

**MINUTE**  
**of**  
**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 10 May 2018.**

**Present:**

Councillor Paul O’Kane (Chair)	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Colm Merrick (Vice Chair)	Councillor Jim Swift
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Dr Frank Angell
Councillor Tony Buchanan	Ms Dorothy Graham
Councillor Danny Devlin	Mr Des Morris
Councillor Charlie Gilbert	

Councillor O’Kane in the Chair

**Attending:**

Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; Janice Collins, Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity); Mark Ratter, Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance); Fiona Morrison, Head of Education Services (Provision and Resources); Tracy Morton, Education Senior Manager; and Jennifer Graham, Committee Services Officer.

**Apology:**

Councillor Jim McLean.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**417.** There were no declarations of interest intimated.

**PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2018-2021**

**418.** The committee considered a report by the Director of Education seeking approval of the Parental Engagement and Involvement Strategy 2018-2022.

It was reported that local authorities were required to prepare a strategy document setting out policies for parental involvement and the East Renfrewshire Parental Engagement Strategy aimed to strengthen parental involvement and representation; ensure that parents were provided with information and support; reduce barriers which limited involvement of specific groups of parents; improve professionals’ understanding and skills; and improve children’s attainment and achievement. The strategy would build on existing good practice and would be monitored with progress reported to the Education Committee on an annual basis through Standards and Quality reports.

The committee agreed to:-

- (a) approve the Parental Engagement and Involvement Strategy 2018-2021; and
- (b) instruct the Director of Education to support all educational establishments to implement the strategy.

## **TOWARDS 1140 HOURS OF EARLY CHILDCARE PROVISION**

**419.** Under reference to the Minute of the Meeting of 28 September 2017 (Page 139, Item 152 refers), when it was agreed to approve the proposed Early Learning and Childcare Implementation Plan and provide regular updates to committee, the committee considered a report by the Director of Education seeking approval to phase from August 2018 the introduction of 1140 hours of free early learning and childcare provision for some children and families.

It was reported that the proposed delivery model was based on current parental demand, offering degrees of flexibility, and would require to be delivered using available resources. Increased entitlement would be introduced on a phased basis prior to August 2020 but it was anticipated that this provision would take a few years to establish. A banding system would be introduced to identify eligible children from August 2018 and would allow places to be allocated in a transparent and equitable way.

Further information was provided on the phasing process which included additional places at the Arthurlie Family Centre; a planned expansion to Busby Nursery Class; and planned adaptations to the outdoor space at Braidbar Nursery Class. Phasing of 1140 hours of free early learning and childcare for children with additional support needs would be provided at Isobel Mair Family Centre. Demand would be closely monitored to ascertain if changes would be required in daily and weekly working patterns for staff and it was anticipated that the impact of the expansion programme on the number of staff required would be significant. The introduction of full day provision and free school meal entitlement would also have an impact on staffing numbers, including for catering, cleaning and janitorial staff.

In response to questions, the Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) advised that as wraparound care was already available for many families and payments were made electronically, it would not be possible for parents or members of staff to identify which children received free provision. She also clarified that the Pre-5 Resource Group identified parents who required additional support due to medical or health issues and they would continue to be dealt with separately from the proposed new banding arrangements.

The Head of Education Services (Provision and Resources) confirmed that the Council had received approximately 80% of the capital and 87% of the revenue funding requested from the Scottish Government and the impact of this funding on the proposed models and flexibility would be considered further and reported to the committee in due course. The Director of Education added that the funding figures would be further analysed through discussions with colleagues from The Scottish Government, CoSLA and other local authorities.

The committee agreed to:-

- (a) approve the department's plan to phase the introduction of 1140 hours of early learning and childcare; and

- (b) instruct the Director of Education to take appropriate steps to communicate to residents the proposed changes to the procedures associated with applying for and allocating 1140 hours of free early learning and childcare places.

### **DRAFT NUMERACY AND MATHEMATICS STRATEGY**

**420.** The committee considered a report by the Director of Education seeking approval for the draft Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy.

