

# EDUCATION RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 27 June 2023

## **Chair:**

Councillor Lynsey Hamilton

## **Councillors Present:**

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor John Anderson, Councillor Ross Clark, Councillor Margaret Cowie, Councillor Grant Ferguson, Councillor Elise Frame, Councillor Alistair Fulton, Councillor Geri Gray, Councillor Mark Horsham, Councillor Cal Johnston-Dempsey, Councillor Susan Kerr, Councillor Ross Lambie, Councillor Richard Lockhart, Councillor Katy Loudon, Councillor Ian McAllan, Councillor Lesley McDonald (*substitute for Councillor Eileen Logan*), Councillor Mo Razzaq, Councillor Graham Scott, Councillor Bert Thomson, Councillor Margaret B Walker, Councillor David Watson

## **Councillors' Apologies:**

Councillor John Bradley, Councillor Joe Fagan (ex officio), Councillor Gavin Keatt (Depute), Councillor Eileen Logan, Councillor Mark McGeever

## **External Members Present:**

Naomi Baxter, Jennifer Gaffney, Christine Hall, John Mulligan

## **External Members' Apologies:**

Gillian Coulter, Dr Nagy Iskander, Joan Lennon

## **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, Quality Improvement Manager

### **Finance and Corporate Resources**

L Harvey, Finance Manager (Resources); P MacRae, Administration Adviser; K McLeod, Administration Assistant; E McPake, Human Resources Business Partner; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Strategy); G McCann, Head of Administration and Legal Services

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## **1 Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

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## **2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of the Education Resources Committee held on 2 May 2023 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

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## **3 Education Resources - Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/2023**

A joint report dated 24 May 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 2022 to 31 March 2023 for Education Resources.

The year end position at 31 March 2023 was a balanced budget after approved transfers to reserves, as detailed in Appendix A of the report.

The balanced budget was a net effect of underspends in Early Years' core budget, partially offset by overspends connected to transport costs, for both mainstream and Additional Support Needs (ASN) transport, school placements, which were demand led, and additional costs of teacher cover. The overspends were also supported by an over recovery of income from Early Years' fees and income from other local authorities for children placed in the Council's schools and establishments.

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

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the Education Resources' outturn position as at 31 March 2023 of a balanced position after approved transfers to reserves, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, be noted; and
- (2) that the proposed budget virements be approved.

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#### **4 Education Resources - Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/2024**

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A joint report dated 5 June 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 19 May 2023 for Education Resources.

As at 19 May 2023, there was a breakeven position against phased budget.

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.

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the breakeven position on Education Resources' revenue budget, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, be noted; and
- (2) that the proposed budget virements be approved.

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#### **5 Education Resources - Capital Budget Monitoring 2022/2023**

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A joint report dated 7 June 2023 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Education Resources) was submitted on the progress of the capital programme for Education Resources for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The total capital programme for 2022/2023 was £13.918 million. Expenditure to 31 March 2023 was £15.342 million. The final expenditure position of £15.342 million showed a difference of £1.424 million in comparison to the programme of £13.918 million.

The additional spend of £1.424 million mainly related to the timing of spend and details were provided in Appendix A to the report.

**The Committee decided:** that the Education Resources' capital programme of £13.918 million, and expenditure for the year of £15.342 million, be noted.

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## **6 Education Resources - Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/2024**

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A joint report dated 7 June 2023 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Education Resources) was submitted on the progress of the capital programme for Education Resources for the period 1 April to 19 May 2023.

The Education Resources' capital programme amounted to £19.047 million and expenditure as at 19 May 2023 was £0.900 million. This included budget amendments for 2023/2024, totalling a net increase of £0.370 million, which had been identified since the approval of the original budget in February 2023 and details of those were provided in Appendix A of the report.

