

EDUCATION RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 26 September 2023

Chair:

Councillor Lynsey Hamilton

Councillors Present:

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor John Anderson, Councillor Ross Clark, Councillor Margaret Cowie, Councillor Maureen Devlin (*substitute for Councillor Mo Razzaq*), Councillor Allan Falconer, Councillor Grant Ferguson, Councillor Elise Frame, Councillor Alistair Fulton, Councillor Mark Horsham, Councillor Cal Johnston-Dempsey, Councillor Gavin Keatt (Depute), Councillor Susan Kerr, Councillor Ross Lambie, Councillor Eileen Logan, Councillor Katy Loudon, Councillor Julia Marrs (*substitute for Councillor Geri Gray*), Councillor Ian McAllan, Councillor Mark McGeever, Councillor Graham Scott, Councillor Bert Thomson, Councillor David Watson

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Joe Fagan (ex officio), Councillor Geri Gray, Councillor Richard Lockhart, Councillor Mo Razzaq, Councillor Margaret B Walker

External Members Present:

Jennifer Gaffney, Christine Hall, Joan Lennon, John Mulligan

External Members' Apologies:

Naomi Baxter, Gillian Coulter, Dr Nagy Iskander

Attending:

Education Resources

C McKenzie, Executive Director; D Dickson, Operations Manager; A Donaldson, Head of Education (Inclusion); S Nicolson, Head of Education (Senior Phase); L Sherry, Head of Education (Support Service and School Estate); J Wallace, Head of Education (Primary and Early Years)

Finance and Corporate Resources

L Harvey, Finance Manager (Resources); P MacRae, Administration Adviser; K McLeod, Administration Assistant; M Milne, Head of Personnel Services; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Strategy); M M Wilson, Legal Manager

Chair's Remarks

The Chair:-

- ♦ welcomed Jacqueline Wallace to the meeting and congratulated her on her recent appointment to the post of Head of Education (Primary and Early Years)
- ♦ referred to the decision of the Council, at its meeting held on 23 August 2023, that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Education Resources Committee to allow for a full discussion on the Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) charity and its work to nurture a supporting environment in educational settings for LGBT young people

At the invitation of the Chair, the Executive Director (Education Resources) provided a brief update and confirmed that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Education Resources Committee

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Education Resources Committee held on 27 June 2023 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Committee decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

3 Education Resources - Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/2024

A joint report dated 23 August 2023 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Education Resources) was submitted on the actual expenditure measured against the revenue budget for the period 1 April to 11 August 2023 for Education Resources.

As at 11 August 2023, there was a breakeven position against phased budget. However, areas of financial risk had been identified in respect of Education Resources' budget as follows:-

- ◆ cost of transport
- ◆ position taken by the Scottish Government to hold back funding for the maintenance of teacher numbers.

Variance explanations were outlined in Appendix A of the report. Virements were proposed to realign budgets across budget categories and with other Resources and those were also detailed in Appendix A of the report.

Following discussion, Councillor Logan, seconded by Councillor Watson, moved that the Committee ask the Chief Executive to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Education expressing concern regarding the Scottish Government's position in relation to holding back funding for the maintenance of teacher numbers and indicating that concerns related to the financial situation in which the Council found itself and the fact that the 2022 Census reflected an inflated level of teacher/support staff who were in place because of temporary funding invested by the Council and not because of Government baseline funding. This was accepted by the Committee.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the breakeven position on Education Resources' revenue budget, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, be noted;
- (2) that the proposed budget virements be approved; and
- (3) that the Chief Executive write to the Cabinet Secretary expressing concern regarding the Scottish Government's position in relation to holding back funding for the maintenance of teacher numbers and indicating that concerns related to the financial situation in which the Council found itself and the fact that the 2022 Census reflected an inflated level of teacher/support staff who were in place because of temporary funding invested by the Council and not because of Government baseline funding.

In terms of Standing Order No 14, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 10.20am for a short period. The meeting reconvened at 10.37am without the attendance of Councillor Thomson

Councillors Frame and McGeever joined the meeting during consideration of the above item

4 Education Resources – Capital Budget Monitoring 2023-2024

A joint report dated 7 September 2023 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Education Resources) was submitted providing information on the progress of the capital programme for Education Resources for the period 1 April to 11 August 2023.

