

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

**Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 11 June 2015.**

**Present:**

Councillor Elaine Green (Chair)	Councillor Ian McAlpine
Councillor Paul O’Kane (Vice Chair)	Councillor Mary Montague
Councillor Danny Devlin	Councillor Vincent Waters
Councillor Jim Fletcher (Leader)	Dr Frank Angell
Councillor Charlie Gilbert	Reverend Thomas Boyle
Councillor Alan Lafferty	Mr Alan Munro

Councillor Green in the Chair

**Attending:**

Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; John Fitzpatrick, Head of Education Services (Inclusion, Schools and Staff); Ken McKinlay, Head of Education Services (Culture, Sport and Continuing Education); Fiona Morrison, Head of Education Services (School Performance and Provision); Mark Ratter, Education Senior Manager (Planning and Reporting); and Jennifer Graham, Committee Services Officer.

**Also Attending:**

Colin Allan, Architect, BDP.

**Apologies:**

Councillor Tony Buchanan and Ms Mary McIntyre.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**1588.** There were no declarations of interest intimated.

**CHAIR’S REMARKS**

**1589.** Councillor Green congratulated Mark Ratter on his recent appointment as Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) and advised that he would take up this appointment in the near future.

### **LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2015-2018**

**1590.** The committee considered a report by the Director of Education seeking approval for the Education Department's draft Local Improvement Plan 2015-2018.

The report explained that the plan was designed to give an indication of the department's key areas for improvement over the next three years and was updated annually to take account of changing priorities. Areas of improvement were outlined and priorities would be developed through self-evaluation and information gathered through external evaluations and the implementation of the plan.

Having heard the Education Senior Manager (Planning and Reporting) refer to the authority's target outcomes and expected impact in the next three year cycle, the committee agreed to approve the draft Local Improvement Plan 2015-2018.

### **DRAFT EQUALITIES DELIVERY PLAN**

**1591.** The committee considered a report by the Director of Education seeking approval of the draft Equalities Delivery Plan 2015-2017 (Education Department).

The report explained that education authorities were required to publish progress on their identified equality outcomes separately in addition to being included in the Council's biennial mainstreaming report, and outcomes would be linked to the Single Outcome Agreement, the Outcome Delivery Plan and the priorities set out in the Local Improvement Plan.

The Head of Education Services (Culture, Sport and Continuing Education) highlighted the outcomes specific to education which had been agreed comprising, improved levels of attainment for those children and young people in deciles 1 and 2 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD); increased opportunities for parental involvement at school and authority levels; increased participation in extra-curricular activities by children and young people from minority ethnic backgrounds; and reduced levels of identity-based bullying and harassment in schools.

Responding to a comment from Councillor Montague, the Director of Education advised that she would support the inclusion of the outcome "to improve levels of attainment for those children and young people in deciles 1 and 2 of the SIMD" nationwide and would raise this at various ADES Groups. Councillor Green advised that she would also raise this issue at COSLA.

Thereafter, in response to a comment from Mr Munro, the Director of Education advised that three of the agreed outcomes could be achieved through changes in attitude and provision of additional information and increased resources had already been provided to assist with improving levels of attainment for the lowest performing 20% of pupils, therefore there were no additional financial implications relating to the report.

The committee agreed to:-

- (a) approve the draft Equalities Delivery Plan 2015-17 (Education Department);  
and
- (b) instruct the Director of Education to implement the plan.

## **IMPACT OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**1592.** The committee considered a report by the Director of Education advising of plans to revise the current Standard Circular 8(a) - Bullying and Anti-bullying, to ensure that the awareness and understanding of anti-bullying approaches remained high among schools staff, parents and pupils.

The report explained that in order to reduce unacceptable bullying behaviours, children and young people must be encouraged to challenge and report them, and staff confidence must be developed to ensure an effective response. Following the launch of the previous anti-bullying policy in November 2011, a working group of staff and campus police officers were provided with training and this was then cascaded to every educational establishment. Establishments were then encouraged to hold their own training sessions and revise their own policies. The revised policy was cited as an example of good practice for other local authorities on *repectme's* website.

The Head of Education Services (Inclusion, Schools and Staff) advised that further guidance was expected from the Scottish Government in October 2015 to provide points for consideration in a refresh of the policy and, in anticipation of this, the working group had been reconvened and a training programme planned. All staff who had previously been trained would be offered half day refresher training and campus police officers would also access the training as appropriate. Nominated new staff would be provided with a full day's training and it was expected that this would take place in September 2015. In addition, from August 2015, the authority's management and information system would include additional fields to monitor and report the perceived causes of bullying behaviour and there would be additional emphasis on the duties of the Equalities Act 2010 with particular reference to LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning). Further information on this would be provided by The Scottish Government in their guidance expected later this year.

Responding to comments from Members, the Head of Education Services (Inclusion, Schools and Staff) advised that the number of reported bullying incidents had most likely increased from the 2009/10 figures due to the launch of the policy in 2011 which had raised awareness of bullying and encouraged young people to report incidents. This had allowed the authority to recognise the extent of the problem and deal with it accordingly. He added that although the percentage of pupils in East Renfrewshire who agreed that staff were good at dealing with bullying behaviour was 10% above the national average, improvements could be made and a change in culture may be required.

The committee agreed to note:-

- (a) the contents of the report on the impact of the current anti-bullying policy; and
- (b) the intention to revise the policy in light of the expected new guidance from the Scottish Government and to bring such back to the Education Committee for approval.

## **NAME OF THE NEW FAMILY CENTRE IN THE BUSBY/CLARKSTON AREA**

**1593.** The committee considered a report by the Director of Education seeking approval on a name for the new family centre in the Busby/Clarkston area.

