

MINUTE
of
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 28 March 2019.

Present:

Councillor Paul O’Kane (Chair)	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Colm Merrick (Vice Chair)	Dr Frank Angell
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	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); Fiona Morrison, Head of Education Services (Provision and Resources); Mark Ratter, Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance); Tracy Morton, Education Senior Manager; Clare Creighton, Quality Improvement Officer; and Jennifer Graham, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Maurice Gilligan, Skills Development Scotland.

Apologies:

Councillor Tony Buchanan (Leader); and Ms Mary McIntyre.

Variation in Order of Business

In accordance with the terms of Standing Order 19, Councillor O’Kane altered the order of business to facilitate the conduct of the meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

841. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

WEST PARTNERSHIP – PROGRESS WITH PHASE 2 IMPROVEMENT PLAN

842. The committee considered a report by the Director of Education providing an update on the progress being made with the West Partnership Phase 2 Plan.

The report explained that an improvement plan tracker had been developed to monitor progress with actions from the West Partnership Phase 2 Improvement Plan and progress with the actions was discussed and updated at each Board meeting. Actions at risk of being missed were considered by the Board and mitigating steps taken as required. It was further reported that 80% of tasks had either been completed, superseded or were on track; 12% had yet to begin; and 8% were currently at risk.

The committee agreed to:-

- (a) note the progress made with the Phase 2 Improvement Plan;
- (b) note that progress was also being made in other areas of work; and
- (c) instruct the Director of Education to bring a further report on completion of the first year of the plan to the committee in August 2019.

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD

843. 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 January 2019 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 Early Years curriculum provided for children and the associated professional learning and training to develop Early Years staff and the assessment report recognised the department's continued commitment to provide excellent services and seek continuous improvement. Twenty two areas were recognised as "compliance plus" which were identified as areas which exceeded the requirements of the standard. Two areas of improvement were identified as; including the possibility of better publicising opportunities for stakeholders and citizens to become involved in early learning and childcare careers; and consideration of early learning courses delivered on an outreach basis.

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.

PROGRESS OF HILLVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL IN ADDRESSING AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT FROM EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

844. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 1 February 2018 (Page 265, Item 298 refers), when it was agreed that the Director of Education carry out a further follow-through review of Hillview Primary School within 12 months and bring the resulting report to Education Committee, the committee considered a report by the Director of Education advising of progress made in Hillview Primary School in addressing the recommendations contained in the report by Education Scotland published in February 2017.

The report referred to the follow-through report which had been considered in February 2018 highlighting that the school had made a positive start in meeting the recommendations from the Education Scotland report.

A further follow-through review was carried out by the Quality Improvement Team in January 2019. The progress report outlined a number of key strengths within the school, highlighting that children were proud of their school, and referring to the strengthened senior leadership team which had accelerated the pace of change across the school. It was reported that there had been a significant improvement in the attainment of Curriculum for Excellence levels and performance was at the highest to date in all four curricular areas. A small number of areas for development had been identified and would be addressed through the school's improvement plan for session 2019-2020.

Having heard Councillor O'Kane, on behalf of the committee, congratulate all those associated with the improvements which had been made, the committee agreed to note the progress made by Hillview Primary School in addressing the recommendations made in the inspection report by Education Scotland.

DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE

845. Councillor O'Kane invited Clare Creighton, QIO and Maurice Gilligan, Skills Development Scotland to make a presentation to the committee on progress with and outcomes from the Developing Young Workforce Implementation Plan.

Ms Creighton referred to the Developing Young Workforce Implementation Plan which had been created in close partnership with Skills Development Scotland (SDS). The plan focussed on five key areas including, increasing opportunities for young people to undertake learning; offering a broader range of qualifications in the senior phase; encouraging partnership working between schools, colleges and employers to information curriculum design and delivery; adoption of Foundation Apprenticeships in the senior phase; and greater understanding for young people and parents about the world of work.

Ms Creighton provided a comparison of East Renfrewshire's Leaver Destinations for 2016/17 and 2017/18 compared to the national average. They showed that 97.4% of young people in East Renfrewshire had gone to a positive destination in 2017/18 compared to the national average of just over 94%. A comparison of the destinations by school from 2015/16-2017/18 was also provided highlighting that only one school in East Renfrewshire remained below the national average in 2017/18. Further information was provided on the number of leavers with 1 or more vocational qualifications at level 6 or better, highlighting that East Renfrewshire was the highest ranking local authority for this statistic.

Mr Gilligan reported that Education Scotland had undertaken a review of Career Information, Advice and Guidance Services (CIAG) in East Renfrewshire in November 2018. They had examined activities that impacted on the quality of customer experience, and CIAG service delivery was evaluated against quality indicators outlined in the "External quality arrangements for the review of CIAG services delivered by SDS". The report was published in January 2019 with one of the key themes being graded as excellent and the remaining four graded as very good. A follow up report was expected in April/May 2020.

The Data Hub had been highlighted as an area of excellent practice as it could be used to better tailor support to an individual well in advance of them leaving school. He reported that the destinations of all young people were currently known and they would continue to work with those in negative destinations.

Ms Creighton reported that various data sources, including labour market information, would continue to be used to plan the curriculum in the senior phase. She referred to the senior phase offer which provided young people with a range of courses at schools, colleges, universities and with other training providers. She advised that some of the courses on offer included an HNC in Quantity Surveying; a City and Guilds in Barbering; and a foundation apprenticeship in social services, children and young people.

In the course of discussion, Councillor Devlin expressed disappointment that Barrhead High School was the only secondary school in East Renfrewshire below the national average for positive destinations. In response, the Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) advised that there had been an improvement in the Barrhead High School destination figures in recent years and the number of young people in positive destinations had improved since September 2018, after these figures had been released. He added that the attainment figures for Barrhead High School continued to improve and the Education Department worked closely with SDS to offer additional support to the school.

Further information was provided on apprenticeship opportunities across the Council's services. In response to a question about course trends, Ms Creighton explained that applications for courses varied widely from year to year, although jobs within the construction industry remained popular, and there was currently a focus on early years employment as a reaction to changes to the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare.

Thereafter, having heard Councillor O'Kane thank Ms Creighton and Mr Gilligan for an interesting and informative presentation, the committee agreed to note the presentation and the comments made.

CHAIR