

MORAY COUNCIL

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

Wednesday, 24 August 2022

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

PRESENT

Mrs Sheila Brumby, Councillor Neil Cameron, Councillor Tracy Colyer, Mrs Anne Currie, Councillor Juli Harris, Councillor Sandy Keith, Councillor Scott Lawrence, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Paul McBain, Councillor Bridget Mustard, Councillor Kathleen Robertson, Councillor Derek Ross, Ms Angela Stuart, Mrs Emma Tunnard, Councillor Sonya Warren

APOLOGIES

Reverend Tembu Rongong, Mrs Susan Slater, Councillor Ben Williams

IN ATTENDANCE

Also in attendance were the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Head of Education, Head of Education Resources and Communities, Donna Borek, Interim Services Manager, Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager, Andy Hall, Senior Project Manager, Alfie Harper, Pupil Representative and Tracey Sutherland, 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 Order 20 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. Agenda Items

Councillor Warren expressed disappointment that the Information Reports were not listed on the agenda. She further expressed disappointment that the information reports are in regards to questions she had been asking and sought agreement that the reports be brought to a future meeting of Moray Council to allow discussion.

In response, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance confirmed that the Call In Procedure for Information Reports was agreed by the Council and

clarified the process is that a minimum of 2 weeks notice with 2 members signatures must be given along with the reason for the report being called in.

The Chair further added that when the email was sent notifying members that the agenda was published, it detailed that there were 3 information reports. She further advised that further consideration would be given following the meeting to how Members are notified of the information reports.

Councillor Warren sought further clarification on whether the reports could go to the next meeting of Moray Council rather than go through the Call In Procedure.

In response, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance re-iterated that the procedure for Information Reports had only been agreed in the last year to 18 months and felt that it was not an onerous procedure. He further reminded members that the nature of Information Reports is such that they would not normally require debate in the Chamber and would be for noting by Members only, however if Members are not content with the report, the agreed procedure is there for them to action.

The Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) further added that the Information Reports contained the statistical information that had been sought, however if Members would like a debate on some of the implications around the cost of living crisis in relation to this particular topic then Member's would need either to submit a notice of motion around that particular issue or greater clarity would be needed on what the issues are that Members wish to debate to make sure there is a report that gives sufficient background information to allow for an informed debate.

Following further consideration the Chair proposed bringing the reports to the Special meeting of the Committee on 14 September if Councillor Warren could confirm her reasons for calling the report in as indicated by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development).

This was agreed by Councillor Warren.

4. Thanks to Academic Community

The Chair acknowledged the resilience of all the academic staff and community over what has been a very challenging period.

5. Minutes of Meeting of 8 June 2022

The minute of the meeting of the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee dated 8 June 2022 was submitted and approved.

6. Written Questions **

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

7. Children and Families Social Work Services Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 June 2022

A report by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Moray informed the Committee of the budget position for Children and Families Social Work as at 30 June 2022.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the position at 30 June 2022.

8. Education National Improvement Framework Report and Plan

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advised Committee of the annual National Improvement Framework (NIF) plan return which is submitted to the Scottish Government by the end of August.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the contents of the Moray Self-Evaluation document and National Improvement Framework Plan;
- ii) recognise the work progressed in a year of significant Covid-19 disruption, staff absences and reduced capacity due to vacancies;
- iii) recognise the resilience and dedication across the wider Education service to continue to provide creative learning experiences and to improve service offer where this has been possible given restrictions; and
- iv) agree the annual National Improvement Framework (NIF) which includes the Executive Summary return to be submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 August 2022.

9. Scottish Attainment Challenge

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) provided the Committee with an update on the refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) which is supported by funding through the Attainment Scotland Fund, the aims of which are to address the challenges of the poverty-related attainment gap. The report also provides information regarding planned spend for the coming session.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the update on 2022 Scottish Government Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), and planned expenditure, based on the Education service self-evaluation gathered across the year, for Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) and Care Experienced Young People Funding (CEYPPF), working with Social Work colleagues;
- ii) note the strategic guidance at Scottish Government and local Authority levels to support the implementation of the funding;
- iii) note the forthcoming requirement to set stretch aims linked to key baseline data (including attainment) as required by the Scottish Attainment Challenge;
- iv) note the planned use of SEF for session 2022/23;
- v) note the early plans for CEYPPF; and

- vi) instruct officers to provide further updates in line with Scottish Government reporting requirements to be presented at future Committee meetings.