The 2023/2024 capital programme for Education Resources amounted to £19.333 million. This included budget amendments for 2023/2024 totalling a net increase of £0.286 million, identified since the last report to Committee. Those amendments were detailed in Appendix A to the report.

Anticipated spend to date was £5.824 million and spend to 11 August amounted to £5.433 million, resulting in spend being behind programme by £0.391 million. This related, in the main, to the new Wooddean Early Learning Centre.

The Committee decided: that the Education Resources' capital programme of £19.333 million, and expenditure to date of £5.433 million, be noted.

5 Education Resources – Workforce Monitoring – May to July 2023

A joint report dated 24 August 2023 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Education Resources) was submitted on the following employee information for Education Resources for the period May to July 2023:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health statistics
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ discipline, grievance and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers and exit interviews
- ◆ staffing watch as at 10 June 2023

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 27 June 2023 (Paragraph 7)]

6 Education Resources – Resource Plan Quarter 4 Progress Report 2022/2023

A report dated 7 September 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the Education Resource Plan Quarter 4 Progress Report 2022/2023 for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The Education Resource Plan 2022/2023 set out the objectives and actions to be managed and delivered by the Resource in the financial year 2022/2023. The Resource Plan measures were rated using a traffic light system of red, amber or green as well as blue (BRAG) which indicated that an action had been completed.

Details were provided on:-

- ◆ progress against all Resource Plan measures, as detailed in the Quarter 4 Progress Report 2022/2023, attached as Appendix 2 of the report
- ◆ key achievements made by the Resource in the period April 2022 to March 2023

No measures had been classified as red or categorised as “report later” or “contextual” and no measures had changed allocation status from Quarter 2 to Quarter 4 .

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Education Resource Plan Quarter 4 Progress Report 2022/2023, as summarised in paragraph 5.2 and attached as Appendix 2 of the report, be noted;
- (2) that the key achievements made by the Resource to date, as detailed in paragraph 5.3 of the report, be noted; and
- (3) that it be noted that no areas had been identified as requiring improvement or to be reported later.

[Reference: Minutes of 14 February 2023 (Paragraph 6)]

7 Underage Use of e-Cigarettes and Vaping

A report dated 5 September 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on work being undertaken by Education Resources to raise awareness among children and young people on the potential risk to their health through vaping and the environmental damage caused due to irresponsible discarding of those products.

At its meeting on 24 May 2023, the Council considered a motion regarding the health and environmental harm caused by the increasing use, particularly by young people, of Disposable Nicotine Vapour Products (vapes). In supporting the motion, in addition to calling for a ban on single use vapes due to their health and environmental harm, the Council agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the appropriate Committee on:-

- ◆ issues which educational establishments were experiencing with vaping
- ◆ actions which the Council and its partners were taking, or could take, to reduce the use of vaping products among children and young people
- ◆ the potential use of a communications campaign to raise awareness of such issues

An action plan for schools and educational establishments was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. Details were given on proposals for:-

- ◆ key actions to be taken forward by Education Resources, in partnership with NHSL Public Health
- ◆ curriculum based activities on which Education Resources would take the lead
- ◆ actions for the Council and partner agencies

Officers responded to members' questions on the report.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Council's position relating to a call for a ban on single use vapes due to their health and environmental harm be noted;
- (2) that approval be given for Education Resources to take the lead on curriculum based activities, designed to raise awareness among children and young people, as detailed in Section 5 of the report; and
- (3) that the steps to be taken forward by Education Resources, in partnership with NHSL Public Health and other partners, as detailed in Section 6 and the action plan shown in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of South Lanarkshire Council of 24 May 2023 (Paragraph 8)]

8 Youth, Family and Community Learning Service Multiply Adult Numeracy Initiative

A report dated 5 September 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the allocated Multiply Funds for Youth, Family and Community Learning and of the planned delivery model and associated staffing requirements, including the need to appoint to posts as a matter of urgency.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) formed part of the UK Government's Levelling Up Strategy funding, targeted at areas identified as most in need, and was the main intended replacement for European Union Structural Funds. Within the overall budget, a sum of money had been ringfenced to fund the Multiply adult numeracy initiative and each area was required to invest a ring-fenced amount to fund local Multiply interventions.