Councillor Green, and other Members of the committee, expressed their disappointment that the application to erect a nursery/family centre in the Busby/Clarkston area had been

refused by the Planning Applications Committee on 10 June 2015. The Director of Education advised that Education officers would meet with colleagues from Legal, Planning, and Property and Technical Services to come up with a solution which would allow this matter to be progressed as soon as possible and it was anticipated that further information would be provided at the next meeting of the Education Committee.

Thereafter, the Director of Education proposed that, although the planning application had been refused at this stage, naming of the family centre should go ahead in anticipation of seeking a resolution. She advised that a number of names had been proposed for the new family centre and Cart Mill had been selected as the preferred name as it reflected the geography and history of the local area.

Having noted the comments made regarding the planning application, the committee agreed to the name of Cart Mill Family Centre.

### **CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE**

**1594.** 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.

Customer Service Excellence recently carried out its annual review of the Education Department during which a wide range of customers and service users were interviewed. The department's continuing commitment to providing excellent service was recognised and they were awarded the Customer Service Excellence Standard. Seven "compliance plus" areas were identified, an improvement on the previous year's performance, and one area of improvement was also highlighted.

Having heard Councillor Green, on behalf of the committee, congratulate and thank the Director and all of her staff for their efforts in achieving this standard, the committee agreed:-

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

### **JOINT FAITH SCHOOLS CAMPUS**

**1595.** The committee considered a report by the Director of Education providing an update on progress in designing the new faith schools' joint campus and of proposed management arrangements for the nursery provision at the campus.

The report explained that BDP (Building Design Partnership) had been appointed as architects for the project and workshop sessions were held with stakeholder groups of both faiths. Following a further three formal stakeholder workshops, a refinement of the design was presented to representatives from both parents groups, Glasgow Jewish Representative Council (GJRC), Father Boyle and Rabbi Rubin in May 2015 and very positive feedback had been received.

The Head of Education Services (School Performance and Provision) advised that provision for a site in Newton Mearns for a new Catholic primary school with non-denominational nursery had originally been included in the proposed Local Development Plan and later, with

the establishment of a joint faith campus, two nursery classes were included in the plans as Calderwood Lodge already had an established nursery class. However, during the design process stakeholders agreed that nursery provision could be shared between the two schools and it was proposed that this should be under the management and leadership of the head teacher at Calderwood Lodge. Discussions were held with representatives from both parent councils, the GJRC and faith leaders and all parties were supportive of this decision.

Mr Angell congratulated the Council on the way they had worked with all stakeholders to provide the joint faith campus and sought clarification regarding the provision of kosher meals to Jewish pupils at Mearns Castle High School once the new campus was operational. In response, the Director of Education advised that kosher food could be made available to high school pupils but that further discussion on practical issues such as the timing of lunch breaks at each school would need to take place.

Responding to comments from Members, the Head of Education Services (School Performance and Provision) advised that discussions about traffic management in the area had taken place during the design phase and further discussions regarding start and finish times for all of the schools in the area may also be required.

Thereafter, Councillor Green introduced Mr Colin Allan, Architect, BDP who gave a presentation on the design process and the final design for the joint faith campus. Mr Allan referred to the joint faith campus as a fantastic and unique opportunity as it was the only campus of this type in Europe and possibly the world. BDP were very sensitive to the strong faiths involved and discovered many differences and similarities between the two faiths which helped to inform the design. Consultation and engagement took place with pupils, parents, staff and other representatives from both faiths and the visions, aspirations, fears and concerns of the pupils were taken into account when considering the design of the building and surrounding campus. Discussions took place during workshops on possible shared features within the campus and both schools agreed that the vast majority of facilities could be shared or timetabled and that only kitchen/dining facilities and certain classrooms should remain separate. Each school and the nursery would have their own entrance to the building but outdoor play space would be shared along with arts, science, drama, theatre and sports facilities, amongst other things.

Referring to traffic management at the campus, Mr Allan advised that the drop off pattern would be the same as the facility already in place at Mearns Castle High School which had been successful.

Responding to questions from Members, the Head of Education Services (School Performance and Provision) advised that the campus was expected to open in August 2017. Mr Allan confirmed that a signalised junction would be put in place as this was considered to be the best solution to help traffic flow.

Further comments were made by Members about the need to improve walking and cycling routes to schools, following which the Director of Education confirmed that discussions were ongoing with colleagues from the Roads Division to explore options. Thereafter Councillor Lafferty stressed the importance of providing adequate outdoor and indoor sports and play facilities in all schools within the authority, especially some of the older schools, to encourage pupils to pursue healthy lifestyles throughout the year.

Father Boyle expressed his thanks to the Council for the way in which they had involved the schools and local communities in the design of the joint faith campus. Thereafter, the Director of Education expressed her thanks to Father Boyle and Dr Angell for their

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involvement in taking the project forward within the faith communities and to the Head of Education Services (School Performance and Provision) for her pivotal role in pulling the project together.

Following discussion the committee agreed:-

- (a) to note the very good progress that had been made in taking forward the new faith schools' joint campus; and
- (b) to approve the proposed management arrangements for the nursery provision at the campus.

**VALEDICTORY – JOHN FITZPATRICK, HEAD OF EDUCATION SERVICES (INCLUSION, SCHOOLS AND STAFF) AND KEN MCKINLAY, HEAD OF EDUCATION SERVICES (CULTURE, SPORT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION)**

**1596.** Councillor Green advised the committee that this would be the last meeting attended by John Fitzpatrick, Head of Education Services (Inclusion, Schools and Staff) and Ken McKinlay, Head of Education Services (Culture, Sport and Continuing Education) who were retiring from the Council.

On behalf of the committee, Councillor Green thanked Mr Fitzpatrick and Mr McKinlay for their contribution to the work of the department in their time with the Council, and wished them well for the future.

CHAIR