

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
ABERDEENSHIRE EDUCATIONAL TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE

VIRTUAL MEETING, 30 SEPTEMBER, 2022

- Present:** Councillors J Whyte (Chair), L McAllister, G Owen and Ms S Padfield.
- Apology:** Councillor A Stirling.
- Officers:** Director of Education and Children's Services (Laurence Findlay), Accountant (Wendy Evans), Team Leader, Finance (Fiona Massie) and Committee Officer (Kasia Balina).

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

2A. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In taking decisions on the undernoted items of business, the Sub-Committee **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 relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and
- (2) to consider, where an equality impact assessment has been provided, its contents and to take those into consideration when reaching a decision.

2B. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Sub-Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the item specified below so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the undernoted paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Item No

5

Paragraph No of Schedule 7A

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3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE OF 24 JUNE, 2022

On consideration of the circulated Minute of Meeting of the Sub-Committee of 24 June, 2022, Members **approved** it as a correct record.

4. ABERDEENSHIRE EDUCATIONAL TRUST (AET) – FINANCIAL UPDATE

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Sub-Committee of 19 March, 2021 (Item 6), when the regular updates on the Aberdeenshire Education Trust (AET) income and expenditure had been agreed, there was circulated a report dated 29 August, 2022, by the Director of Business Services, which outlined the financial position of the Trust for the period to 31 August, 2022.

The report advised that (1) at the start of the current financial year the balance held within AET was £4,459,429.08 and those monies were invested in a mixture of external investments and the Council's Loans Fund, (2) during the period 1 April, 2022 to 31 August 2022, there had been £45,649.26 paid out from the AET, (3) applications for travel grants and school excursions were increasing and to date grants of over £21,000 had been provisionally awarded for trips due to take place in the current financial year, (4) applications for further education grants were normally received after the start of the academic year so only a relatively small amount had been awarded as at 31 August, 2022, and it was anticipated that demand would continue to rise, (5) the preference grants and school prizes were normally paid out annually at the financial year end, (6) at its meeting on 11 March 2022, Trustees had agreed to the use of Trust funds to pay for external legal advisors to help to modernise the Trust and Morton Fraser had been appointed, (7) the level of grant awarded for Travel, Further Education and School Excursions was reviewed annually in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI) at July and the maximum grant would increase from £542 to £609 for Travel and Further Education and from £1,084 to £1,218 for School Excursions, (8) in the period to 31 August, 2022 £28,610 had been received in dividends, and (9) interest of £4,480 had been received for the period April to July 2022, and was higher than previous years due to increasing interest rates from the Loans Fund and would be calculated and allocated later in the financial year.

Having considered Members' comments with regard to the donation from the Robb's Trust, the method for grants for school excursions to be paid, and the timeline for cooperation with Morton Fraser, the Sub-Committee **agreed** to note the financial position of the Aberdeenshire Educational Trust as at 31 August, 2022, as detailed in the report.

5. ABERDEENSHIRE EDUCATIONAL TRUST (AET) – GRANT FUNDING AWARDS

With reference to the Minute of the Meeting of the Sub-Committee of 3 December, 2021 (Item 5), when it had been agreed that any applications outwith travel and further education awards be presented to the Trustee Representatives for approval at their quarterly meetings, there had been circulated a report dated 29 August, 2022 by the Director of Business Services, which sought consideration of 5 applications received for the period from 11 June, 2022 to 26 August, 2022 for grant funding from the Aberdeenshire Educational Trust.

The Sub-Committee **agreed** to approve the applications received for grant funding from the Aberdeenshire Educational Trust (AET) for the period from 11 June, 2022 to 26 August, 2022, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.