10. Education Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 June 2022

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the budget position for Education as at 30 June 2022.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the budget position at 30 June 2022.

11. Education Resources and Communities and Education Capital Budget Monitoring Report to 30 June 2022

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the capital budget position for Education Resources and Communities and Education as at June 2022.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the capital budget position at 30 June 2022.

12. Education Resources and Communities Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 June 2022

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the budget position for Education Resources and Communities as at 30 June 2022.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the budget position at 30 June 2022.

13. Learning Estate - Closure of Inveravon Primary School - Statutory Consultation

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) sought approval to undertake a statutory consultation on the closure of Inveravon Primary School.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) authorise a statutory consultation with local stakeholders (Parent Councils, parents, pupils, staff and the local community) on the proposal to close Inveravon Primary School attached as Appendix 1; and
- ii) receive a further report on the outcome of the consultation in January 2023.

14. Question Time ***

Under reference to paragraph 7 of the minute of the meeting of Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 8 June 2022, Councillor Ross sought an update on the number of secondary teaching posts still vacant.

In response, the Head of Education advised that she did not have the current figures but would circulate them to the Committee following the meeting.

Under reference to paragraph 12 of the minute of the meeting of Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 8 June 2022, Councillor Lawrence sought an update on the funding allocation for music instruction.

In response, the Head of Education Resources and Communities confirmed that staff are currently working on proposals for the distribution of the funds with partners and an update will be provided to Members.

Under reference to paragraph 19 of the minute of the meeting of Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 8 June 2022, Councillor Warren sought an update on the revised petitions process and in particular petitions from young people. She further requested an update on the crediting earlier of Young Scot Card's for pupils receiving free school meals and whether this had now been actioned.

In response, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance confirmed that Committee Services have been working on revising the process and consulted other local authorities to determine how the voices of young people are captured.

He further added that no Councils have a bespoke process for petitions from young people, however confirmed that a report will be presented to the November meeting of Corporate Committee which will contain proposals for processes to consider ways of taking on board the views of young people along with the proposed new petitions process.

The Head of Education confirmed that the Catering section are looking into the cards being credited earlier and would seek to get an update, however also added that some pilot schemes are being trialled with regards to increasing the number of breakfast clubs and also the opportunity for pupils to take home any leftover meals each day.

Also under reference to paragraph 12 of the minute of the meeting of Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 8 June 2022, Councillor Warren sought an update on the Early Learning and Childcare Consultation.

In response the Head of Education confirmed that the Consultants are still carrying out interviews and it is hoped that a report will be presented to Committee in November 2022.

Under reference to paragraph 12 of the minute of the meeting of Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 8 June 2022, Councillor Keith sought an update on the uptake for free bus travel passes.

In response, the Head of Education Resources and Communities confirmed that the uptake had risen as at 1 August 2022 from 26% to 40.8%.

Councillor Keith welcomed the increase and hoped that the uptake would continue to increase.

Councillor Ross sought an update on progress with the Additional Support Needs Review.

In response, the Head of Education Resources and Communities confirmed that it is the intention to bring an update report to the next meeting of this Committee in November.

Councillor Warren sought clarification on what the Council is doing to address the cost of living and energy crisis.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) advised that the recently appointed Senior Policy Officer (Poverty) is working to identify the range of poverty work that is currently ongoing, the issues in Moray and any potential gaps, working with Council services and partners. It is anticipated that a report will be submitted to either Corporate Committee or Moray Council to provide an update in November.

Councillor McBain sought clarification on whether the Council had taken on any Confucius Students following the Scottish Governments decision to distance itself from the Confucius Institute.

In response, Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager confirmed that the Council had received the offer of a teacher which is in the process of being taken forward.

Ms Stuart left the meeting during consideration of this item.