

EDUCATION RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Microsoft Teams on 8 February 2022

Chair:

Councillor Katy Loudon

Councillors Present:

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor John Anderson, Councillor Margaret Cooper, Councillor Margaret Cowie, Councillor Peter Craig (Depute), Councillor Maureen Devlin (*substitute for Councillor Mo Razzaq*), Councillor Mary Donnelly, Councillor Isobel Dorman, Councillor Joe Fagan, Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, Councillor Ian Harrow, Councillor Mark Horsham, Councillor Martin Grant Hose, Councillor Julia Marrs, Councillor Monique McAdams, Councillor Ian McAllan, Councillor Gladys Miller, Councillor Lynne Nailon, Councillor Carol Nugent, Councillor Graham Scott, Councillor Margaret B Walker, Councillor David Watson

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Jackie Burns, Councillor Fiona Dryburgh, Councillor Mo Razzaq, Councillor John Ross (ex officio)

External Members Present:

Christine Hall, Andy Harvey, Hilary Kirby, John Mulligan

External Members' Apologies:

Gillian Coulter, 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); J Pringle, Service Manager; L Sherry, Head of Education (Support Service and School Estate); J Wallace, Quality Improvement Manager

Finance and Corporate Resources

L Harvey, Finance Manager (Resources); E Maxwell, Human Resources Business Manager; K McLeod, Administration Assistant; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Strategy); T Slater, Administration Adviser; M M Wilson, Legal Services Manager

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 9 November 2021 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

With reference to item 11 of the previous minutes – Enhanced Summer Programme 2021 – Sensational Summer Sessions – Evaluation, Councillor Cowie advised that she had not, as yet, received the additional information she requested. Councillor Cowie asked that this information be provided and that her request be minuted. The Chair agreed to this request.

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

3 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2021/2022 - Education Resources

A joint report dated 12 January 2022 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure at 31 December 2021 against budgeted expenditure for 2021/2022 for Education Resources together with the forecast for the year to 31 March 2022.

As at 31 December 2021, there was an overspend of £1.151 million, as detailed in Appendix A to the report. Costs incurred in relation to the Resource's Covid-19 response were outlined in Appendix B to the report.

Following the Council's Probable Outturn exercise, the Resource had reported an estimated overspend of £2.028 million, after transfer of £7.295 million to reserves, which included the projected net costs of Covid-19 to 31 March 2022.

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

The Committee decided:

- (1) that an overspend of £1.151 million, as at 31 December 2021, on Education Resources' revenue budget, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the forecast to 31 March 2022 of an overspend of £2.028 million, after transfers to reserves, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted; and
- (3) that the proposed budget virements be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 9 November 2021 (Paragraph 3)]

4 Capital Budget Monitoring 2021/2022 - Education Resources

A joint report dated 20 January 2022 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted advising of progress on the Education Resources' capital programme for 2021/2022 and summarising the expenditure position at 31 December 2021.

At its meetings on 1 December 2021 and 2 February 2022, the Executive Committee agreed changes to the Education Resources' capital programme, as detailed in Appendix A to the report. The revised capital programme amounted to £15.199 million. Expenditure as at 31 December 2021 was £10.167 million. This represented a position of £0.144 million ahead of profile which, in the main, reflected the timing of payments.

The Committee decided: that the Education Resources' capital programme for 2021/2022 of £15.199 million, and expenditure to date of £10.167 million, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 9 November 2021 (Paragraph 4)]

5 Education Resources - Workforce Monitoring - September to November 2021

A joint report dated 23 December 2021 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the following employee information for Education Resources for the period September to November 2021:-

- ♦ 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 September 2021

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

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 9 November 2021 (Paragraph 5)]

6 Education Resource Plan: Quarter 2 Progress Report 2021/2022

A report dated 18 January 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the Education Resource Plan for 2021/2022.

Details were provided on:-

- ◆ achievements in implementing the priority projects identified in the Resource Plan 2021/2022, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report
- ◆ progress against all Resource Plan measures as detailed in the Quarter 2 Progress Report 2021/2022, attached as Appendix 2 to the report
- ◆ key achievements made by the Resource to date
- ◆ one contextual measure which would be reported later, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report

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

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Quarter 2 Progress report for 2021/2022, as detailed in paragraph 5.2 and attached as Appendix 2 to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the key achievements made by the Resource to date, as detailed in paragraph 5.3 to the report, be noted;
- (3) that it be noted that there were no areas for improvement and management actions, as outlined in paragraph 5.4 of the report; and
- (4) that details of those measures which had changed in the blue/red/amber/green status during the period between Quarter 2 to Quarter 4, as detailed in paragraph 5.5 and Appendix 3 to the report, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 18 August 2020 (Paragraph 10)]

7 Devolved School Management Scheme (DSM)

A report dated 13 January 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the new Devolved School Management (DSM) Scheme 2022 to be implemented in schools from 1 April 2022.

