

MORAY COUNCIL

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

Wednesday, 07 June 2023

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

PRESENT

Mrs Sheila Brumby, Councillor Tracy Colyer, Councillor John Cowe, Mrs Anne Currie, Councillor Juli Harris, Councillor Sandy Keith, Councillor Scott Lawrence, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Paul McBain, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Bridget Mustard, Councillor Kathleen Robertson, Reverend Tembu Rongong, Councillor Derek Ross, Mrs Susan Slater, Mrs Emma Tunnard, Councillor Sonya Warren, Councillor Ben Williams

APOLOGIES

Councillor James Allan, Mr Alfie Harper, Ms Angela Stuart

IN ATTENDANCE

Also in attendance at the above meeting were the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Head of Education, Stewart McLauchlin, Quality Improvement Manager, Susanne Campbell, Quality Improvement Officer 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 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 19 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
23	6 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person(s).

4. Thanks

The Committee joined the Chair in thanking Mr Alfie Harper, Pupil Representative and Ms Angela Stuart, Primary School Representative for their contributions during previous ECLS Committee meetings as this would be the last meeting for both of them and wished them every success in the future.

In acknowledging that this was the last meeting of the Committee before the summer break, the Committee joined the Chair in wishing all staff and pupils a good summer break.

5. 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 12 – Learning Estate – Crossroads Primary School Status Update as the first report after item 4 on the agenda, to allow Councillor Coull to speak to the report.

6. Minute of Meeting of 19 April 2023

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

7. Written Questions **

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

8. Learning Estate - Crossroads Primary School Status Update

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee on the current status of Crossroads Primary School and sought a decision by Committee on the next steps.

On the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Coull spoke on behalf the of the Primary School and local community and urged members of the Committee to chose option 1 in the report.

Councillor Warren moved that the Committee agree recommendation i), ii) a and iii), this was seconded by Councillor Lawrence.

Following further consideration, Councillor Colyer seconded by Councillor Mustard proposed agreeing recommendation i), ii) b and iii)

On the division there voted:

For the Motion (4)	Councillors Warren, Lawrence, Leadbitter and Morrison
For the Amendment (10)	Councillors Colyer, Mustard, Cowe, Harris, Keith, Macrae, McBain, Robertson, Ross and Williams
Abstention (0)	

Accordingly the amendment became the finding of the meeting and the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the information included in the report;
- ii) consider future options for the school soonest; and
- iii) receive a further report following issue of the next annual School Roll Forecast report and completion of 2024/25 schools admission process.

Councillor Cowe joined the meeting during the consideration of this item.

9. Education Communities and Organisational Development Service Plans 2023-24

A report by the Depute Chief Executive invited the Committee to consider the Education and Education Resources and Communities Service Plans for 2023-24.

During consideration, Councillor Mustard proposed amending the recommendation to include 2 further recommendations that the Committee:

- i) in agreeing the plan note that in relation to ASN in particular, the broad principles around the actions of ASN in the service plan in recognition that the working group will report back to the Committee with the findings which will reflect work in this area for future years and the longer term direction of the service; and
- ii) agree the Business Admin review be reported back to Committee once the consultation analyses is completed to enable the Committee to consider the outcomes of the consultation.

Following further consideration and as there was no one otherwise minded the Committee agreed:

- i) to approve the Service Plans for services within Education and Education Resources and Communities;
- ii) in agreeing the plan note that in relation to ASN in particular, the broad principles around the actions of ASN in the service plan in recognition that the working group will report back to the Committee with the findings which will reflect work in this area for future years and the longer term direction of the service; and
- iii) agree the Business Admin review be reported back to Committee once the consultation analyses is completed to enable the Committee to consider the outcomes of the consultation.

10. Education Scotland Continuing Engagement Progress Report Millbank Primary School

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the outcomes of the recently published report on a Moray school following scrutiny activity by Education Scotland.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the contents of this report and Education Scotland continuing engagement findings following local authority reporting;
- ii) note that following review of evidence, Education Scotland will publish no further reports in relation to the October 2018 inspection of Millbank Primary School, where HM Inspectors are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve; and
- iii) commend senior leaders and staff for positive improvements secured over time for learners and the wider school community including during the Covid-19 pandemic, resulting in a very favourable end inspection outcome with considerable progress noted by HM Inspectors.

