr Alfie Harper, Councillor Juli Harris, Councillor Sandy Keith, Councillor Scott Lawrence, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, 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 Anne Currie, Councillor Marc Macrae, Mrs Emma Tunnard

IN ATTENDANCE

Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development); Head of Education; Acting Head of Education Resources and Communities; Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager; Social Work Service Manager; Early Years Service Manager; Head Teacher, Forres Academy; Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer and Tracey Sutherland, Democratic Services Manager.

1. Chair

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Kathleen Robertson.

2. Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests *

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

Councillor Lawrence did however state that in relation to Item 12 "Education Scotland Inspection of Andersons Primary School" and Item 14 "Forres Academy Reinforced Autoclaved Aeriated Concrete (RAAC) Contingency and Recovery Planning" he was a parent of children attending the schools. This was noted.

Councillor Robertson stated in relation to Item 14 "Forres Academy Reinforced Autoclaved Aeriated Concrete (RAAC) Continutency and Recovery Planning" she was a parent of a child attending the school. This was noted.

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 Items 17 and 18 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 the Minute	Para Number of Schedule 7a
16	Para 4 Information relating to any applicant or recipient of any financial assistance provided by the Authority.

4. Minutes of meeting of 19 September 2023

The minute of the meeting of the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee dated 19 September 2023 was submitted and approved.

5. Written Questions **

The Committee noted the following written question submitted by Councillor Fernandes and the Council's response thereto:

Language Degrees

The University of Aberdeen is currently drawing up plans for consultations which are likely to see the withdrawal of Honours degree in languages (French, German, Spanish, Gaelic).

Should the withdrawal go ahead, students would have to move to the Central Belt or the South of Scotland to study languages.

How many languages teachers employed by the Moray Council are Aberdeen University alumni? How many languages teachers' vacancies are there in the Moray Council?

What would be the impact of the University of Aberdeen's withdrawal of languages degrees on languages teachers' recruitment in Moray?

RESPONSE

Of the 39 modern languages teachers across the secondary school within the authority, 8 qualified at Aberdeen University – figures taken from their GTCS registration.

We currently do not have any vacancies for modern languages teachers across the authority.

If Aberdeen University was to withdraw the options of studying modern languages to Honours degree level, it may have the impact of redirecting students wishing to study modern languages to a university elsewhere in the country. They would still be able to return to the local area as one of their choices for their NQT year. The more concerning issue would be if people initially wishing to study modern

languages at a local university chose a different subject area to study, in order to study locally.

6. Notice of Motion - Wave Trust

In terms of Standing Order 34a, there was submitted a Notice of Motion by Councillor Warren, seconded by Councillor Lawrence in the following terms:

WAVE Trust

Background

- Wave are a UK and Ireland wide network of individuals, organisations and elected representatives working together to reduce child abuse, neglect and other adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) by at least 70% by the year 2030. This is the 70/30 campaign.

Further details of Wave and the 70/30 campaign can be found at-

<https://www.wavetrust.org/7030>

- Adverse Childhood Experiences can raise the likelihood of over 80 negative life outcomes, including mental health, drug addiction, suicide attempts, alcoholism, criminality, as well as several physical health issues.
- It is important to recognise the preventative work already being carried out by the Moray Council and acknowledge that there is an understanding of ACEs across services, including Education.
- It is important to realise the intergenerational impact ACE's can have on individuals. Trauma and its effects can be passed down through generations. The effects and associated costs of ACE's can last for multiple decades.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) can also result in the entrenchment of intergenerational health and income inequalities at the loss of over £20 billion per year to the UK economy.
- The effects of ACE's can be long term, intergenerational and complex. Each case is different and there can be substantial costs in educating a young person who has suffered an ACE. Due to the negative life outcomes associated with ACE's (See first bullet point) long term costs can apply to a number of services provided by Moray Council.
- over 700 MPs, MSPs, MLAs, AMs, mayors, and local Councillors have endorsed the campaign across all political parties.

Action

There are a number of things that can be done to help prevent young people in Moray from experiencing ACEs

To help facilitate this we are asking that this committee:-

- Notes the work of WAVE Trust and its 70/30 campaign to reduce levels of child abuse, neglect, and domestic abuse by 70 per cent by 2030;
- Recognises the role that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) play in the entrenchment of intergenerational health and income inequalities and the

loss of over £20 billion per year to the UK economy. As well as significant costs in services provided by Local Authorities.