Details were given on the priorities for which the Council's Youth, Family and Community Learning Service (YFCLS) would deliver interventions.

Details were also given on the Youth, Family and Community Learning Service's planned delivery of the 'Numbers Count' project, a key feature of which would be the delivery of specific interventions to engage parents to support their own and their child's learning. Inputs would be designed to attract learners from Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) areas into financial literacy programmes to better understand daily life challenges.

All programmes would be monitored using agreed YFCLS and partnership measures. Learner progress and impact would be monitored and recorded respectively through an existing suite of measures.

To support the Multiply project, it was proposed that the following posts be added to the establishment until 31 March 2025:-

Post	Proposed Number of Posts (FTE) Permanent	Grade	SCP Range	Annual Salary
Team Leader	1.0	Grade 3 Level 4	SCP 72-74	£40,275 to £41,115
YFCL Officer	4.0	Grade 3 Level 2	SCP 63-65	£35,530 to £36,498

The cost of YFCLS supporting the delivery of Multiply amounted to £0.481 million over 2023/2024 and 2024/2025. This included staffing costs of £0.368 million to 31 March 2025 and equipment and other resources of £0.113 million. Those costs would be met from the Shared Prosperity Funding for this project.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the requirement to have posts added to the establishment to meet the additionality purpose of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund be noted;
- (2) that the proposed additional posts and the financial costs detailed in Sections 6 and 7 respectively of the report be approved and that the posts be added, on a temporary basis to 31 March 2025, to the Youth, Family and Community Learning Service establishment to deliver the 'Numbers Count' project; and

- (3) that the continued commitment to vulnerable learners and the actions to develop their skills and confidence through Youth, Family and Community Learning Service activities be noted.

9 School Holiday Dates 2024/2025

A report dated 7 September 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the proposed holiday arrangements for schools in South Lanarkshire for session 2024/2025. A range of stakeholders, including Parent Councils and employee trades unions, had been consulted on the proposals.

The Committee decided: that the following school holidays for session 2024/2025 be approved:-

Session 2024/2025

First Term	Teachers' In-service	Monday	12 August 2024
	In-service day	Tuesday	13 August 2024
	Pupils return	Wednesday	14 August 2024
September	Closed on	Friday	27 September 2024
Weekend	Re-open	Tuesday	1 October 2024
October Break	Closed on	Monday	14 October 2024
	Re-open	Monday	21 October 2024
Christmas	In-service day	Monday	11 November 2024
	Closed on	Monday	23 December 2024
	Re-open	Monday	6 January 2025
Second Term			
February break	Closed on	Monday	17 February 2025
		Tuesday	18 February 2025
Spring	In-service day	Wednesday	19 February 2025
break/Easter	Closed on	Monday	7 April 2025
	Re-open	Tuesday	22 April 2025
Third Term			
	In-service day	Thursday	1 May 2025
Local Holiday	Closed	Monday	5 May 2025
Local Holiday	Closed on	Friday	23 May 2025
	Re-open	Tuesday	27 May 2025
Summer break	Close on	Wednesday	25 June 2025

Lanark schools to observe 5 and 6 June 2025

Schools to close at 2.30 pm on last day of Terms 1 and 2

Schools to close at 1pm on last day of Term 3

Proposed in-service days 2 dates for teachers' in-service training in August 2025 still to be confirmed.

[Reference: Minutes of 15 November 2022 (Paragraph 9)]

10 Accounts Commission – Early Learning and Childcare – Progress on Delivery of the 1140 Hours Expansion

A report dated 7 September 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the findings of the report published by the Accounts Commission on 1 June 2023 on the progress of delivery of the 1140 hours expansion of early learning and childcare (ELC).

The focus of the Accounts Commission's assessment was based on:-

- ◆ progress which the Scottish Government and councils had made in addressing the main risks to expanding funded ELC
- ◆ progress which the Scottish Government had made on planning how to assess the effectiveness of the expansion

The Accounts Commission had identified gaps in the data available on funded ELC and their potential impact as an area for action. It had published a recommendation for the Scottish Government and councils and a number of recommendations for the Scottish Government alone around:-

- ◆ review and collection of data
- ◆ development of long term workforce plans for the sector
- ◆ urgent implementation of a process for monitoring progress with providers paying the living wage to staff delivering funded ELC
- ◆ capturing and considering children's views as part of future evaluation of the policy
- ◆ improvement of planning for and implementation of future policies by working with stakeholders to make plans to gather the necessary data for managing and planning services at an early stage

There were no immediate specific action points for the Council given its investment to expand both early and childcare infrastructure and workforce to meet, wherever possible, the needs of parents/carers and families across South Lanarkshire.