Updated DSM Guidelines had been published in 2019 which aimed to build and improve on the DSM Guidelines of 2012. The Guidelines would also reflect and integrate with the Education Reform Programme and emerging priorities from the Scottish Government and COSLA Education Reform Joint Agreement of June 2018.

The Guidelines had been reviewed to consider the delivery of a new DSM scheme for schools with an original implementation date of April 2021, however, due to the pandemic, this date was rescheduled nationally to April 2022.

The key aims and objectives of the review were to:-

- ◆ deliver a new, flexible and transparent DSM scheme for schools that empowered schools and Headteachers to make decisions that most affected their children and young people's outcomes while being part of a collaborative learning community and was fully inclusive of stakeholders
- ◆ advise of the necessary budgetary changes required to the pupil roll allocation (PRA) and staffing methodologies and budgets subject to the outcomes of the review
- ◆ deliver training to all relevant stakeholders. ensuring engagement on the new DSM scheme
- ◆ provide support to schools to manage change as a result of project outcomes

The review outcomes were detailed in section 6 of the report.

The new DSM Scheme 2022, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, enhanced the process of transparency and engagement with stakeholders, including young people, parents and carers, staff and the wider learning community, as well as local communities within the context of the Community Planning Partnership, Council Plan and Education Resources' Resource Plan.

Officers responded to members' questions.

The Committee decided: that the Devolved School Management Scheme 2022, to be implemented in schools from 1 April 2022, be approved.

8 Continuation and Development of the Current MCR Pathways Programme

A joint report dated 12 January 2022 by the Executive Directors (Education Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the continuation and development of the current MCR Pathways programme.

On 19 June 2018, the Committee approved arrangements to pilot a MCR Pathways programme in 6 secondary schools. This school-based mentoring programme supported care experienced or disadvantaged young people to realise their potential within education. 6 MCR Pathways Co-ordinators were appointed, on a temporary basis, to support implementation of the pilot programme. In October 2021, following the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, 3 schools had been invited to participate in Phase 2 of the programme during the period April 2022 until October 2023.

Following a refresh of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) funding, announced in November 2021, costs associated with the appointment of MCR Pathways Co-ordinators would now be met from that funding source. Administrative costs per school would also be met by the Scottish Government.

It was proposed that MCR Pathway Co-ordinator posts on Grade 2, Level 4, SCP 55-57 (£29,837 to £30,749) be added to the establishment of Education Resources on the following basis:-

- ◆ 6 temporary posts now made permanent
- ◆ 3 additional posts, for a fixed term period of 18 months, to support the implementation of the pilot

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the 6 temporary posts of MCR Pathways Co-ordinators be made permanent on Grade 2, Level 4, SCP 55-57 (£29,837 to £30,749); and
- (2) that 3 posts of MCR Pathway Co-ordinator be established, for a fixed term period of 18 months, on Grade 2, Level 4, SCP 55-57 (£29,837 to £30,749) to support the implementation of the pilot.

[Reference: Minutes of 19 June 2018 (Paragraph 4)]

9 Proposal to Cease Charging for Privilege Transport Places on Mainstream School Transport

A report dated 18 January 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on a proposal to remove charging for privilege transport places on mainstream school transport with effect from 1 January 2022.

Paid privilege transport, charged at a rate of £1.09 per day, was provided only when there was spare capacity on existing mainstream school transport contracts. The priorities for the allocation of available places were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Information was given on the Public Services Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000 (PSVAR) which required buses and coaches designed to carry over 22 passengers on local and scheduled routes, to incorporate features to enable disabled people to travel on them comfortably and safely, including wheelchair space and a ramp or lift. Those Regulations also applied to any coaches manufactured before 2005. Notification had been received that the date of enforcement of the PSVAR had been changed from 31 December 2021 to July 2022.

Not all school transport contract providers would be able to comply with the PSVAR, consequently, this would lead to an inconsistent charging approach whereby the Council would only be able to charge for privilege places on those contracts which met the terms of the Regulations.

