

# EDUCATION RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 1 and via Microsoft Teams, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 18 August 2020

## Chair

Councillor Katy Loudon

## Councillors Present:

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor John Anderson, Councillor Stephanie Callaghan, Councillor Graeme Campbell, Councillor Gerry Convery, Councillor Margaret Cooper, Gillian Coulter, Councillor Margaret Cowie, Councillor Peter Craig (Depute), Councillor Mary Donnelly, Councillor Fiona Dryburgh, Councillor Mark Horsham, Councillor Julia Marrs, Councillor Monique McAdams, Councillor Ian McAllan, Councillor Gladys Miller, Councillor Lynne Nailon, Councillor Carol Nugent, Councillor Mo Razzaq, Councillor John Ross, Councillor Graham Scott, Councillor Bert Thomson (*substitute for Councillor Joe Fagan*), Councillor Margaret B Walker, Councillor David Watson

## Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Joe Fagan, Councillor Ian Harrow, Councillor Jared Wark

## External Members Present:

Gillian Coulter, Andy Harvey

## External Members' Apologies:

Christine Hall, John Mulligan, Ann Marie Hobson, Dr Nagy Iskander

## Attending:

### Education Resources

T McDaid, Executive Director; D Dickson, Operations Manager; A Donaldson, Head of Education (Inclusion); C McKenzie, Head of Education (Broad General Education); S Nicolson, Head of Education (Senior Phase); L Sherry, Head of Education (Support Services and School Estate)

### Finance and Corporate Resources

M M Cairns, Legal Services Manager; L Harvey, Finance Manager (Resources); M Milne, Human Resources Business Partner; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Strategy); L Paterson, Administration Officer

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## 1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

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## 2 Note of Previous Meeting

Note of Delegated Decisions taken by the Chief Executive, in consultation with Group Leaders, on items of business relating to the Education Resources Committee on 19 May 2020 submitted for information.

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

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## 3 Education Resources – Revenue Budget Monitoring 2019/2020

A joint report dated 23 July 2020 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 against budgeted expenditure for 2019/2020 for Education Resources.

As at 31 March 2020, there was an underspend of £4.452 million before transfer to reserves. as detailed in Appendix A to the report, and an overspend of £0.076 million after transfer to reserves.

The main factors contributing to the underspend on the Education Resources' revenue budget and proposed budget virements were detailed in the report.

The Resource had incurred costs of £0.026 million in relation to Covid-19 as outlined in Appendix B to the report which mostly related to Personal Protection Equipment and cleaning products.

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that, the underspend of £4.452 million, before transfers to reserves, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, and the overspend of £0.076 million, after transfers to reserves, be noted;
- (2) that the £0.026 million incurred in relation to Covid-19 as outlined in Appendix B to the report, be noted, and
- (3) that the budget virements, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be approved.

*[Reference: Note of 19 May 2020 (Paragraph 3)]*

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#### **4 Education Resources – Revenue Budget Monitoring 2020/2021**

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A joint report dated 23 July 2020 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure at 19 June 2020 against budgeted expenditure for 2020/2021 for Education Resources.

As at 19 June 2020 there as an overspend of £0.839 million as detailed in Appendix A of the report. Costs incurred in relation to the Resources' Covid-19 response were outlined in Appendix B to the report.

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the overspend of £0.839 million at 19 June 2020 be noted;
- (2) that the expenditure incurred in relation to the Resources' Covid-19 response be noted; and
- (3) that the budget virements, as detailed in A to the report, be approved.

*[Reference: Note of 19 May 2020 (Paragraph 5)]*

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#### **5 Education Resources – Capital Budget Monitoring 2019/2020**

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A joint report dated 30 July 2020 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted advising of progress on the Education Resources' capital programme for 2019/2020 and summarising the expenditure position at 31 March 2020.

The total capital programme for 2019/2020 was £25.234 million. Expenditure to 31 March 2020 was £20.347 million. The implications of Covid-19, which included the closure of construction sites in advance of the financial year end, had impacted on the level of spend in 2019/2020 and would continue to impact on the 2020/2021 capital programme.

**The Committee decided:** that the 2019/2020 capital programme of £25.234 million, and expenditure to 31 March 2020 of £20.374 million, be noted.

