

EDUCATION RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 1 October 2019

Chair:

Councillor Katy Loudon

Councillors Present

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor John Anderson, Councillor Jackie Burns (*substitute for Councillor David Watson*) Councillor Stephanie Callaghan, Councillor Graeme Campbell, Councillor Margaret Cooper, Councillor Peter Craig, Councillor Maureen Devlin (*substitute for Councillor Mo Razzaq*), Councillor Mary Donnelly, Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, Councillor Ian Harrow, Councillor Mark Horsham, Councillor Monique McAdams, Councillor Ian McAllan, Councillor Mark McGeever (*substitute for Councillor Fiona Dryburgh*), Councillor Gladys Miller, Councillor Lynne Nailon, Councillor Graham Scott, Councillor Collette Stevenson (*substitute for Councillor Julia Marrs*), Councillor Margaret B Walker, Councillor Jared Wark

Councillors' Apologies

Councillor Margaret Cowie, Councillor Fiona Dryburgh, Councillor Julia Marrs, Councillor Carol Nugent, Councillor Mo Razzaq, Councillor John Ross, Councillor David Watson

External Members Present:

Christine Hall, Dr Nagy Iskander, John Mulligan

External Members' Apologies:

Gillian Coulter, Andy Harvey, Ann Marie Hobson, Hilary Kirby

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); E McPake, Human Resources Business Partner; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Strategy); L Paterson, Administration Officer

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 6 August 2019 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 2019/2020

A joint report dated 28 August 2019 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure at 16 August 2019 against budgeted expenditure for 2019/2020 for Education Resources, together with a forecast for the year to 31 March 2020.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the breakeven position on Education Resources' revenue budget at 16 August 2019 be noted;
- (2) that the forecast to 31 March 2020 of a breakeven position be noted; and
- (3) that the budget virements, as detailed in the appendix to the report, be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 6 August 2019 (Paragraph 4)]

4 Education Resources – Capital Budget Monitoring 2019/2020

A joint report dated 28 August 2019 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 16 August 2019.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 6 August 2019 (Paragraph 6)]

5 Education Resources – Workforce Monitoring – June and July 2019

A joint report dated 27 August 2019 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the following employee information for Education Resources for the period June and July 2019:-

- ♦ attendance statistics
- ♦ occupational health statistics
- ♦ accident/incident statistics
- ♦ disciplinary hearings, grievances and Dignity at Work cases
- ♦ analysis of leavers
- ♦ Staffing Watch as at 8 June 2019

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 6 August 2019 (Paragraph 7)]

6 Education ICT Managed Service Contract Extension October 2020 to September 2025

A report dated 6 September 2019 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on a proposal to enter into a contract agreement with RM Education plc to extend the existing Next Generation of Learning Systems 2 (NGLS2) Managed Service Contract.

On 13 February 2013, the Executive Committee agreed that approval be given for RM Education plc to be appointed to deliver Education (ICT) Managed Service for an initial period of 7 years, with the option to extend for a further period of 5 years, subject to a satisfactory performance and funding being available.

In 2018, in consideration of exercising the option to extend the existing contract, an appraisal of options for the provision of ICT supply and support for Education Resources was undertaken. The potential alternatives, including tendering for other suppliers, had been analysed and had not been found to be sufficiently favourable, nor expected to yield the benefits achieved through the NGLS2 contract extension. The key reasons to extend the contract included RM Education plc's excellent performance throughout the NGLS2 contract period and its commitment to, and delivery of, best value evidenced by positive benchmarking, efficiencies delivered, delivery of service improvements and technology shifts.

Project governance was formally managed using Prince2 project management methodology. A Project Review Board, Project Steering Group and a number of Working Groups had been established, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, to gather requirements, prioritise and mediate between any competing demands.