- Agrees that the Council should further develop a comprehensive early years' strategy to prevent harm to children before it happens, ensuring that all parents are supported to give children the best possible start in life.
- Agrees that the Council should explore with WAVE Trust (our/their) ideas on how to achieve 70/30, and to report back to Council within six months to indicate what would be required for the key recommendations of this strategy to be implemented and embedded within the culture and processes of the Moray Council.

Financial implications

- There will be no direct costs
- There will be an indirect cost of officer time.

The Chair advised, following officer advice having been circulated to Members, an amendment to the Notice of Motion had been received from the proposers. The Chair asked the Clerk to distribute printed copies to Members. The changes to the amendment were to delete the last two bullet points under "Action" and replace with:-

- Ask officers to report back to this committee within 6 months of the publication of the commission of inquiries report into delivery of the 70/30 target, with reference to recommendations within that report and how they relate to Moray councils current practices around adverse childhood experiences in the services covered by this committee.

The Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) provided a summary of the Officer advice circulated to Members advising it is covered in a range of actions in the Children's Services Plan approved by the Community Planning Board in May 2023, and any amendments would be best considered at the annual review in May 2024.

Adjournment of the Meeting

The Chair proposed a short adjournment to allow Members the opportunity to consider the amendment.

Resumption of the Meeting

Following a short adjournment Councillor Warren advised she was withdrawing the amendment and the last two bullet points under "Action" meaning the Committee were now being asked to note the work of the Wave Trust and recognise the role that ACEs play. She also asked that it be referred to the Community Planning Partnership to include in the review of strategic priorities. This was seconded by Councillor Lawrence.

There being no one otherwise minded, the Committee therefore unanimously agreed the amended Notice of Motion Namely to:-

- note the work of WAVE Trust and its 70/30 campaign to reduce levels of child abuse, neglect, and domestic abuse by 70 per cent by 2030; and

- recognise the role that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) play in the entrenchment of intergenerational health and income inequalities and the loss of over £20 billion per year to the UK economy. As well as significant costs in services provided by Local Authorities.

7. Children and Families Social Work Services Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2023

The meeting had before it a report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Moray informing the Committee of the budget position for Children and Families Social Work Services as at 30 September 2023.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to note the budget position at 30 September 2023.

8. Childrens Services Social Work, Review of Spend for Self Directed Support

The meeting had before it a report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Moray asking the Committee to note the review of spend for Self Directed Support (SDS) in Children's Services.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to note the review of spend for SDS in Children's Services.

9. Performance Report - Education - Period to September 2023

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informing the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 30 September 2023.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to:-

- i. note performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2023; and
- ii. note the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

10. Education Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2023

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informing the Committee of the budget position for Education as at 30 September 2023.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to note the budget position at 30 September 2023.

12. Early Learning and Childcare - Top Up Hours Update

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) updating the Committee about income generation through the top up hour and on the proposed changes for hourly, light teas and snack charges during top up hours.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to:

- i. note the uptake of top up hours across the year round services;
- ii. agree the proposed changes for hourly charges for top up hours. These charges would be £6.00 for 1 additional hour or £11.50 for 2 additional hours; and
- iii. agree the additional charges for light teas and snacks during top up hours. These charges would be up to 50p for snack and £1.95 for a light tea.

13. Education Scotland Inspection of Andersons Primary School

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informing the Committee of the outcomes of the recently published report on a Moray school following inspection by Audit Scotland.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to note the contents of this report and findings of Education Scotland following their inspection visit.

14. Initial Analysis of Secondary School Attainment - Session 2022-2023

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) reporting to Committee on the attainment of secondary schools in Moray for session 2022/2023 further to National Insight benchmarking toolkit update in September 2023 and central attainment data analysis and review.