11. Education Scotland Inspection of Forres Academy

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the outcomes of the recently published report on a Moray school following scrutiny by Education Scotland.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the contents of this report and findings of Education Scotland following their inspection visit; and
- ii) that following a future re-visit from Education Scotland (anticipated April 2024), a further paper will be brought to the Committee in order to provide an update of school progress with improvements required.

12. Leadership and Management Arrangements for Primary Schools

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) sought Committee approval to review the current policy and adopt this for future vacancies across Primary schools.

Concern was raised by a number of Councillors regarding the proposed changes and in particular the proposal to increase a paired headship to a federation model of 3 schools for 1 Head Teacher.

In response, the Head of Education confirmed that within 3 rural schools it allows for collegiate working and puts a leadership model into a school that is not currently available. She further added that the current Head Teacher for Newmill and Botriphne would be offered the opportunity to take on Rothiemay Primary as a permanent appointment.

Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager, further added that in a previous authority, there had been a successful arrangement where a Head Teacher was responsible for 5 associated schools.

Councillor Harris sought clarification on the impact on accumulative travel time on the time available for the Head Teacher in each school as she was concerned that

travelling between schools is not an efficient use of time.

In response, the Head of Education confirmed that the Head Teacher is responsible for managing their time, including the time spent in each school.

Councillor Warren confirmed that she was supportive of the proposals and moved the recommendations as detailed in the report.

Following further consideration, Councillor Ross, seconded by Councillor Keith proposed agreeing the first recommendation only, until a full review of the policy is undertaken.

As a result of the further consideration, Councillor Warren withdrew her motion.

As there was no one otherwise minded the Committee agreed that a full review of the policy be carried out and the policy be taken back to a future meeting of the Committee.

13. Devolved School Management Scheme Update

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of progress with the Devolved School Management (DSM) Scheme Review, which is part of the Education Reform and School Empowerment agenda.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) reviews and notes the updated DSM scheme in the context of the revised national guidelines following stakeholder engagement and inter authority peer review; and
- ii) agrees the changes to the funding formulas included in the Moray DSM Scheme.

14. Resumption of Meeting

PRESENT

Councillor Tracy Colyer, Councillor Juli Harris, Councillor, Sandy Keith, Councillor Scott Lawrence, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Paul McBain, Councillor Bridget Mustard, Councillor Kathleen Robertson, Councillor Sonya Warren, Councillor Ben Williams, Mrs Sheila Brumby, Mrs Anne Currie and Mrs Emma Tunnard

APOLOGIES

Councillor James Allan, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Derek Ross, Mr Alfie Harper, Reverend Tembu Rongong, Mrs Susan Slater and Ms Angela Stuart.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Also in attendance at the above meeting were the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Head of Education, Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager, Susanne Campbell, Quality Improvement Officer, Lizette Van Zyl, Service Manager and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer.

15. Allocation of Education Funding

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) updated the Committee on allocation of the funding for Education in the 2023/24 revenue grant settlement and to ask the Committee to consider the allocation of the funding taking account of these issues.

- i) the funding is used on a permanent basis;
- ii) to amend the DSM Scheme formula for primary schools so that the Head Teacher is non-class committed at a roll of 121 and above at a cost of £103,000, for schools without an enhanced provision;
- iii) to amend the DSM Scheme formula for primary schools so that Head Teachers are class committed for 2 days at a roll of 95 – 120 at a cost of £45,000, for schools without an enhanced provision;
- iv) to amend the DSM Scheme formula for enhanced provision primary schools so that the Head Teacher is non-class committed at a roll of 90, this currently has no cost provision;
- v) to provide funding for one Principal Teacher raising attainment for each secondary school at a cost of £558,000; and
- vi) the remaining budget of £41k should be used to partially fund the extension of the PT Flexible Education for a further year.

16. Cost of School Day Update and Guidance

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the publication of the Cost of the School Day guidance to all Educational establishments following the collaborative work that was undertaken by the Cost of the School Day Project Workers, with schools across Moray.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) the progress to date to reduce the cost of the school day; and
- ii) the Guidance that has been produced as a result of collaborative work with Educational establishments that will be used to support ongoing work in schools to continue to reduce the cost of the school day.