Consideration had been given to:-

- ◆ the current national free travel scheme for children and young people aged under 22
- ◆ how the removal of charges might assist families who continued to face financial challenges due to the impact of the pandemic

In view of the above and in advance of the new Regulations coming into force, it was proposed that, with effect from 1 January 2022, the Council no longer charge for privilege transport places.

The Committee recommended to the Executive Committee:

that the proposal for the Council to no longer charge for those pupils accessing a privilege transport place, with effect from 1 January 2022, be approved.

10 Scottish Child Disability Payment (CDP) – Education Resources’ Information Requests and Associated Administrative Support

A report dated 18 January 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted:-

- ◆ on the implementation of the new Scottish Child Disability Payment (CDP)
- ◆ advising of the need for future staffing establishment changes, as required, to assist with responding to information requests used to support parent/carer CDP applications

The Scottish CDP would replace the Child Disability Living Allowance. All new applications under the Scottish CDP would now be made through Social Security Scotland who would gather information from GP practices, Health Boards and local authorities on behalf of applicants. Education Resources would be asked to provide appropriate data to help inform the assessment process. At present, an Administration Team had ensured that all requests were processed correctly and timeously. This process had been managed within existing resources, however, it was anticipated that additional staff would be required as the number of information requests increased. Details of any additional staffing requirements would be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.

The Council had received notification from the Scottish Government that permanent funding of £0.248 million would be allocated annually to support the processing of information requests. It was anticipated that any staffing or other costs would be managed within this funding allocation.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

11 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

A report dated 20 January 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing an update on the progress made with the Education Resources’ Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy for schools.

Education Resources continued to support schools through successful Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education (HMiE) inspections and outcomes had demonstrated that Learning, Teaching and Assessment were often found as a key strength. A ‘Framework for the Curriculum’ document, developed by Education Resources, supported schools through their curriculum development journey and a key feature in this document was the Learning, Teaching and Assessment process.

Part of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategic Plan for Session 2021/2022 was to further develop a Strategy and provide professional learning activities to support learning, teaching and assessment through the period of curriculum recovery. Detailed information on some of the key areas of focus as part of the Strategic Plan was provided in sections 4.3 to 4.6 of the report.

The Committee decided: that the progress made with Education Resources’ Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy for schools be noted.

12 Numeracy and Mathematics Update

A report dated 20 January 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing:-

- ◆ an update on developments in Numeracy and Mathematics

- ◆ details of the Strategy for recovery in Numeracy and Mathematics

In 2019, the Scottish Government published its Thematic Review of Numeracy and Mathematics, 'Multiplying skills, adding value'. The report highlighted that, although professional learning was deepening the knowledge and skills of staff in Numeracy and Mathematics, it was not yet resulting in significant improvement in outcomes for children and young people.

Information was provided on the Education Resources' Numeracy and Mathematics Strategic Plan which had the following 3 main areas of focus:-

- ◆ to develop a Numeracy Strategy to support schools to understand how to develop Numeracy Curriculum to recover from the impact of Covid-19 lockdown
- ◆ to build a Numeracy Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) programme to support the recovery Strategy
- ◆ to self-evaluate the Numeracy CLPL programme and Strategy to ensure it was dynamic and responsive to evolving need

The Strategy outlined the process to train every primary school teacher and appropriate secondary school teachers in the pedagogical approaches of Maths Recovery over the next 5 years. The long-term plan was to establish an internal team of accredited Maths Recovery trainers. There was evidence that schools who had embedded the pedagogy of Maths Recovery across all stages had seen the greatest improvements in attainment.

The Committee decided: that the Strategy for recovery in Numeracy and Mathematics be noted.

13 Community Learning and Development Strategic 3-Year Plan 2021 to 2024

A report dated 12 January 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted providing an update on progress made in the review and drafting of the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan for 2021 to 2024.

All local authorities had a statutory obligation to produce a 3-year CLD Plan as set out in The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013: Guidance for Local Authorities, the 'CLD Regulations'.

Key to the successful implementation of the 3-year CLD Plan (2021 to 2024), attached as Appendix 1 to the report, would be to align identified need with current good practice and build on areas for improvement through self-evaluation and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) inspection processes.

The Plan outlined the CLD Partnership's commitment to the shared vision to 'improve the quality of life for people of South Lanarkshire by offering vibrant learning and development opportunities that lead to personal development and community empowerment' and to deliver positive outcomes.