The Quality Improvement Manager apologised for an error in paragraph 3.22, in the S4 Numeracy table where the 2023 Gap figure (column 4) should read -1% and be coloured yellow.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to:-

- i. note the position in respect of attainment of the young people of Moray for session 2022/2023;
- ii. note that performance discussions with Head Teachers continue to take place during October to December 2023 involving progress visits to schools with regards to attainment position within each secondary school and actions for improvement required;
- iii. note that a future meeting of this Committee, a follow-up Insight report will be presented in consideration of school leaver data including post-school destinations following data publication in February 2024; and
- iv. review and agree key interventions now planned and/or underway in support of raising attainment and achievement for young people across all secondary schools through identified actions and secondary Stretch aims set and previously reported to Committee.

15. Vary Order of Business

In terms of Standing Order 29 the meeting agreed to vary the order of business set down on the agenda and take Item 19 "Moray and Nairn Educational Trust -

Disbursement 2023-2024 [Para 4]" followed by Item 18 "Question Time" and Item 16 "Education Resources and Communities Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2023" as the next items of business to provide time for the webcast technical issues to be resolved to allow Item 14 "Forres Academy Reinforced Autoclaved Aeriated Concrete (RAAC) Contingency and Recovery Planning and Item 15 "Performance Report - Education Resources and Communities - Period to September 2023" to be held in public.

The press were asked to leave the meeting.

16. Moray and Nairn Educational Trust - Disbursement 2023-2024 [Para 4]

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) providing information and seeking approval for the payment plan to be used to assess applications to the Moray and Nairn Educational Trust and considering applications to the trust.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to approve grants at the rates provided in the payment plan.

The press were invited to join the meeting.

17. Question Time ***

Connecting Scotland Funding and Digital Lending Libraries

Under reference to paragraph 17 of the minute of the meeting of 19 September 2023, Councillor Warren thanked the Acting Head of Education Resources and Communities for his response following the meeting and asked whether funding applications had now been made, specifically in relation to older people who are unable to access libraries.

In response the Acting Head of Education Resources and Communities advised library and heritage staff were being trained on the digital lending devices prior to rollout. He further advised he was unable to confirm in relation to funding applications made but would ascertain and provide an update.

Additional Support Needs Review

Under reference to paragraph 17 of the minute of the meeting of 19 September 2023, Ms Slater sought an update on the remit of Additional Support Needs (ASN) and whether this was still sitting with the Head of Education.

In response the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advised the current arrangements are in place until April 2024 and work is ongoing on the review.

Social Media Chats

Councillor Warren asked if there is a policy and guidance for social media chats that informs and provides guidance to teaching staff.

In response the Head of Education advised there is a social media guidance for teachers and schools which is sent out annually to schools in the August return pack. She further advised there is a campaign just now across Moray with at least 10 sessions for parents and carers this year. In respect of children, this is a grey area as it is not possible to check who sets up chat groups which is one of the

dangers of using social media groups noting they are only secure if the users keep them secure.

Councillor Warren expressed concern for the work required by staff and reiterated that she hoped staff had the appropriate guidance.

18. Education Resources and Communities Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2023

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informing the Committee of the budget position for Education Resources and Communities as at 30 September 2023.

Following consideration the meeting unanimously agreed to note the budget position as at 30 September 2023.

19. Forres Academy Reinforced Autoclaved Aeriated Concrete (RAAC) Contingency and Recovery Planning

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advising the Committee on work to date and future planning subsequent to the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aeriated Concrete (RAAC) in Forres Academy, part of the Learning Estate.

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 the business on the agenda.

This was unanimously agreed.

The Acting Head of Education, Resources and Communities explained that whilst the report had been updated with amended Phase numbers, these had not been amended in the Appendix attached. For clarity he advised the Phase numbers in the Appendix should read:-

- Phase 2A is now Phase 2
- Phase 2C is now Phase 3B
- Phase 2D is now Phase 3D
- Phase 2B is now Phase 3A
- Phase 2E is now Phase 3D

The Chair asked that her thanks be recorded to all pupils for their resilience during the period of disruption and to staff for the support given to continuing provision of education to pupils.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to:

- i. acknowledge work to date to ensure the safety of all at the school; and
- ii. acknowledge work planned to secure further teaching areas to allow the school to operate until the new building is completed.

**20. Performance Report - Education Resources and Communities -
Period to September 2023**

The meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informing the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 30 September 2023.

Following lengthy consideration the Committee unanimously agreed to:

- i. note the performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2023; and
- ii. note the actions being taken to improve performance where required.