

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 7 DECEMBER, 2017

Present: Councillors G Owen (Chair), M Findlater (Vice-Chair), Mr D Bilsland, R Bruce, C Buchan, M Buchan, S Dickinson, M Ford, Ms A Guy, M Ingleby, R McKail, Mrs M Nelson, D Robertson (as substitute for Councillor V Harper), A Simpson, R Thomson (as substitute for Councillor A Evison), J Whyte and L Wilson.

Apologies: Councillors A Evison and V Harper.

Officers: Director of Education and Children's Services, Head of Resources and Performance, Head of Lifelong Learning and Leisure, Head of Children's Services, Principal Solicitor Governance (Miss R O'Hare) and Senior Committee Officer (Mr N David)

DR I R FINDLAY

The Chair, Councillor Owen, paid tribute to Dr Ian Findlay who had recently died. Dr Findlay had been a religious representative on the Education and Children's Services Committee, and its predecessor committees, for more than 10 years.

The Committee concurred with the Chair and observed a minute's silence in tribute to Dr Findlay.

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

The Chair asked Members if they had any interest to declare in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct. No interests were intimated.

2. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In making decisions on the following items of business, the Council **agreed**, in terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act, 2010:-

- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (2) where an Equality Impact Assessment was provided, to consider its contents and take those into account when reaching their decision.

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE OF 12 OCTOBER, 2017

The Minute of Meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee of 12 October, 2017, was circulated, **approved** as a correct record and thereafter signed by the Chair.

4. "RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW" – SCOTTISH YOUTH PARLIAMENT PRESENTATION

3 Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament gave a presentation to the Committee.

Josh McRae (Aberdeenshire East), Sasha Brydon (Aberdeenshire West) and Lauren McGill (Angus North & Mearns) gave a presentation on the "Right Here, Right Now" campaign. They provided information on the elements which Aberdeenshire Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament would be involved in. This included developing a peer workshop which they hoped to deliver to all youth platforms who would then deliver locally to school assemblies.

They went on to speak about the Year of Young People and ideas which the Year of Young People ambassadors would like to organise. These included delivering a mindfulness and relaxation workshop to pupils before exams in 2018; a large regional event involving young people from other north local authorities to discuss diversity; creation of a website to involve young people in forum discussions; and organising an LGBT event. A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Thereafter, the committee concurred with the Chair in thanking the 3 members of the Scottish Youth Parliament for an excellent and informative presentation.

The Committee **agreed** that the members of the Scottish Youth Parliament be asked to nominate a person to receive future Education and Children's Services Committee agendas, with a view to the local members of the Scottish Youth Parliament being given an opportunity to provide comment to the Committee on relevant agenda items.

5. SCRUTINY REFERRAL FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE – PRIMARY SCHOOL PROCUREMENT

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Audit Committee of 21 September, 2017 (Item 5) there was circulated a report dated 11 October, 2017, by the Director of Education and Children's Services on a scrutiny referral in respect of Primary School Procurement.

The report explained that at the meeting of the Audit Committee on 21 September, 2017, an Internal Audit report was received and considered. The Audit Committee identified a matter of service delivery for improvement being non-compliant with financial regulations and/or the service's financial procedures in Primary Schools. The relevant extract of the report and the draft minute of the meeting were included as an appendix to the report.

The report went on to explain that the Audit Committee had powers relating to the scrutiny of service delivery. Section G.2.2 of part 2a of the Scheme of Governance allowed the Audit Committee to request that a policy committee conduct the committee review process in respect of a matter of service delivery, identified in an Audit Report for improvement.

Following consideration, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to conduct the Committee review process in respect of the matter of service delivery identified by the Audit Committee for improvement,
- (2) to appoint the Head of Resources and Performance as the Lead Officer and that the Head of Resources and Performance report to the Education and Children's Services Committee with the Stage 1 report at the meeting on 22 March, 2018, and

- (3) that the Head of Resources and Performance report to the Audit Committee at their meeting on 31 January, 2018 to confirm that the Committee Review Process would be conducted.

6. CONSULTATION REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE STONEHAVEN TOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL ZONES

With reference to the Minute of the Meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee of 14 June, 2017, (Item 11) and the Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee of 28 November, 2017 there was circulated a report by the Director of Education and Children's Services on the Review of the Stonehaven Town Primary School Zones.

The report reminded members that the consultation regarding the review of the Primary School Zones within the town of Stonehaven was approved at the Education and Children's Services Committee on 14 June, 2017. The consultation was launched on 28 June, 2017 and ran until 29 September, 2017.

The consultation proposed to amend the existing primary school catchment areas within the town of Stonehaven for new pupils joining from August, 2018. This proposed rezoning tied up rural parts of the catchment, ensuring they followed roads and postcode boundaries wherever possible, and also realigned the school rolls within the three primary schools in the town.