The Committee decided: that the Accounts Commission report of 1 June 2023 on the progress made on the delivery of 1140 hours expansion of early learning and childcare be noted.

11 Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) – Triannual Report 3

A report dated 7 September 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the Triannual Report 3 published on 3 June 2023 by Education Scotland on the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) programme in South Lanarkshire.

The Education Scotland report provided an update on the steps taken since the publication of the Triannual Report 2 in March 2023 and was based on the key themes detailed in the report, focusing on the overall progress made during 2022/2023. A copy of the full report was attached at Appendix 1 to the Executive Director's report.

The main focus for the Triannual Report 3 was on learning, teaching and assessment and key highlights in terms of the following were detailed in the report:-

- ◆ strengths
- ◆ assessment
- ◆ partnerships
- ◆ professional learning

Sections 3 and 4 of the Triannual Report 3 focused on the next steps for continuous learning, teaching and assessment and on progress towards stretch aims and those would continue to be taken forward in the current academic year.

Overall, the Council had demonstrated considerable progress in its implementation of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) refresh, in particular, governance around the Strategic Equity Fund (SEF) and the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF).

Education Resources would, over the school session, continue to build on the progress identified in the Triannual Report 3, with a clear emphasis on maximising funding to support poverty related barriers to learning to improve better outcomes for children and young people.

Officers responded to a member's question on the report.

The Committee decided: that the Scottish Attainment Challenge Triannual Report 3 (June 2023), published by Education Scotland, be noted.

12 Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment in Scotland

A report dated 6 September 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing an update on the national Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment in Scotland following publication of the report by Professor Hayward and the Independent Review Group (IRG) entitled "It's Our Future".

Following engagement with a wide range of participants, including learners and teachers, the report "It's Our Future: Report of Qualifications and Assessment" was published in June 2023.

Recommendations in the report focused on the introduction of a Scottish Diploma of Achievement (SDA) with the following 3 elements:-

- ◆ personal pathway
- ◆ programmes of learning
- ◆ project learning

Details of each of those elements were provided in the report.

The Review recommended that:-

- ◆ all learners be offered the opportunity to experience learning in all elements of the Diploma
- ◆ the Diploma be the graduation certificate offered in all settings where Senior Phase education was provided
- ◆ there be a digital profile for all learners which allowed them to record personal achievements and plan future learning
- ◆ there be a move to use the terms SCQF level as the key descriptor followed by type of qualification to strengthen parity of esteem between different types of qualifications
- ◆ information on learners' achievements within the SDA, courses and projects be aligned in Scottish Statistics on Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations and INSIGHT data

There were also a number of recommendations on the change process and what would require to happen if the SDA was to be developed successfully.

The Scottish Government was considering the report and recommendations and would respond to those in due course.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

13 Standards and Quality Report 2022/2023

A report dated 5 September 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the Education Resources' Standards and Quality Report for session 2022/2023.

The purpose of the Standards and Quality report was to provide high level information on the successes and achievements of Education Resources. Specifically, it had been designed to provide information about how Education Resources performed as a Service, the type of activities delivered and examples of the impact that those had on children, young people and families.

The Standards and Quality Report 2022/2023:-

- ◆ was designed to address progress towards meeting Education Resources' key priorities
- ◆ reported on all elements of the Service
- ◆ made specific reference to the impact of the COVID pandemic and the fact that schools and educational establishments were still considered to be in the recovery phase, given that restrictions were still in place up to the end of spring 2022
- ◆ had been written in an accessible format and in plain English, to be read by a wide audience of stakeholders

Work was ongoing to share the report publicly on the Council's website in a format that met the accessibility standards. Copies would be made available to all schools, establishments and other stakeholders.

A Standards and Quality report would be published in September each year and would reflect the work of the previous school session. The format and content would continue to meet national requirements for reporting and also provide information to stakeholders.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

14 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.