The positive impact of Education Resources' digital infrastructure on teaching and learning had been recognised, on a regular basis, during HMIE Inspections. Extracts from various school and nursery inspection reports published during 2017/2018 were attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

Detailed information was provided on the contract deliverables, risks and benefits; financial and legal implications, community benefits and system benefits.

The proposed extension to the contract was compliant with the following requirements of the Council's Standing Orders on Contracts:-

- ◆ the extension would secure best value
- ◆ the NGLS2 contract had not been extended previously
- ◆ the performance of RM plc in the NGLS2 contract had achieved a performance rating of 70% or above, having achieved 91%
- ◆ the Council was satisfied with the financial standing of RM Education plc

As Clause 22.2 limited a contractual extension to 3 years, it was proposed that the Committee give approval for the NGLS2 contract to be extended by 5 years, from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2025.

The Committee decided: that the Council proceed to finalise the contractual details for the NGLS2 Contract Extension, for a 5 year period, from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2025.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 13 February 2013 (Paragraph 25)]

7 Standards and Quality Report 2018/2019

A report dated 5 September 2019 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing information on Education Resources' Standards and Quality report for session 2018/2019.

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 report made specific links to the priorities of Education Resources and the National Improvement Framework priorities, including raising attainment for all and closing the poverty related achievement gap. It was further noted that the 'Statutory Guidance Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000', placed a statutory duty on schools and local authorities to report on progress towards achieving the above priorities.

The Standards and Quality report 2018/2019 had been published on the Council's website and copies made available at the meeting. An electronic version would be sent 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.

[Reference: Minutes of 18 September 2018 (Paragraph 8)]

8 Education Scotland Inspection Update

A report dated 2 September 2019 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing an update on:-

- ◆ the outcome of school and associated nursery class inspections published in 2018/2019
- ◆ the support provided to schools, to achieve positive outcomes, by the Curriculum and Quality Improvement Service (CQIS)
- ◆ planned developments to support schools during 2019/2020

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? (4th edition) (HGIOS4) and, in nursery classes, the equivalent QIs from 'How good is our early learning and childcare?' (HGIOELC).

During school session 2018/2019, Education Scotland conducted inspections of schools within the Council as follows:-

- ◆ full inspections had been undertaken in 6 primary schools (2 primary schools with nursery classes and 1 primary school with a nursery and ASN supported classes)
- ◆ short inspections had been undertaken in 6 primary schools
- ◆ 2 schools (1 primary and 1 secondary) had been visited during a Scottish thematic review of the curriculum

- ◆ 2 primary schools (1 primary and 1 nursery) had been visited during a Scottish thematic review of numeracy
- ◆ 1 ASN primary school had been visited during a Scottish thematic review of Pupil and Parent Participation

There were no inspections of secondary schools during 2018/2019.

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 2 to the report illustrated that South Lanarkshire's total percentage for all QIs scored 'good' or 'better' had increased significantly from 68.1% in 2017/2018 to 79% in 2018/2019.

Information on planned developments and support for schools and establishments to be provided in 2019/2020 was detailed in the report.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 18 September 2018 (Paragraph 7)]

9 Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour – Guidelines for Establishments

A report dated 4 September 2019 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on a revision to the existing 'Promoting Positive Relationships and Behaviour' guidelines.

On 20 January 2015, the Committee noted the development of an information pack for establishments and services which contained approaches and strategies for promoting positive relationships and behaviour. Across Scotland, there was a heightened awareness of how children displaying distressed behaviour in schools were being supported and the need for plans to be put in place. Discussions had taken place between representatives from Education Scotland and the Council's Education Resources' Inclusive Education Service on the Council's current procedures and how those could be adapted and refreshed.