**The Committee decided:** that the Education Resources' capital programme of £19.047 million, and expenditure to date of £0.900 million, be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of South Lanarkshire Council of 22 February 2023 (Paragraph 3) and Minutes of the Executive Committee of 21 June 2023 (Paragraph 6)]*

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## **7 Education Resources – Workforce Monitoring – March and April 2023**

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A joint report dated 25 May 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 March and April 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 11 March 2023

Officers responded to members' questions on accident/incident reporting.

**The Committee decided:** that the report be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 2 May 2023 (Paragraph 5)]*

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## **8 Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) - Sustainable Rate Price Review 2023/2024**

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A report dated 8 June 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on work undertaken to set the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) sustainable rate for funded providers for implementation from 16 August 2023.

At its meeting on 15 November 2022, the Committee approved an hourly rate of £5.71 for 3 to 5 year olds and an hourly rate of £6.34 for 2 year olds, plus £0.50 per hour for lunch. The hourly rate to funded providers for statutory 1,140 ELC provision was in addition to the funded programme of Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme Scotland Regulations 2021, the Council's investment to support Early Access for 3 year olds and the zero based support for training and development and quality assurance.

Following a consultation process in 2022 with the funded providers, a representative subgroup of funded providers, covering all private and voluntary sectors, was established to consider rate setting.

In May 2023, the subgroup had been updated on the financial climate local government was experiencing and the challenges faced in terms of service reduction over the next 2 to 3 years. In addition, discussion had taken place in terms of the Council's willingness to support funded providers within the financial envelope available for ELC provision, the proposals for August 2023 and the intention to continue to support and work with funded providers on the delivery of ELC. The subgroup was invited to consult with the broader group, as appropriate, to determine the next steps for wider consultation, as required. This was undertaken and the proposed rate changes for August 2023 were agreed by the funded providers. The early involvement in the process and consultation approach was noted as positive by the funded providers.

The proposed rate changes, which incorporated a 3% rise, recommended an hourly rate of £5.88. Having applied the same increase for 2 year olds, the proposed revised hourly rate was £6.53. The £0.50 per hour lunch rate would remain.

It was anticipated that the revised rate would be implemented from 16 August 2023, in line with the terms and conditions of the Procured Service Agreement for ELC, and would be paid in the next appropriate payment cycle for each funded provider.

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the content of the report and the outcome of the sustainable rate review be noted;
- (2) that the recommendation for the proposed sustainable rate, as detailed in section 5.2 of the report, be approved; and
- (3) that the requirements of the Procured Service Agreement (PSA) for ELC to secure funded providers' agreement be progressed in line with the framework terms.

*[Reference: Minutes of 15 November 2022 (Paragraph 8)]*

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## **9 Mental Health Update Report**

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A report dated 8 June 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing an update on the work of the Psychological Service to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People was a national and local priority.

In June 2018, the Children and Young People's Mental Health Task Force was jointly commissioned by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) to investigate how to improve the organisation of children's mental health services. The Task Force published a series of recommendations in July 2019. Following on from those recommendations and, as part of its Mental Health Strategy, the Scottish Government had made funding available for the provision of access to counsellors through schools, to be delivered to pupils aged 10 and over from 2019/2020. Additionally, the Scottish Government allocated funding to councils to enable them to prepare to implement community mental health and wellbeing services for children and young people.

All mainstream secondary schools, ASN secondary schools and young people attending the Aspire youth employability service now had access to counselling support. All primary schools could access counselling through a learning community model. Over the past year, the number of children and young people accessing counselling had increased both in primary and secondary sectors.

Data was provided on those who had accessed counselling as well as information on outcomes. The report also provided an update on the various community mental health approaches adopted and programmes provided in South Lanarkshire.

The Council's Psychological Service had been involved in research exploring the impact of COVID-19 which found that lockdown had an adverse impact on mental health and wellbeing.

