

## Education, Children and Families Committee

**10.00am, Tuesday 10 October 2017**

### **Present**

Councillors Perry (Convener), Dickie (Vice-Convener), Bird, Booth (substituting for Councillor Corbett), Mary Campbell, Child, Laidlaw, Rust, Smith and Young.

### **Added members for Education matters**

#### **Religious Representative**

Rabbi David Rose.

#### **Parent Representative**

Alexander Ramage (non-voting).

### **1. Deputation on behalf of NLRP12**

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The Committee agreed to hear a deputation from John Wallace on behalf of NLRP12, an Edinburgh based organisation which supported families with children with rare diseases. The deputation highlighted the following:

- Mr Wallace's son suffered from a rare condition named FCAS2 which had prevented him from attending school regularly. This meant he was struggling to keep up with his school work and the family had concerns regarding his future educational attainment.
- A robotic device called the AV1 had been developed which would allow the pupil to participate in school classes via an audio-video link from the classroom to his home. Mr Wallace had been in contact with the Council to arrange a trial of this device in the school however due to the concerns of other parents of pupils in the school this had not gone ahead as planned.
- The device was already in use in another local authority in the United Kingdom and from his own research and that of others he was confident the device posed no threat to the safety or privacy of other pupils in the school.
- The device was secure and could only be accessed by the pupil it was intended for and therefore no one else could gain access to the video link.
- The deputation felt that the Council's handling of the case was unacceptable and parents had not been given sufficient information about the security of the device in order to make an informed decision prior to submitting the complaints which had led to the cancellation of the planned trial.
- The time missed from school was detrimental to the pupil's education and issues such as those he faced contributed to the disparity in educational attainment between pupils with a disability and those without.

The deputation requested the Committee to consider the following:

- that the Council allow Mr Wallace to access the essence of the complaints received in order that he could address the issues of concern
- that the Council allow a trial of the device to take place as soon as possible.

### **Decision**

- 1) To note that within the next two weeks, the Acting Head of Children's Services intended to clarify the information governance and security processes around the proposed usage of the AV1 technology in the school environment, progress with work on the privacy impact assessment and to also consult and engage with the wider parent community on the issue.
- 2) To agree that members of the Committee would be kept updated on progress.
- 3) That a report would be submitted to the meeting of the Committee in December 2017 setting out the issues and any implications of rolling out the technology.

## **2. Participation and Engagement in Communities and Families**

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Information was presented on the participation and engagement activities which had been undertaken recently by Communities and Families with a view to improving engagement processes to better inform policy and decisions within the service area in future. The report highlighted the use of parent and pupil councils, surveys, gatherings organised by young people, action research groups and the Consultative Committee with Parents.

Councillor Graczyk, as a local Ward member, asked the Committee to take into account the following key issues during their consideration of the report:

- concerns around the lack of a formal engagement structure at a local level between Scottish Local Authorities and Youth Councils
- why was there engagement with young people via the Scottish Youth Parliament but not at Council level in Edinburgh the Scottish Youth Parliament had elections, they had the ability to vote on various issues and had proper representation for their peers but there was not a similar arrangement at a local level

### **Motion**

- 1) To note the report.
  - 2) To discuss appropriate ways to ensure that children and young people, parents and carers, staff and other stakeholders could better inform committee decisions and shape policy.
  - 3) As a follow-on to the Scottish Government pilot on children and young people's engagement, agree to take part in a workshop with children and young people with a focus on what meaningful and sustained participation would look like in a children and young people friendly city.
- moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Dickie

## Amendment

- 1) To instruct officers to refresh the report to include research on the potential for establishing an Edinburgh Youth Council body to give Young People who live, work or study within the City of Edinburgh a stronger voice, and the power to be involved in democracy; to inspire Young People about the immense and positive change they could make to their local communities and the wider city environment; and to improve communication between the Council and the Youth sector.
  - 2) Officers to consider interest, logistics and resource required in light of engagement already undertaken with partners and existing consultation, and look to examples operational in other cities.
- moved by Councillor Laidlaw, seconded by Councillor Smith

## Voting

For the motion - 9 votes  
For the amendment - 3 votes

(For the motion – Councillors Bird, Booth, Mary Campbell, Child, Dickie, Perry, Ritchie and Young.

For the amendment – Councillors Laidlaw, Rust and Smith.)

## Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Perry.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

## 3. Motion by Councillor Arthur – Child Poverty – School Uniform Grant

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The following motion was submitted by Councillor Arthur in terms of Standing Order 29:

- “1) To recognise that child poverty is rising in Edinburgh and that the City of Edinburgh Council, The Scottish Government and the UK Government have a duty to use their powers to reverse this trend.
- 2) To recognise that a significant burden on low income families is providing their children with a school uniform.
- 3) To recognise the significant work of the Edinburgh School Uniform Bank, Edinburgh Police Fund for Children, and others to help equip children from low income families for school.
- 4) To recognise the Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland estimate that the cost of a school uniform is £129.50, but the School Uniform Grant provided by City of Edinburgh Council is only £42 and £50 for primary and secondary school children respectively.
- 5) To recognise that the Scottish Government recommends the School Uniform Grant level be set at £70, but many Local Authorities exceed this.