Information was provided on the following areas:-

- ◆ stakeholder consultation findings and literature review of South Lanarkshire and other local authority Plans
- ◆ the principles that underpinned CLD practice in South Lanarkshire
- ◆ governance arrangements
- ◆ mapping unmet need
- ◆ workforce development

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

14 Equity – School Update

A report dated 13 January 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ the support provided to schools to close the poverty-related attainment gap
- ◆ changes to the Scottish Attainment Challenge funding

The relative poverty of an area was measured using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) with the most deprived data zones allocated SIMD Decile rating 1 and the least deprived area allocated SIMD 10. In South Lanarkshire, 21% of learners lived in SIMD 1 or SIMD 2 areas. Education Resources were firmly committed to supporting young people to overcome disadvantage related to being born into poverty, not just in attainment but in their everyday lives.

The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC), an umbrella term used to describe the full allocation of monies provided to schools to help tackle the poverty related attainment gap, had 2 funding strands. One of those was the SAC Schools' Programme and the other was Pupil Equity Funding (PEF).

On 23 November 2021, a refresh of the SAC funding was announced. Funding from the SAC Schools' Programme, along with funding from Challenge Authorities, would now be more evenly distributed across all local authorities in Scotland. South Lanarkshire Council would receive £1.47 million central funding for session 2022/2023 and this allocation would increase year on year until 2025/2026 when the amount of funding would be £2.47 million.

20 schools situated within the most deprived areas of the Council were currently supported by SAC funding. Those schools would be supported as they transitioned from one funding model to another.

Details were provided on the following areas:-

- ◆ Participatory Budgeting
- ◆ closing the poverty related attainment gap
- ◆ cost of the school day
- ◆ additional support for schools
- ◆ community wellbeing pilot

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

Councillor Craig left the meeting during consideration of this item of business

15 Covid-19 Guidance Update for Schools and Educational Settings

A report dated 20 January 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the impact of updated Scottish Government guidance published on 5 January 2022 in response to the Omicron variant for schools and educational settings.

A summary of the updated guidance, which supplemented significantly the guidance provided to schools on 17 December 2021, was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Details were given on the current position with regard to:-

- ♦ positive cases, close contacts and self isolation
- ♦ confirmatory PCR tests
- ♦ testing
- ♦ minimising contacts through use of groupings
- ♦ self-isolation rules
- ♦ face coverings for adults, pupils and on school transport
- ♦ ventilation and heating
- ♦ vaccinations

The Scottish Government would continue to review the position. It was noted that the Care Inspectorate had published guidance on 11 January 2022 on adult to child ratios to address staff absence which would be reviewed on 18 February 2022.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Scottish Government guidance published on 5 January 2022 in response to the Omicron variant and the key mitigations, detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the further changes to the self-isolation policy which came into effect on 6 January 2022 along with the continued need to strictly observe the health mitigations be noted; and
- (3) that the efforts of staff in schools and educational settings to adapt to the changing guidance and in being agile in responding to those changes, while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and staff, be noted.

16 Celebrating Success – COSLA Quality Awards

A report dated 20 January 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the wider achievements and the learner journeys of children and young people, as well as the good work undertaken by teachers, employees and parents across South Lanarkshire.

The COSLA Awards provided an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the success of some of the work taking place by staff across South Lanarkshire. A summary of the wide range of submissions of best practice and the impact this work had made was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Information was given on the following submissions made under specific categories:-

Category 1 – Service Innovation and Improvement

- ♦ GradU8 programme
- ♦ Early Years
- ♦ Digital Support for Teachers and Learners
- ♦ Instrumental Music Service

Category 2 – Achieving Better Outcomes in Partnership

- ♦ Partnership working with Money Matters
- ♦ Rooftop Nursery, East Kilbride

Category 5 – Just Transition to a Net Zero Economy

- ♦ COP 26

The Early Years' project had reached the final stage of the COSLA Awards.

It was noted that the ongoing work, particularly when faced with unprecedented challenges due to the pandemic, had made a difference to the lives of learners and families and should be recognised and celebrated.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

17 Notification of Contracts Awarded: 1 April to 30 September 2021

A report dated 20 January 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on contracts awarded by Education Resources during the period 1 April to 30 September 2021. In terms of Standing Order Nos 21.8 and 22.5 of the 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.

[Reference: Minutes of 1 June 2021 (Paragraph 13)]

18 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

Chair's Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked members, external representatives and officers for their contribution to the work of the Committee over the term of this Administration.