A diverse group of officers and practitioners had been established to review the current guidelines and included staff from trades unions and professional associations. The review had been undertaken around the following 3 streams:-

- ◆ central text setting out key principles about how best to engage children and families in positive and productive relationships
- ◆ planning and auditing tools to support good information gathering and planning at both school and local authority level
- ◆ training strategy to meet the needs of practitioners in different environments and be based on the strong principles around de-escalation and the duty of care

Following this review, a revised and re-named document, 'Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour', was produced which included a new set of guidelines, specifically for ASN schools and bases, about best practices, understanding better reasons for distressed behaviour and the use of Quiet Rooms. The series of recommendations contained in the document 'No Safe Place', published by the Scottish Children's Commissioner, had been the basis on which the Council's guidelines had been reviewed.

It was intended to launch and raise awareness of the new guidelines and revised practices with front line staff for use at the Inclusion Conference in December 2019. This would be followed by officers from the Inclusive Education Team attending Learning Community meetings to obtain feedback and comments to allow any final adjustments to be made before the revised guidelines were published.

The Committee decided: that the development of the 'Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour' guidelines be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 20 January 2015 (Paragraph 10)]

10 Access to Counsellors through Primary, Secondary and Special Needs Schools

A report dated 2 September 2019 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ the Scottish Government's commitment to the provision of counselling through primary, secondary and special schools
- ◆ the Council's proposed approach to the establishment of this service across South Lanarkshire schools

The 2018/2019 Programme for Government contained a number of commitments around children and young people's mental health which included a commitment to 'create around 350 counsellors in school education across Scotland and to ensure that every secondary school had counselling services'.

The delivery of counselling services was a joint approach between national and local government and would enable children and young people with issues affecting their mental health, to be supported more efficiently and effectively. The provision of counselling would help school staff to engage with children and young people with appropriate support services at an early stage and from within their own local communities. Counselling services should be available to secondary school pupils primarily, with access for children over the age of 10 in primary and special schools and in communities.

COSLA Officers and Scottish Government officials had developed a set of principles for the delivery of counselling through schools which would:-

- ◆ achieve the policy intent behind the commitment to increase access to counselling for children and young people
- ◆ enable local authorities to ensure any provision would be complementary and linked to existing local provision

Detailed information was provided on the:-

- ◆ aims of the policy
- ◆ position in South Lanarkshire in relation to the range of key organisations that currently offered help and support with mental health issues
- ◆ implementation of provision of counselling services across South Lanarkshire schools (phase 1) and the planned full roll-out of services from September 2020 (phase 2)

A Reference Group had been established with senior representatives from primary and secondary schools, the Educational Psychology Service, Inclusive Education Team, Curriculum and Quality Improvement Service and Finance and Corporate Resources. The Reference Group would make recommendations on the implementation of provision of counselling services across South Lanarkshire schools by the end of October 2019. In response to members' questions regarding the importance of engaging with young people on this matter, it was confirmed that this would be considered by the Reference Group.

The Scottish Government would provide funding for the provision of counselling services and the Council's allocation would be £709,000 in 2019/2020 and £961,000 in the 3 financial years 2020/2021 to 2022/2023.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Scottish Government's commitment to provision of counselling through primary, secondary and special schools be noted; and
- (2) that the Council's approach to the establishment of a counselling service be noted.

11 Celebrating Success Learner Journey

A report dated 11 September 2019 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the academic and wider achievements of children and young people in schools and establishments throughout South Lanarkshire.

Traditional examination courses and exams results were only part of what was known as the Senior Phase of education. Schools were now empowered to offer a range of pathways for individual learners, to develop their knowledge and skills and to ensure their education was tailored to their needs and aspirations.

In line with Curriculum for Excellence, schools continued to set learner pathways designed to support young people to develop their skills for learning, life and work.

Recognising and understanding the pathways which individual learners chose, as part of their 'learner journey', was one way of looking more widely at the breadth and range of achievements of learners. Learning pathways were flexible and tailored to the individual needs of young people which enabled them to make the best possible progress and be supported into sustained positive destinations. The emphasis was on young people being actively involved and engaged and, consequently, able to set and achieve their learning goals.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

12 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.