- 6) To request that within two cycles Council Officers report on the feasibility of increasing the School Uniform Grant to ensure that from the 2018/19 academic year children from low income households are better equipped for school.”

- moved by Councillor Arthur, seconded by Councillor Dickie

#### **Decision**

To approve the motion by Councillor Arthur.

### **4. Minutes**

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#### **Decision**

To approve the minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 15 August 2017 as a correct record.

(Reference – Minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee of 15 August 2017, submitted)

### **5. Education, Children and Families Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan**

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The Education, Children and Families Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan for the period from December 2017 to March 2018 was presented.

#### **Decision**

To note the Key Decisions Forward Plan for the period from December 2017 to March 2018.

(Reference – Key Decisions Forward Plan, submitted.)

### **6. Education, Children and Families Committee Rolling Actions Log – October 2017**

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The Education, Children and Families Committee Rolling Actions Log for October 2017 was presented.

#### **Decision**

- 1) To approve the closure of actions 3, 4, 16 (decision 1), 17 (decision 1), 20 and 21.
- 2) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, submitted.)

### **7. Education, Children and Families Committee Business Bulletin**

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The Education, Children and Families Committee Business Bulletin for October 2017 was presented.

## **Decision**

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted.)

## **8. Education Governance: Fair Funding to Achieve Excellence and Equity in Education**

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The Scottish Government had invited the Council to comment on proposals to change the way schools were governed and financed. Key issues were raised included the potential devolution of power over school governance to regional level and to schools themselves, and the actions which would be required to be undertaken to support Head Teachers to succeed under the new governance model.

A proposed response to the consultation was submitted.

## **Decision**

To approve the consultation response to “Fair Funding to Achieve Excellence and Equity in Education” as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families - submitted)

## **9. Education Authority Improvement Plan**

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The City of Edinburgh Education Improvement Plan for the academic year 2017-18 as required by the Standards in Scotland’s Schools Act (2000) was submitted.

The Plan addressed the following four outcomes set out within the National Improvement Framework which were raising attainment, improving health and wellbeing, improving employability skills and closing the poverty related attainment gap. Steps which would be taken to help towards reducing inequalities in learning were also outlined.

## **Decision**

- 1) To approve the Education Authority Improvement Plan as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
- 2) To agree that the Committee recognised the challenges Edinburgh schools faced as a result of a shortage of teachers in STEM areas and commended the efforts of schools, in particular teachers, in their managing of the situation.
- 3) To instruct the Executive Director for Communities and Families to provide details at the December Committee meeting on the number of teacher vacancies in Edinburgh schools and an assessment of the impact this had on the high standards of learning in Edinburgh.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families - submitted)

## 10. Schools and Lifelong Learning Estate Strategic Review – Update on Informal Consultation in West and South West Edinburgh

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An update on the informal consultations which were to be carried out in West and South West Edinburgh was presented.

Officers were in the process of formulating options for the school estate which would be presented to elected members in the following weeks before a full consultation was undertaken.

With regards to Queensferry High School, it was anticipated that the school roll would exceed the capacity of the new school by 2023 and therefore informal consultation had already taken place with relevant Parent Councils and further engagement with other parties would follow.

### Decision

- 1) To note the update on the informal consultation process with local elected members, school communities and other key stakeholders in west and south west Edinburgh which would inform a detailed statutory consultation paper (or multiple papers if required) expected to be submitted to Committee for consideration in December 2017.
- 2) To note that if, as a result of the informal consultation process, it was necessary for further engagement to be progressed before the preferred strategic options could be established, then the submission of draft statutory consultation papers for consideration by Committee may be delayed to future Committee meetings during 2018.

(Reference – Minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 15 August 2017 (item 1); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

## 11. Statutory Consultation – A Replacement for Castlebrae High School

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Authority was sought to proceed with the statutory consultation relating to the replacement Castlebrae High School. The draft consultation paper and response questionnaire was submitted. The public consultation period was due to begin on 1 November 2017 with a final consultation report due to be submitted to a meeting of the Council in May 2018.

### Decision

- 1) To agree that a statutory consultation based on the details provided in the draft statutory consultation paper as set out in Appendix 1 to the report could proceed in relation to a replacement for Castlebrae High School on the site identified in Craigmillar Town Centre.
- 2) To note that an Outcomes of the Consultation report was expected to be submitted for consideration to a full Council meeting by May 2018.

- 3) To note that the Executive Director for Communities and Families would ensure that easily accessible versions of the consultation papers and response questionnaires would be made available in local libraries.
- 4) To note that a list of the statutory consultees would be provided to local ward members.

