

THE FIFE COUNCIL - EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – BLENDED MEETING

Committee Room 2, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

21 March 2023

10.15 am – 12.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Kathleen Leslie (Convener), Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, Patrick Browne, John Caffrey, Ian Cameron, Fiona Corps (substituting for Councillor Boubaker-Calder), Altany Craik (substituting for Councillor Linda Erskine), Dave Dempsey, Sean Dillon, Brian Goodall (substituting for Councillor Anis-Miah), Alycia Hayes, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, Daniel Wilson, Mr. Brian Blanchflower and Mr. Alastair Crockett, religious advisors.

ATTENDING: Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director, Education and Children's Services; Maria Lloyd, Head of Education & Children's Services - Secondary Schools & Specialist Support; Angela Logue, Head of Education & Children's Services - Primary Schools & Improvement Support; Shelagh McLean, Head of Education & Children's Services - Early Years and Directorate Support; Jackie Funnell, Education Manager, Education & Children's Services; Alison Binnie, Finance Business Partner; and Diane Barnett, Committee Officer, Legal & Democratic Services.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Naz Anis-Miah, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Colin Davidson and Linda Erskine.

There was a slight delay to the Committee start time due to a fire alarm at the venue.

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 7.1.

33. MINUTE

The Committee considered the minute of the Education Scrutiny Committee of 24 January 2023.

Decision

The Committee agreed to approve the minute.

34. INSPECTION OUTCOMES AUGUST 2021 – JANUARY 2023

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services providing an overview of the quality improvement activity across Fife schools and early learning centres, Education Scotland inspection activity in Schools and Care Inspectorate Inspections within Early Learning Centres and Out of School/Creche Provision, during the academic Session 2021/22.

A summary of Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate inspections from August 2022 was also provided, however, more detail of the outcome of inspections for the whole of academic year 2022/23 would be provided for the Scrutiny Committee's consideration in January 2024.

Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) scrutinised the outcomes of the inspection activity;
- (2) noted areas of success and progress, as well as the actions being taken to ensure continued improvement; and
- (3) noted that a more detailed report on the outcome of inspections for the whole academic year 2022/23 would be provided for the Committee's consideration at its meeting on 9th January, 2024.

35. RELATIONSHIPS & BEHAVIOUR - SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL STAFF

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Education and Children's Services providing details of the supports available for school staff when there were incidents of violence and aggression.

Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) reviewed and commented on the content of the report and the supports available;
- (2) requested a further report toward the end of the year, to include:
 - (a) updated and comparative data relating to violent incidents broken down as appropriate according to, for example: SIMD, gender, age, care experience, additional support needs, etc;
 - (b) an update on progress of the pilot model of having a social worker based in secondary schools; and
 - (c) an update on the work of the recently established multi-agency group committed to working together in responding to violent incidents and the development and implementation of best practice processes; and
- (3) agreed to encourage all Elected Members to undertake Level 1 of Trauma Informed Practice training for a better understanding of reasons for violent and aggressive behaviour.

36. RELATIONSHIPS & BEHAVIOUR - SUPPORT FOR PUPILS

As requested at its previous meeting on 24 January 2023, the Committee considered a report by the Head of Education and Children's Services providing information relating to behaviour in Fife schools and details of the approaches in place to support young people.

Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) examined the information provided relating to pupil behaviour and the supports available, as detailed in the report;
- (2) requested a further report toward the end of the year, to include:
 - (a) updated and comparative data relating to violent incidents broken down as appropriate according to, for example: SIMD, gender, age, care experience, additional support needs, etc;
 - (b) an update on progress of the pilot model of having a social worker based in secondary schools; and
 - (c) an update on the work of the recently established multi-agency group committed to working together in responding to violent incidents and the development and implementation of best practice processes; and
- (3) agreed to encourage all Elected Members to undertake Level 1 of Trauma Informed Practice training for a better understanding of reasons for violent and aggressive behaviour.

Councillor Craik left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

37. EDUCATION SERVICE REVENUE BUDGET 2022-23 PROJECTED OUTTURN

The Committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services and the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services providing an update on the forecast financial position for the 2022-23 financial year, for the areas in scope of the Education Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) noted the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report;
- (2) noted the projected outturn position and the relevant areas of projected over and under spend within the service; and
- (3) requested that the next revenue budget scrutiny report included feedback on any Corporate decision relating to the use of the projected underspend due to savings arising from teachers' industrial action.

38. EDUCATION SERVICE CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2022-23: PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services and the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services providing information on the overall progress of the Education Service capital programme, for the current financial year, 2022-23 and progress on major projects.

Decision

The Committee noted:-

- (1) the financial position as detailed in the report, and
- (2) that the budget had been revised to reflect the outcome of the Capital Plan review undertaken in February 2021 and the subsequent re-phasing exercise carried out in May 2022.

Councillor Caffrey left the meeting following consideration of the above item.

39. EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services relating to the workplan for future meetings of the Education Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) agreed to review the workplan with a view to putting forward suggestions for areas of scrutiny - any suggestions were to be submitted to the Convener, Lead Officer and Committee Officer for consideration;
- (2) as referenced at Para. 34. (3) above – 'Inspection Outcomes' – a detailed report for academic year 2022/23 would be considered at its meeting on 9 January 2024;
- (3) as referenced at Para. 35 (3) and Para. 36 (3) above – 'Relationships and Behaviour – Support for school staff and Support for pupils', respectively, an update report would be provided toward the end of the year on a date to be advised.