

**THE FIFE COUNCIL - EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – BLENDED MEETING**

**Committee Room 2, 5th Floor, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes**

**28 January 2025**

**10.00 am – 12.30 pm**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Kathleen Leslie (Convener), Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, Auxi Barrera, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Ian Cameron, Rod Cavanagh, Eugene Clarke, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Linda Erskine, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, James Leslie, Lynn Mowatt, Alistair Suttie and Daniel Wilson; and Mr Ian Macaulay, Church of Scotland.

**ATTENDING:** Donald MacLeod, Executive Director, Education, Maria Lloyd, Head of Education, Secondary Schools and Specialist Support, Angela Logue, Head of Education, Primary Schools and Improvement Support, Shelagh McLean, Head of Education, Early Years and Directorate Support, Kevin Funnell, Service Manager (Directorate Operations), Alan Cumming, Education Manager, Pamela Colburn, Quality Improvement Officer, Education; Jil Simpson, Headteacher, Lorna McKay, Teacher and Christine Crooks, Pupil Support Assistant, Kennoway Primary School; Alison Binnie, Finance Business Partner and Diane Barnett, Committee Officer, Finance and Corporate Services.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Councillor John Caffrey and Mr Alastair Crockett, Cupar Baptist Church.

**112. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 22.

**113. MINUTE**

The committee considered the minute of meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee of 19 November 2024.

**Decision**

The committee approved the minute.

**114. COST OF SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education relating to the cost of school transport (current), including cost of provision for pupils with additional support needs, as requested at its meeting of 5 March 2024 (minute reference para 84. (2) of 2024.ES.41).

**Decision**

The committee:-

- (1) scrutinised and commented on the contents of the report;

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- (2) noted that, with a view to reducing costs, the service was streamlining and automating their process to ensure consistent application of qualifying criteria for free school transport for all children/young people; and
- (3) welcomed the service's commitment to further promote and encourage active travel for the health and wellbeing of children/young people.

### 115. INSPECTION OUTCOMES AUGUST 2023 – JUNE 2024

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education providing an overview of the quality improvement activity across 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 2023/2024.

#### **Decision**

The committee:-

- (1) scrutinised and commented on 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) recommended that, to encourage appropriate scrutiny at area level, the service, in addition to existing arrangements for advising ward members of inspections of establishments in their area, would send a weblink to inspection reports to area committee conveners as soon as they became available.

### 116. HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES - PROGRESS REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education providing progress in relation to actions developed to support school staff and pupils in reducing and addressing incidents of violence and aggression, as part of the Health and Wellbeing Improvement Priorities for 2023-26.

The committee also received a verbal update by the Head of Education, Secondary Schools and Specialist Support relating to the work being carried out in schools by Safer Communities Youth Justice Officers to tackle violence and aggression.

#### **Decision**

The committee:-

- (1) scrutinised and commented on the content of the report and improvement plan;
- (2) noted that the service was now recording data which would provide information on the ratio of number of incidents to number of children/young people involved/affected;

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- (3) thanked the Headteacher, Teacher and Pupil Support Assistant from Kennoway Primary School for their contribution to the discussion; and
- (4) agreed that an officer led, member working group be arranged - to add value to ongoing work relating to improving relationships and behaviour in schools, possible approaches and actions to address violence and aggression involving children/young people and staff. Said working group to comprise one member from each political group – nominations to be submitted to the convener and committee officer in the first instance.

*Councillor Davidson left the meeting briefly during discussion of the above item, from 11.37 am until 11.40 am. Councillor Kathleen Leslie left the meeting briefly during discussion of the above item, from 11.40 am until 11.42 am.*

### **117. 2024-25 REVENUE BUDGET PROJECTED OUTTURN – EDUCATION DIRECTORATE**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Education and the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services providing an update on the projected outturn financial position for the 2024-25 financial year for the Education Directorate as at 31 October 2024.

#### **Decision**

The committee scrutinised and noted the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

### **118. 2024-25 CAPITAL MONITORING PROGRESS REPORT – EDUCATION DIRECTORATE**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Education and the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services providing an update on the Capital Investment Plan and advising on the projected financial position for the 2024-25 financial year for the Education Directorate.

#### **Decision**

The committee scrutinised and noted the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

### **119. EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PLAN**

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services relating to the committee's consideration of the workplan for future meetings.

#### **Decision**

The committee noted the workplan and suggestions were invited from members of the committee for future areas of scrutiny.