(Reference – Minute of the Education, Children and Families Committee 15 August 2017 (item 1); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

## **12. Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare from 600 to 1140 Hours by 2020**

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A draft plan for the delivery of the increase of early learning and childcare to 1140 hours as required by the Scottish Government was presented. The plan outlined the Council's current position, the number of spaces which would be required going forward and the infrastructure and staff required to deliver this.

The draft plan followed a phased approach to the expansion which would be completed by 2020, with approximately 1000 children already receiving the increased 1140 hours of early learning and childcare. Consultations would take place to identify areas of demand to further inform the plan.

A final plan was intended to be presented to the Committee in December 2017.

### **Decision**

- 1) To note the submission of the Council's draft Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Plan to the Scottish Government.
- 2) To note that a final report was intended to be submitted to the Education, Children and Families Committee in December 2017 setting out the financial implications following the review of the plan by the Scottish Government.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

## **13. Child Poverty - Equity Framework**

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The 2017 Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill placed a requirement on local authorities to develop and publish a local child poverty action report.

The Equity Framework intended to be used by the Council to address issues of child poverty in Edinburgh was presented. The Framework built upon the work of the 1 in 5: Raising Awareness of Child Poverty in Edinburgh project which began in 2015 and included 71 schools across Edinburgh.

The three main areas of focus were to minimise costs and reduce pressures on family budgets, to ensure equal access to opportunities regardless of income and to reduce poverty-related stigma. The Framework aimed to close the attainment gap between children living in poverty and those who were not and to increase engagement and enjoyment of school by helping children feel respected, valued, included and to have a sense of belonging.

## **Decision**

- 1) To approve the Equity Framework for use by City of Edinburgh Council schools and settings.
- 2) To instruct officers to evaluate its impact and bring a further report to Committee in December 2018.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

## **14. Parental Engagement: Partnership Schools**

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A progress update on the Partnership Schools Project was presented. The Project had recently completed its second year and aimed to promote the involvement of parents in their children's education. The Project currently involved three schools in Edinburgh which were Castleview Primary, St. Peter's RC Primary and St. John's RC Primary.

### **Decision**

To note the update.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

## **15. Arts and Creative Learning Update**

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An update was provided on the work undertaken by the Arts and Creative Learning Team over the past year. Information was provided on five key services: Instrumental Music Service, Youth Music Initiative, Creative Learning, Dance Development and Screen Education Edinburgh and the allocation of provision across Edinburgh.

### **Decision**

- 1) To note the update.
- 2) To note the progress of the Instrumental Music Service.
- 3) To note the progress of the Creative Learning Network funded by Education Scotland and related creative learning initiatives.
- 4) To note the progress of the Scottish Government's Youth Music Initiative in Edinburgh funded via Creative Scotland.
- 5) To note the progress of work carried out by Screen Education Edinburgh.
- 6) To note the high level of external funding and partnership working.
- 7) To agree that the Committee would receive a further report in October 2018.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

## 16. Lifelong Learning Service Officers

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Information was provided on the role and responsibilities of Lifelong Learning Service Officers (LLSO), their relationships with communities.

LLSO would work as members of a locality-based integrated team delivering lifelong learning services according to National and Council priorities, the strategic direction set for lifelong learning, and the Locality Improvement Plan (LIP).

### Decision

- 1) To note the report and to approve the continued engagement with communities to achieve agreed priorities for locality Lifelong Learning Services.
- 2) To agree to receive a further report on the impact of staffing changes, including the total number of activity hours offered at each community centre, within 3 months.

(Reference – Education, Children and Families Committee 15 August 2017 (item 11), report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

## 17. Revenue Monitoring 2017-2018 – Month Three Position

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The projected three-month revenue monitoring position for the Communities and Families Directorate was presented. A balanced budget position for 2017/18 was projected, dependant on the management of demand-led service pressures.

### Decision

- 1) To note the net residual budget pressure of £1.1m which remained at month three.
- 2) To note that the approved savings in 2017-18 totalled £7.348m and were on track to be delivered in full.
- 3) To note that the Executive Director for Communities and Families had been asked to identify proposals to deliver additional savings in 2017/18 to offset the projected deficit in the Council wide budget.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted)

## 18. Looked After Children - Transformation Programme Progress Report

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The Committee, at its meeting on 15 August 2017, had agreed to refer the progress report on the Transformation Programme for Looked After Children to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee for scrutiny.

That Committee referred the report back to the Education, Children and Families Committee with the following requests:

- i) to call for a report to its December meeting quantifying the risk related to unaccompanied asylum seeking children; and

- ii) to consider writing to the Scottish and UK Governments for their support with the increasing pressures placed on the authority with regard to looked after children.

### **Decision**

- 1) To call for a report to the meeting of the Committee in December 2017 quantifying the risk related to unaccompanied asylum seeking children.
- 2) To write to the Scottish and UK Governments for their support with the increasing pressures placed on the authority with regard to looked after children.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Ritchie declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a non-Executive Director of Children's Hearings Scotland.

(Reference – Education, Children and Families Committee 15 August 2017 (item 14); referral report by the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, submitted)