*[Reference: Note of 19 May 2020 (Paragraph 4)]*

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## **6 Education Resources – Capital Budget Monitoring 2020/2021**

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A joint report dated 16 July 2020 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted advising of progress on the Education Resources' capital programme for 2020/2021 and summarising the expenditure position at 19 June 2020.

The Education Resources' capital programme amounted to £35.001 million and expenditure as at 19 June 2020 was £0.599 million. The progress in delivery of the capital programme had been affected by the lockdown due to Covid-19. The ongoing implications of this, which included the closure of construction sites in advance of the financial year end, had impacted on the level of capital spend achieved in 2019/2020 and would continue to impact on the 2020/2021 capital programme.

**The Committee decided:** that the Education Resources' capital programme of £35.001 million, and expenditure to date of £0.599 million be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of South Lanarkshire Council of 25 March 2020 (Paragraph 2) and minutes of the Executive Committee of 24 June 2020 (Paragraph 4)]*

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## **7 Education Resources – Workforce Monitoring – April to June 2020**

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A joint report dated 21 July 2020 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the following employee information for Education Resources for the period April to June 2020:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health statistics
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ discipline, grievance and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers and exit interviews

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

*[Reference: Note of 19 May 2020 (Paragraph 5)]*

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## **8 Getting It Right for Every Child – Administrative Support**

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A joint report dated 10 August 2020 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on:-

- ♦ the implementation of the national SEEMiS Wellbeing Application and the development of a single point of contact to process, store and share sensitive information for vulnerable children and families
- ♦ a proposal for 2 FTE temporary administrative posts and employees to be converted to permanent posts on the Education Resources' establishment

Use of the Wellbeing Application had created opportunities to consider improvements in the ways in which sensitive wellbeing information was communicated, processed and stored, both within Education Resources and across partnerships. A 'single point of contact' had been established which provided a fully secure communications network. In 2017, a pilot project was undertaken by Police Scotland to test the effectiveness of a single point of contact to transfer sensitive information between agencies. Vulnerable Persons reports were now shared routinely which enabled Education employees to provide on-going support.

Information was provided on existing processes and partnership arrangements in relation to Additional Support Needs, Child Protection, multi-agency working, children affected by homelessness and children affected by domestic violence.

On 19 June 2018, the Committee approved the establishment, on a temporary basis, of two additional administrative posts to support the implementation of the Wellbeing Application and operation of the single point of contact. It was now proposed that those posts and employees be converted from temporary to permanent posts within the Education Resources establishment on the following basis:-

- ♦ 1 FTE post of Administration Assistant on Salary Grade 2, Level 1 to 2, SCP 34 to 40 (£21,497 to £23,468)
- ♦ 1 FTE post of Clerical Assistant on Salary Grade 1, Level 1 to 3, SPC 25 to 27 (£18,869 to £19,416)

### **The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the temporary administrative posts as detailed above be converted to permanent posts on the Education Resources' establishment; and
- (2) that the progress made to deliver the Scottish Government's ambitions in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 19 June 2018 (Paragraph 6)]*

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## **9 Survey Results of Children and Young People and Parents/Carers Regarding COVID-19 Experiences and Return to School**

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A report dated 10 August 2020 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing details on the:-

- ♦ findings from surveys, undertaken by Education Resources, of children and young people and parents/carers in relation to COVID-19 experiences and return to school
- ♦ ways in which engagement had informed the planning for school return and provision of support and services

Information was provided on the design of a range of surveys undertaken to explore pupils' experiences, thoughts and feelings about the school closure period and to gather their views, and that of their parents/carers, about plans to return to school. Surveys had been issued to all parents/carers with a child who attended a South Lanarkshire educational establishment; a child friendly version for primary aged children from P4 to P7 and a young person friendly version of the survey for young people from S1 to S6.

The surveys had been open for response for 1 week in June 2020 and the rates of responses had been as follows:-

- ◆ parents/carers – 5,799
- ◆ primary aged pupils – 1,486
- ◆ secondary aged pupils – 1,563

A detailed summary of the survey findings and comments received in respect of each category mentioned above was provided in the report.

