

MORAY COUNCIL

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

Wednesday, 06 October 2021

Various Locations via Video-Conference,

PRESENT

Councillor George Alexander, Councillor James Allan, Councillor Frank Brown, Councillor Paula Coy, Councillor Lorna Creswell, Mrs Anne Currie, Councillor Tim Eagle, Councillor Claire Feaver, Councillor Aaron McLean, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Laura Powell, Reverend Tembu Rongong, Mrs Susan Slater, Ms Angela Stuart, Councillor Amy Taylor, Councillor Sonya Warren

APOLOGIES

Councillor Ryan Edwards, Mr John Morrison, Councillor Derek Ross

IN ATTENDANCE

In attendance at the above meeting were the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Head of Education, Head of Education Resources and Communities, Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Head of HR, ICT and Organisational Development, Acting Head of Children and Families, Communities (CLD) Service Manager, Hazel Sly, Continuous Improvement Officer and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Committee.

Also in attendance was Councillor Graham Leadbitter in an ex-officio role.

1. Chair

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Sonya Warren.

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. Minute of Meeting of 11 August 2021

The minute of the meeting of the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee dated 11 August 2021 was submitted by Councillor Aaron McLean as Chair of the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee and approved.

4. Written Questions **

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

5. Moray Education ELC Continuous Improvement

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) updated the Committee on the Improvement of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) services across Moray as assessed by Care Inspectorate under Key Question 5 - Operating an early learning and childcare setting (including out of school care and childminders) during Covid-19.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the progress to meet the National Standard in ELC;
- ii) note the interim inspection process from Care Inspectorate; and
- iii) note that plans are in place to further support those settings who are still not meeting the standards.

6. Wellbeing Support for Children Young People and Families

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) and the Chief Officer Health and Social Care, Moray sought agreement from the Committee on the proposed amendment for spend in relation to streamlined locality planning model across children's services in Moray.

Following consideration, the Committee noted and agreed the amendments to spend previously approved for the locality planning model at Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee on 3 February 2021 (para 15 of the minute refers).

7. The Queens Platinum Jubilee - 3 June 2022

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) asked the Committee to consider the proposals in relation to teaching staff, recognising the Queen's Platinum Jubilee as an additional day of annual leave on Friday 3 June 2022.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) recognise Friday 3 June 2022 as an additional day of annual leave for teaching staff across educational establishments in line with the provision being made for Scottish Joint Council staff; and
- ii) seek an exemption from the Scottish Government for the requirement to provide 190 days schooling and seek consent for the exceptional closure of all Moray schools on Friday 3 June 2022, under the terms of section 133 (4) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

8. Dick Bequest Statutory Fund

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) asked the Committee to consider the Council's

position in relation to the Dick Bequest following the receipt of evidence that the original truster had links to the slave trade.

Councillor Morrison moved to agree para 4.3 for the Council to lobby the Scottish Government to wind up the Dick Bequest and follow the suggestion of Messrs Alston and Morrison that the Funds be re-directed to benefit people in Jamaica, this was seconded by Councillor Warren.

Mrs Slater, Secondary Teacher Representative, sought clarification on whether paragraph 4.2 would continue if paragraph 4.3 was agreed asked whether it would be possible to add a further bullet point at 4.2 to ensure full transparency of the origin of the fund is made available.

She further sought clarification on whether the plaque commemorating Mr Dick would be removed from Andersons Primary School, Forres.

In response, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance advised that the removal of the plaque would be a decision for the school estate and that rather than removal the addition of advisory signs might be preferable.

Councillor Morrison added that she would be happy to amend her motion to include the continuation of paragraph 4.2 until such time as the fund can be wound up and was also happy to include the additional bullet point suggested by Mrs Slater.

In response, Councillor Brown expressed concern that the Committee may be trying to re-write history and proposed that the model taken by Aberdeenshire Council as indicated in paragraph 4.2 was the sensible option . This was seconded by Councillor Feaver.