The report had been considered at the Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee on 28 November, 2017. The Learning Estates Manager provided a verbal update on the decision of that Committee, whereby it had been agreed to make a recommendation to the Education and Children's Services Committee that the proposal detailed in the report be adopted, and that the proposals were only a short term solution with regard to Dunottar Primary School, as the long term need was for a new school.

Thereafter the Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) acknowledge the formal report regarding the consultation on the review of Stonehaven Town Primary School Zones,
- (2) note the recommendation from Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee from their meeting on 28 November, 2017, and
- (3) adopt the proposals as detailed in the consultation report, outlined in Appendix A.

7. EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE EXCEPTION REPORTING: JULY – SEPTEMBER, 2017 (ABERDEENSHIRE PERFORMS)

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of 23 March, 2017, (Item 8), there was circulated a report dated 17 October, 2017 by the Director of Education and Children's Services advising how Education and Children's Services was performing against key performance measures and associated targets as set out in the Education and Children's Services Service Plan 2016 to 2019 in the period from July to September, 2017. The report commented on the five performance measures which were currently performing on target and as a result no exceptions were noted.

The Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) acknowledge the performance achieved from July to September, 2017,

- (2) note those measures for performance which were below expectations in July to September, 2017,
- (3) note the publication of the complete July to September, 2017 performance report on ward pages,
- (4) instruct the Director of Education and Children's Services to continue to report, by exception, to Committee Quarterly Performance measures against Service objectives.

8. PRIMARY CURRICULUM – UPDATE ON MANAGING NON-CLASS CONTACT TIME

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee of 31 August, 2017 (Item 16), there was circulated an update report dated 29 November, 2017, by the Director of Education and Children's Services on the managing of non-class contact time. A revised version of the report was tabled at the meeting.

The report reminded members that there was a move away from deployment of staff in a centralised model of visiting specialist teachers to a model where schools and clusters could work collegiately to agree the composition of staffing for their situations. The report highlighted that there would be no reduction in teacher numbers. It would be a change in the way in which teaching staff were deployed and managed.

The report further explained that there were currently visiting specialist teachers who, whilst teaching in primary schools, came from both Secondary and Primary Sectors, and therefore there were different implications for each staff group. For Primary registered teachers there would initially be little change. In the longer term the numbers of schools in which they taught was likely to reduce as the teaching commitment would be part of a staffing allocation to agreed schools there would be an expectation of flexibility as they integrated more fully with the schools' under the management of Head Teachers. Head Teachers would continue to have the choice on how they deployed teachers to fulfil the curriculum in their school, including having teachers offer specific curricular areas as appropriate.

For Secondary registered teachers there were two options. The first option was to return to a Secondary setting and there would be support for teachers who wished to do this. The second option was to gain primary registration.

The report explained that following the meeting of the Committee on 31 August, 2017 arrangements had been made to individually meet with all visiting specialist teachers. Thereafter a meeting with visiting specialist coordinators took place in November to discuss the collated responses from the one to one meetings.

Following discussion, the Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) note the update within the report on progress to date with arrangements in schools to ensure that non-class contact time was covered in schools, and
- (2) note that a further update report would be submitted to the meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee on 1 February, 2018, and that this report should address concerns expressed by the Committee regarding the retention of staff and retention of skills.

9. REGIONAL SKILLS STRATEGY

There was circulated a report dated 1 November, 2017, by the Director of Education and Children's Services on the Regional Skills Strategy.

The report explained that the Regional Skills Strategy was the culmination of work undertaken by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) in partnership with a wide range of regional and national organisations to develop a shared regional skills strategy for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City. The report was also to be presented to Infrastructure Services Committee for their endorsement.

The Strategy was a high level strategy focused on a regional approach to ensure all the relevant partners and agencies were working together to deliver on the skills agenda to ensure businesses had the people they needed, and people had the skills to gain employment opportunities in the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire areas.

The Regional Skills Strategy was appended to the report.

The Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to note the Regional Skills Strategy,
- (2) to endorse the elements of the Regional Skills Strategy that fell within the remit of the Education and Children's Services Committee, and
- (3) that the Director of Education and Children's Services seek continued engagement on the development of the Regional Skills Strategy Action Plan in order to maintain the opportunity to provide comment on it.

10. USE OF DELEGATED POWERS TO APPROVE BUDGET VIREMENTS

On a circulated report dated 6 November, 2017, by the Director of Education and Children's Services, the Committee **agreed** to note the use of delegated powers by the Director of Education and Children's Services by reason of special urgency to approve the virements set out in the appendix to the report, the virements relating to rates budgets and Active Schools budget.