17. Moray Progress in Implementing the Scottish Attainment Challenge Programme

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development informed the Committee of the impact of Scottish Attainment Challenge funding for the children and young people of Moray, in particular, those most affected by poverty.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the progress in closing the poverty related attainment gap in Moray using Scottish Attainment Challenge funding; and
- ii) acknowledge the impact of Covid-19 on work to close the poverty related attainment gap and subsequent progress made, including reducing underspend noted through targeted actions, interventions and support.

18. Performance Report - Education - Period to March 2023

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development informed the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2023.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

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

19. Performance Report - Education Resources and Communities - Period to March 2023

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development informed the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2023.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

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

20. Performance Report - Children and Families and Criminal Justice

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development informed the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2023.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note performance in the areas of Services Planning, Services Performance and other related data to the end of March 2023; and

ii) note the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

21. Information Reports - if called in

The Committee noted that no Information Reports had been called in.

22. Question Time ***

Under reference to paragraph 10 of the minute of the meeting of 19 April 2023, Councillor Mustard sought an update on the Speech and Language Contract.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that a report will be brought to the next meeting of the Committee in September 2023.

Under reference to paragraph 12 of the minute of the meeting of 19 April 2023, Councillor Keith asked the Chair if she had received a response from the Cabinet Secretary for Education asking the Scottish Government to reassess its criteria for positive destinations.

The Chair confirmed that she had written to the Cabinet Secretary for Education but had not yet received a response.

Under reference to paragraph 21 of the minute of the meeting of 19 April 2023, Councillor Warren sought an update on whether any further consultation had taken place with communities in the Buckie ASG.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that initial discussions had taken place with Political Group Leaders to agree a way forward and engagement on the School Estate will be taken forward after the summer break, progressing through ASG by ASG but no time frame has been agreed yet.

Under reference to paragraph 21 of the minute of the meeting of 19 April 2023, Councillor Warren raised concerns about not having seen a Service Level Agreement for the Moray Leisure Centre.

The Sport and Culture Service Manager confirmed that a report was submitted to Committee in December 2019 and work started on the SLA pre Covid and resources were then placed elsewhere.

She further added, that following Covid, work did recommence on the SLA, however when work on the development started, it was agreed that the SLA needs to align to any future developments and the Council was not in a position to formalise the SLA.

The Monitoring Officer added that a funding agreement has been in place since 1993 and that will continue to be active until the new SLA is in place.

Councillor Warren further added that she had requested to see the updated figures on Fitlife memberships, including corporate memberships but did not recall seeing the information.

In response, the Sport and Culture Service Manager confirmed she would arrange for the figures to be circulated.

Councillor Colyer, in reference to paragraph 9 of the minute of the meeting of 19 April 2023, confirmed that the report on the overspend and concerns within Self Directed Support will be presented to the next meeting of the IJB in June and ECLS Committee in September 2023.

Councillor Warren raised a concern about the recycling of the old astro pitch turf from Buckie High School and sought assurances that the Council work within its environmental policies.

In response, The Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that the Council had the correct arrangements in place, adhering to Council policies, however a response had been received from the Community to change those arrangements. She further added that she was happy to have a further discussion with Councillor Warren about the issue following the meeting.

23. Moray Leisure Centre Expansion Proposal [Para 6]

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) informed the Committee of the Moray Leisure Centre (MLC) expansion proposals and seek direction regarding the level of support that should be provided by the Council at this time.

Councillor Robertson moved to defer the report for a decision at the meeting of Moray Council on 28 June 2023 due to the financial implications contained in the report. This was seconded by Councillor Keith

Councillor Lawrence sought clarification on the urgency for a decision on the report and was a delay of a couple of months worth considering to ensure the right decision is made.

In response, the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that there is frailty in the building and plant and injecting any funding to maintain either could be seen as a false economy. She further added that the project plan is ambitious and Moray Leisure Centre need to obtain the relevant funding to ensure it meets the proposed timescales for delivery.

Councillor Lawrence added that he was not comfortable making the decision with the current information. Councillor Warren added that she also had concerns about the proposals.

Councillor Warren, seconded by Councillor Lawrence proposed deferring the report until the meeting of Moray Council on 27 September 2023.

On the division there voted:

For the motion (9)	Councillors Robertson, Keith, Colyer, Harris, Leadbitter, Macrae, McBain, Mustard and Williams
For the amendment (2)	Councillors Warren and Lawrence

Abstention (0)	
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Accordingly the motion became the finding of the meeting and Committee agreed to defer the report to the meeting of Moray Council on 28 June 2023.