To help inform recovery planning for school session 2020/2021 and beyond, a full analysis of the survey responses had been shared with the Chairs of the Council's Recovery Groups and identifies stakeholders, including the Children's Services Strategy Group. A communications strategy would be developed by Education Resources to ensure that key stakeholders, especially parents/carers, children and young people and schools received key messages from the surveys. This would include the use of social media channels.

The findings of the surveys would be used to highlight the importance of supporting positive mental health and wellbeing during post COVID-19 recovery with all schools and educational settings. The universal approach to this would be underpinned by thorough implementation of the Education Resources' Attachment Strategy.

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the findings of the children and young people and parents/carers surveys be noted; and
- (2) that the planned next steps and development of a communication strategy, as outlined in the report, be approved.

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## **10 Education Resources' Resource Plan – Quarter 4 Progress Report 2019/2020**

A report dated 24 July 2020 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the Education Resource Plan for 2019/2020.

Details were provided on:-

- ◆ progress made in implementing the priority projects identified in the Resource Plan 2019/2020, as detailed in the Quarter 4 Progress Report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report
- ◆ those measures which had changed in red/amber/green status, during the period from Quarter 2 to Quarter 4, as detailed in Appendix 2 the report

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the Quarter 4 Progress report for 2019/2020, attached as Appendix 1 to the report be noted;
- (2) that the achievements made by the Resource to date, as detailed in paragraph 4.3 to the report be noted;
- (3) that the areas for improvement and management actions as detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report be noted; and
- (4) that details of those measures which had changed in the red/amber/green status during the period between Quarter 2 to Quarter 4, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 10 December 2019 (Paragraph 6)]*

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## **11 Education Resource Plan 2020/2021**

A report dated 10 August 2020 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the Education Resource Plan for 2020/2021.

Details were provided on the Resource Plan for 2020/2021, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, which outlined the:-

- ◆ key areas of focus for the year ahead
- ◆ objectives and outcomes
- ◆ measures and actions
- ◆ resourcing of the Plan
- ◆ organisational structure of the Resource

The Resource had established a number of objectives to support the delivery of the Connect priorities in 2020/2021 which were detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

In line with the Council's performance management arrangements, a mid-year progress report on actions identified in the 2020/2021 Resource Plan would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

**The Committee recommended to the Executive Committee:** that the Education Resource Plan for 2020/2021 be approved and uploaded to the Council's website.

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## **12 Covid-19 Update on Education Recovery**

A report dated 10 August 2020 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing a summary of the Education Resources' response to COVID-19 and, in particular the measures taken to ensure a safe return to school and early years' establishments for staff, children and young people.

Detailed information was provided on the following key areas:-

- ◆ the initial COVID-19 response following the closure of all schools on 20 March 2020 which focused on the safety and welfare of vulnerable children, provision of emergency childcare for children of key workers and provision for the continuity of learning for all children
- ◆ the Local Phasing Delivery Plan
- ◆ reopening of schools
- ◆ safety and infrastructure
- ◆ school transport
- ◆ support for pupils in terms of:-
  - ◆ mental health and wellbeing
  - ◆ pupils with additional support needs
  - ◆ vulnerable children and young people
- ◆ learning focus for schools as pupils returned to schools in terms of:-
  - ◆ health and wellbeing
  - ◆ equity
  - ◆ continuity of learning
- ◆ digital learning
- ◆ early learning and childcare provision
- ◆ recruitment of additional teachers and support staff, including school support assistants

**The Committee decided:** that the Education Resources' response to COVID-19 be noted.

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### 13 Education Scotland – Inspection Update

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A report dated 23 July 2020 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing an update on:-

- ◆ the outcome of school and early years' inspections published in 2019/2020
- ◆ the support provided to schools, to achieve positive outcomes, by the Curriculum and Quality Improvement Service (CQIS)
- ◆ planned developments to support schools during 2020/2021

In August 2016, a range of new national inspection models was introduced by Education Scotland to suit particular circumstances and contexts and also to reflect the changing educational landscape. The models introduced were as follows:-

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

Inspectors used the new Quality Indicators (QIs) from 'How Good is Our School? (4<sup>th</sup> edition) (HGIOS4) and, in nursery classes, the equivalent QIs from 'How good is our early learning and childcare?' (HGIOELC).