It was reported that the Council's Local Improvement Plan 2018-2021 had set out the importance of numeracy and mathematics and the draft strategy aimed to make a number of improvements in numeracy and mathematics including, attainment in numeracy and mathematics throughout the years of the broad general education and senior phase; the employability skills of pupils, school leavers and adults; and public attitudes to numeracy and mathematics, amongst other things. The strategy would build on existing good practice and recognised the need to work with parents and partners to improve attitudes.

The committee agreed to:-

- (a) approve the draft Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy; and
- (b) instruct the Director of Education to report to a future meeting on the impact of its implementation.

### **CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**421.** The committee considered a report by the Director of Education advising of the outcome of the most recent Customer Service Excellence assessment for the Education Department.

It was reported that a two-stage assessment was undertaken in February 2018 consisting of a review of the department's self-assessment submission and a review of the actual service delivered on-site. The second part of the review focussed on the vocational programme offered by secondary schools and the assessment report recognised the department's continued commitment to provide excellent services and seek continuous improvement. Seventeen areas were recognised as "compliance plus" which were identified as areas which exceeded the requirements of the standard, with there being no areas of non or partial compliance. Two areas of improvement were identified as, consideration of the possibility of using a generic "how satisfied are you?" questionnaire, and further exploration of technology to support staff who were lone workers.

The committee agreed to:-

- (a) note the continuing high standard of the award in recognition of the department's high quality services; and
- (b) approve the approach to ensuring the department's sustained commitment to continuous improvement.

**FUTURE NON-DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION PROVISION FOR CHILDREN OF NEILSTON PRIMARY AND MADRAS FAMILY CENTRE; AND FUTURE DENOMINATIONAL (ROMAN CATHOLIC) EDUCATION PROVISION FOR CHILDREN OF ST. THOMAS' PRIMARY, NEILSTON**

**422.** The committee considered a report by the Director of Education seeking approval to carry out a statutory education consultation on a proposal for *Learning in Neilston* to renew both Neilston and St. Thomas' primary schools and Madras Family Centre on a joint site in the locale of Neilston and Madras.

It was reported that although funding was not yet available, the consultative proposal was a necessary step in seeking to establish this new education provision and ensured the Council was prepared to benefit from potential funding opportunities. Further information was provided on the current nursery and primary school provision within Neilston and reference was also made to the facilities currently provided in Neilston by East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure (ERCL) Trust.

Following detailed condition surveys, both Neilston and St. Thomas' primary schools were assessed to be in poor condition and Madras Family Centre had been assessed as being in fair condition with a backlog of maintenance requirements. In order to improve education provision in Neilston, an informal consultation was held with the Parent Councils of both primary schools in 2017 regarding the potential to establish a campus approach. This proposal had received positive interest, although the proposed site was not yet known at that time.

In addition, detailed condition surveys were undertaken on the ERCL Trust operated facilities and it was found that all properties would benefit from replacement. A site option appraisal was subsequently commissioned, which included consideration of the potential to co-locate library and leisure provision, and it was reported that it would be possible to establish a joint site in the locale of Neilston Primary School and Madras Family Centre with opportunities to include library and sports provision on site. It was also considered that the proposal would have a number of educational benefits including having a positive impact on the motivation, aspirations and enjoyment of children, staff and the wider schools community.

In response to questions, the Head of Education Services (Provision and Resources) confirmed that the inclusion of parking at Pig Square would be beneficial to any development but advised that further discussion with appropriate parties would be required prior to a final decision on this being reached. She added that the shared campus option had been considered as the best value option on this occasion, but added that shared and joint campus options would always be considered on a case by case basis and would not necessarily be the preferred option for a project.

Having heard members welcome the department's continued commitment to improving the school estate throughout East Renfrewshire, the committee agreed to:-

- (a) approve that the Director of Education proceed with a consultation on a proposal to establish a learning campus on a joint site in the locale of Neilston and Madras comprising new build replacements for Neilston Primary School, St. Thomas' Primary School and Madras Family Centre as soon as is practically possible; and
- (b) request that the Director of Education reports the results of the consultation exercise to the Education Committee on 4 October 2018.