Councillor Alexander thanked the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance for bringing the report to Committee and added that any change in the trust is beyond the Council's remit. Councillor Alexander added that he would like the money used to educate young people on how the money came about and the affect it has had on our area. He further added that it could be used to build bridges between the 2 areas and open up the opportunity for exchange visits.

Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Creswell proposed to agree paragraph 4.3 but for the Council to lobby the Board of Governors, not the Scottish Government and to continue with paragraph 4.2, with the inclusion of the additional bullet point until such time as the fund can be wound up.

Following confirmation from the Clerk it was agreed to take Councillor Brown's amendment (1) against Councillor Alexander's amendment (2) and the winner would then be taken against Councillor Morrison's motion.

On the division there voted:

For Amendment 1 (7)	Councillors Brown, Feaver, Allan, Creswell, Eagle, Powell and Taylor
For Amendment 2 (2)	Councillor Alexander and A McLean
Abstentions (3)	Councillors Coy, Morrison and Warren

Amendment 1 was then taken against the Motion and on the division there voted:

For the Motion (7) Councillors Morrison, Warren, Alexander, Coy,
Creswell, A McLean and Taylor

For the Amendment (5) Councillors Brown, Feaver, Allan, Eagle and Powell

Abstentions (0)

Accordingly the motion became the finding of the meeting and the Committee agreed to lobby the Dick Bequest Board of Governors and the Scottish Government to wind up the Dick Bequest and follow the suggestion of Messrs Alston and Morrison that the Funds be re-directed to benefit people in Jamaica.

The Committee further agreed that until such time as the fund is wound up the Council adopt a minimum approach in relation to the Dick Bequest, meaning:

- * not active steps to be taken to refer to or promote the Scheme (although the Council would not be able to stop teachers applying directly to the Scheme for grants);
- * no requests would be made by the Council for equipment grants from the Scheme;
- * the Council would still be required to nominate a Councillor to the Board of Governors;
- * the Scheme would likely incur higher administration costs; and
- * full transparency of the origin of the fund to be made available.

9. Publication of Refreshed Partnership Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-24

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) asked the Committee to review and endorse the draft Partnership Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan 2021-24 on 31 August 2021 in line with statutory requirements.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- i) reviewed the final draft Partnership Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan 2021-24, taking account of amendments made following comment at Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee on 11 August 2021; and
- ii) endorsed the final draft Partnership Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-24 and associated implementation plan.

10. Question Time ***

Councillor Brown sought clarification on a motion raised at the Children and Young people's Committee in 2020 where a report was requested on the Council's position with regards to the use of mobile phones in school.

In response the Deputy Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that when the request was originally requested it was confirmed that the use of mobile phones in school would be picked up as part of the Digital Strategy. She further clarified that due to Covid, changes in staffing in both ICT and Education the work has been delayed however it is hoped that an update will be brought to the November meeting of this Committee.

Councillor Brown indicated that there were advantages to the use of mobile phones in school but he feared that their use was being abused by pupils.

In response, the Deputy Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) confirmed that schools do have behavioural management tools that can be used to ensure the use of mobile phones is not abused and suggested that confirmation of these could be circulated to Members following the meeting.

Councillor Eagle sought confirmation on whether an update on the Council's position with regards to School Crossing Patrollers was being considered to allow a further discussion on the issue. It is a number of years since the Council made the decision to remove the Crossing Patrollers and he felt it would be a good opportunity to review the decision that was made.

In response, Councillor Warren said that she would arrange for Officers to provide members with an update on the various initiatives which are currently taking place within the authority.

Councillor Feaver expressed concern that period products are not readily available or easily accessed in schools and sought an update on their availability within the schools.

In response, the Deputy Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development) said she did not have the information available to allow her to reply to Councillor Feaver at the meeting but agreed to provide information to members following the meeting.