In discussion with the Chief Officer of Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership, some short-term funding had become available to focus on early interventions and school counselling supports. This funding would be ring-fenced and governance would be through the Integration Joint Board. Part of the funding proposals agreed was to employ an additional Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) maingrade Educational Psychologist to support whole system working and to further develop interventions. It was, therefore, proposed that a post of maingrade Educational Psychologist on Grade 1, SNCT (£67,887) be established on a temporary basis for 23 months.

Education Resources would continue its work to:-

- ◆ engage with young people, led by the Psychological Service, to feed into future plans around mental health supports
- ◆ complete annual quality assurance visits to secondary schools for delivery of counselling interventions
- ◆ monitor, evaluate and review the delivery and impact of all interventions
- ◆ further embed Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) interventions within the authority
- ◆ embed suicide prevention approaches within Education Resources and with partners

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

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the establishment of 1 FTE post of maingrade Educational Psychologist on Grade 1, SNCT (£67,887) on a temporary basis for 23 months, funded from NHS Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership funding stream, to support sustained implementation of mental health and wellbeing interventions, be approved; and
- (2) that the progress made in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in schools across South Lanarkshire, together with the work highlighted in paragraph 11 of the report, be noted.

*In terms of Standing Order No 14, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 11.02am for a 6 minute period. The meeting reconvened at 11.08am without the attendance of Councillors Razzaq and Thomson*

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## **10 Scottish Government Consultation on School Hours (Prescribing the Minimum Annual Number of Learning Hours per Week)**

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A report dated 8 June 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on prescribing the minimum annual number of learning hours for school pupils.

Section 21 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 made provision about learning hours and gave powers to Scottish Ministers to make regulations to prescribe the minimum number of learning hours per academic year. The Scottish Government planned to set a legal minimum number of hours of school education that pupils should receive each year and had launched a consultation providing the opportunity for local authorities, parents, children and young people and other stakeholders to provide views and evidence about the potential impact of the implementation of this policy.

There was currently some variation in the school hours offered across Scotland that had arisen for a number of reasons. There were also some differences in local delivery, however, the Scottish Government did not intend to constrain local variation.

The Council supported the principle that there should be no ad hoc means to reduce the time that children spent in school or formal education settings and would wish the normal school week for children attending primary school to be preserved at 25 hours and for young people attending secondary school, preserved at 27.5 hours, with the option for local flexibility, for example, at the end of a school term. It was considered that annualising this figure rather than specifying the normal school year as 38 weeks/190 days might introduce unintended consequences.

A copy of the Council's draft response to the consultation, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, had been submitted to the Scottish Government on 13 June 2023 intimating that it was subject to Committee approval.

<b>The Committee decided:</b>	that the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on 'Prescribing the minimum annual number of learning hours per week', attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.
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## 11 School Improvement and Inspection Update

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A report dated 12 June 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ the work of the Curriculum and Quality Improvement Service (CQIS) in relation to supporting schools and Early Years' establishments to achieve positive outcomes for inspections
- ◆ the outcome of school and Early Years' inspections 2022/2023
- ◆ future developments to support schools for 2023/2024

Schools in Scotland were subject to external inspections from Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) who were employed by Education Scotland. The number of inspections carried out within each local authority area in a school session depended largely on the size of the authority. The Council had 13 establishment inspections during 2022/2023. Information on comparator local authorities was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

In August 2016, HMIe introduced the following range of inspection models to suit particular circumstances and contexts, and to reflect the changing educational landscape, details of which were provided at Section 4 of the report:-

- ◆ full inspection model
- ◆ short inspection model
- ◆ localised thematic model
- ◆ neighbourhood model

Inspection activity had ceased following the COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020 and resumed in August 2022.

It was recognised that schools could find the process of preparing for inspection challenging. In addition, significant and rapid changes in national educational policy, as well as periods of remote learning and school closure, had left schools less certain about new expectations for inspections.

In order to best prepare schools for a return to the inspection process and to refocus on expectations around self-evaluation for improvement, CQIS support and challenge for establishments had been wide-ranging, as detailed in the report.