Appendix 1 to the report provided information on the number of published inspections during school session 2019/2020 across authorities of comparable size to South Lanarkshire. Education Scotland conducted 14 inspections of schools within the Council as follows:-

- ◆ full inspections had been undertaken in 8 primary schools (6 of those schools with nursery classes) and 2 secondary schools
- ◆ short inspections had been undertaken in 4 primary schools, 1 of those schools with nursery classes

All schools inspected had received a 'positive' outcome, that is a grade of satisfactory or above for all QIs and there had been no requirement for follow-up inspection activity as an outcome of any inspection, as illustrated in Appendices 1 and 3 to the report.

Appendix 1 to the report illustrated that South Lanarkshire's total percentage for all QIs scored 'good' or 'better' stood at 71.4%.

Information on planned developments and support for schools and establishments to be provided in 2020/2021 was detailed in the report.

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

*[Reference: Minutes of 1 October 2019 (Paragraph 8)]*

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## **14 Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing through Transition, Reconnection and Recovery – An Attachment Informed Approach**

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A report dated 10 August 2020 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing an update on:-

- ◆ the guidance prepared for educational establishments to support positive mental health and wellbeing during the post COVID recovery period
- ◆ progress made on the implementation of the Education Resources' Attachment Strategy approved by the Committee on 27 November 2018

The Educational Psychology Service had developed guidance entitled 'Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing through transition, reconnection and recovery: an attachment informed approach'. The guidance was intended for senior managers and practitioners across Education Resources in considering their forward planning as new ways of working were developed and to respond to the needs of education communities.

The guidance took full account of the Education Resources' Attachment Strategy and outlined key aspects of whole school wellbeing illustrated within 10 factors necessary in supporting mental health and wellbeing through transition, reconnection and recovery.

Detailed information was provided on the:-

- ◆ progress made on the implementation of the Attachment Strategy
- ◆ additional approaches to supporting mental health and wellbeing in education establishments

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



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## **15 Provision of Emergency Childcare for Keyworkers and Services for Vulnerable Children and Families during Summer Holiday Period**

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A report dated 11 August 2020 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing an update on the provision of emergency childcare for keyworkers and services for vulnerable children and families during the 2020 Summer holiday period.

The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 required education authorities to provide ongoing critical childcare and emergency childcare provision. This provision had continued to be delivered throughout the period from 26 June to 5 August 2020. The locations and average weekly attendance was provided in Appendix 1 to the report.

Detailed information was provided on the:-

- ◆ delivery and impact of the Summer 2020 provision of emergency childcare
- ◆ activities and impact of services to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families

Formal evaluation of the impact of all aspects of the delivery of services for children of keyworkers and vulnerable children during Summer 2020 was underway and would inform future activity. Early indication had highlighted that the provision had had extremely positive impacts on the health and wellbeing of children, parents, carers, families and staff.

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

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## **16 Celebrating Success – Young People and Staff in Schools and Services**

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A report dated 29 July 2020 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on a range of recent achievements and success of children and young people, staff in schools and services throughout South Lanarkshire.

Staff throughout Education Resources, working with officers in other Resources, had played a pivotal role in adapting to challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 5 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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## **17 Urgent Business**

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There were no items of urgent business.

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## **Additional Item of Business**

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Reference was made to discussion that had taken place at the Executive Committee meeting on 12 August 2020 regarding the Scottish Qualifications Authority exam results situation that had developed. The Executive Committee had:-

- ◆ noted that concern had been raised that the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) had caused huge upset and worry to South Lanarkshire students by initially downgrading 8,590 awards from those assessed by teachers (approximately a quarter of the total) on a moderation process which appeared to lack equity and fairness and which particularly disadvantaged young people from more deprived areas

- ♦ agreed that a further and full debate would take place on this matter today's meeting of the Education Resources Committee

The Chair referred to:-

- ♦ the Scottish Government's decision that the SQA reinstate all the downgraded results to those originally recommended by their teachers
- ♦ the Deputy First Minister's apology to all those affected and his pledge that no one would be "crowded out" of a university or college place they would otherwise have been awarded

The Chair and the Executive Director (Education Resources) provided responses to a number of questions that had been raised at the Executive Committee.

It was recognised that young people had had a significant disruption to their lives in 2020 and should be congratulated on their achievements, not only their academic achievements but the the resilience and tenacity they had shown throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

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