Section 7 of the report provided details on the outcome of inspections during session 2022/2023. 6 primary inspections and 1 secondary inspection this session had been identified by Education Scotland as having practice worth sharing nationally. In addition, there was no requirement for follow-up inspection activity as an outcome of any of the school inspections during 2022/2023. An analysis of quality indicators was also given in terms of the Council and comparator authorities.

Early years' establishments and school nursery classes were inspected both by Education Scotland around the quality of educational provision using Quality Indicators (QIs) and separately by the Care Inspectorate. During 2022/2023, 6 Early Years' inspection reports by Education Scotland had been published. All received positive outcomes of a grade of 'good' or above for all QIs. In addition, there was no requirement for follow-up inspection activity as an outcome of those inspections.

Support and challenge for schools around self-evaluation would continue to be developed to secure further advances in school improvement.

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that current and planned progress relating to Education Scotland inspection support be noted; and
- (2) that the results of this year's Education Scotland inspection results for schools and Early Years' establishments be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 18 August 2020 (Paragraph 13)]*

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## **12 Youth, Family and Community Learning Pathfinder Initiative**

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A report dated 8 June 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing an update on the progress on the Youth, Family and Community Learning (YFCL) Pathfinder Initiative in 7 secondary schools.

The Pathfinder Initiative had been established in the 3 secondary schools in the Cambuslang and Rutherglen area in 2019. The aim of the Initiative was to promote effective early intervention and to consider how best to support and promote resilience in young people on the 'edges of care' who experienced significant barriers to learning and whose health and wellbeing were at risk. The Initiative was influenced by the ethos of Community Learning and Development which promoted equality, empowerment and life-wide learning for all.

A rigorous and scientific research programme had been undertaken to explore the impact and outcomes of the Initiative. The research findings, published in 2021, were outlined in Section 4 of the report and had led to the Pathfinder Initiative being extended to include secondary schools in all 4 learning communities.

To build on the initial success of the Initiative, the next steps for research would be to:-

- ◆ continue to work closely with YFCL Pathfinder management in the development of best practice within Pathfinder
- ◆ continue to undertake research interviews and collect data until the end of the current school term
- ◆ continue to be alert to opportunities to share research evidence on Pathfinder on a local and national basis
- ◆ complete a final research report for August 2023

In response to a request from members, officers undertook to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee evaluating the impact of the Initiative on attainment levels.

**The Committee decided:** that the progress on the Youth, Family and Community Learning (YFCL) Pathfinder Initiative and the evidence-based research work and findings be noted.

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### **13 Celebrating Success**

A report dated 8 June 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on a range of recent achievements and success of children and young people together with staff in schools and services throughout South Lanarkshire.

Section 4 of the report highlighted a range of achievements which captured the essence of education in South Lanarkshire, which was to inspire learners, transform learning and strengthen communities.

**The Committee decided:** that the report be noted.

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### **14 Notification of Contracts Awarded - 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023**

A report dated 15 May 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on contracts awarded by Education Resources during the period 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023. In terms of Standing Order Nos 21.8 and 22.5 of the Council's Standing Orders on Contracts, Resources were required to notify the relevant Committee of contracts awarded above the sum of £50,000.

Details of the contracts awarded by Education Resources were provided in the appendix to the report.

**The Committee decided:** that the report be noted.

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### **15 Item of Urgent Business – Ban on Single-Use, Disposable Vapes - Update**

In terms of Standing Order No 4(c), the Chair decided that consideration be given to the following item of business as a matter of urgency.

Councillor Frame referred to her notice of motion, agreed at the South Lanarkshire Council meeting of 24 May 2023, in relation to banning the use of single-use, disposable vapes and asked that an update be provided in relation to the work undertaken with schools on this matter

The Executive Director (Education Resources) confirmed that work had commenced on this issue and that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Education Resources Committee.



**The Committee decided:** to note the position.

*[Reference: Minutes of South Lanarkshire Council of 24 May 2023 (Paragraph 6)]*