

Education Executive  
25 October 2011

**IRVINE, 25 October 2011** - At a Meeting of the Education Executive on North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

**Present**

John Bell, Alex Gallagher, Gordon McConnell, Very Reverend Matthew Canon McManus, Peter McNamara, David O'Neill, John Reid and Gordon Smith.

**Also Present**

Robert Barr and Anthea Dickson.

**In Attendance**

C. Kirk (Corporate Director), M. Armstrong, M. Docherty and J. Leckie, Heads of Service, and S. Storrie, Project Manager (Education and Skills); C. McCourt, Finance Manager (Finance and Infrastructure); J. Montgomery, General Manager, S. Morley, Team Leader - Economic Development, P. Shiach, Committee Services Officer and C. Rowney, Communications Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

**Also In Attendance**

S. Quinn, Headteacher, Auchenhavie Academy.

**Chair**

Councillor Bell in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Tom Barr.

**1. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 16.

**2. Minutes**

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Education Executive, held on 13 September 2011, were signed in accordance with paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

**3. Education Business Case**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education & Skills) seeking agreement to develop Business Change proposals in relation to Education and Skills.

The Education Business Case, which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report, forms part of the Council's Change Programme, which has been established to support services identifying areas for transformational change, and to provide resources and investment in implementing the changes which will be required to meet future challenges.

Following a period of intensive work within the Programme, a number of opportunities for further development have been identified.

Education and Skills have achieved significant changes in the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery, with the reshaping of services including:

- A reduction in senior managers from 48 to 23;
- A full restructuring of Cultural and Community Services, leading to a reduction in management and team leader posts from 30 to 10 and providing a more cohesive and effective service;
- A review and rationalisation of Irvine non-denominational schools which will result in a more efficient and effective schools service with higher numbers of children in a modern, high quality educational environment;
- Restructuring of pupil support to focus on young people at risk of becoming unemployable thus significantly reducing exclusion and reducing the number of young people on out of authority placements;
- Restructuring of management and support functions in schools, and
- A review and rationalisation of Irvine East and West school provision.

The report identified a number of challenges which included continuing improvement in leaver destinations at a time of a decline in the economy, difficulties in accurately predicting pupil numbers to ensure that the school estate is of an appropriate capacity, and legislative and Scottish Government requirements relating to class sizes, teacher numbers and meeting the requirements of additional support for learning.

The proposals contained within the Education Business Case were developed from a range of hypotheses which were then assessed to ensure that they complied with the underpinning principles of:

- Improving outcomes and impact;
- Co-operation;
- Transformation of service delivery , and
- Improved efficiency and effectiveness.

A number of hypotheses were developed around the areas of School Estate; Cluster Resources; Early Years; Senior Phase and Post 16 Education; Pupil Support Service Reorganisation; Educational Psychology Service; Repairs and Maintenance expenditure; Support Functions; and School Shared Headship and Senior Management Teams.

A number of these hypotheses were rejected for further work through the Business Case. Details of these, together with the reasons for their rejection, were contained in the report.

It was proposed that further work be undertaken to redesign the following areas of Education and Skills:

- Effective use of the Education and Skills estate;
- Budget devolution;
- Review of Early Years provision, and
- Review of senior phase and post 16 education.

The report set out the proposed timescales for completing each area of work.

Members sought, and received, clarification on a number of aspects of the report, including:

- confirmation that further reports on progress would be submitted to the Education Executive prior to any final determinations arising from the Business Case;
- the review of early years provision;
- the inclusion of detailed costings of proposals at this stage,
- the future of CPD, and
- the benefits to schools of private nursery provision.

The Education Executive agreed to (a) note that the figures detailed in the Executive Summary of the Business Case relating to paragraphs 4.1, 4.2 and 4.6 therein, were indicative at this stage; and, (b) approve further development of the Business Case relating to (i) effective use of the Education and Skills estate; (ii) a Review of the Existing Support Functions; (iii) Cluster Resources, and (iv) Early years and Senior Phase Education.

#### **4. Advancing Professionalism in Teaching - The Report of the Review of Teacher Employment in Scotland**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education & Skills) on the report of the independent review of all aspects of teacher employment in Scotland, chaired by Professor Gerry McCormac.

The 2010 spending review agreement between the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) included an agreement for an independent review of all aspects of teacher employment in Scotland.

The Education Executive, at its meeting of 12 April 2011, approved a response from North Ayrshire Council to the review and agreed that a follow-up report be submitted once the agreed recommendations had been published.

The review report, entitled "Advancing Professionalism in Teaching", published in September 2011, contained 34 recommendations, details of which were contained in appendix 1 to the report. The key recommendations included:

- No increase in class contact time for teachers in Scotland;
- Increased flexibility in the use of non-contact time over longer periods;
- Control of the number and grade of promoted posts devolved to schools;
- The creation of a revised Professional Review and Personal Development system for all teachers and other staff within a school who contribute to the education of pupils;
- Teacher-led involvement of external experts to contribute to the delivery of the curriculum, and
- Ending the Chartered Teacher Scheme.

The report has been broadly welcomed by the Education Secretary, who has indicated his intention to discuss the recommendations of the report with leaders of the teaching unions and COSLA, with a view to securing agreement on the way forward.

It is intended that the report's recommendations, are considered in conjunction with those of Professor Graham Donaldson's earlier report "Teaching Scotland's Future" to further improve learning outcomes for children and young people in Scotland.

The Education Executive agreed to (a) note the report and the 34 recommendations detailed within "Advancing Professionalism in Teaching - The Report on the Review of Teacher Employment in Scotland"; and (b) instruct officers to submit further reports as required detailing the implications for North Ayrshire Council and school education following the outcome of discussions on the Report's recommendations.

## **5. Creative Scotland: Creative Places Award Funding Application**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education & Skills) seeking approval to submit funding application proposals on behalf of North Ayrshire communities.

Creative Scotland's new investment programme highlights its intention to "identify, nurture and champion creative talent for the benefit of Scotland". Its objectives are to invest in:

- Talent;
- Quality Artistic Production;
- Access, Audience Development and participation;
- The Cultural Economy, and
- Places and their contribution to a creative Scotland.

In addition, there are three cross cutting themes of International, Equalities and Education.

The Creative Scotland investment strand most relevant to North Ayrshire is the Creative Places Award, the purpose of which is to recognise and celebrate the achievements of the smaller communities in Scotland in positioning themselves through creative activity. There is a particular emphasis on attracting visitors.

The scheme will commence in 2012, the Year of Creative Scotland, and run over three years 2012-2014. The winners will be entitled to describe themselves as "Creative Place Award Winner 2012" (or as appropriate) in promotional material. All short-listed nominees will receive a certificate and be entitled to describe themselves as Creative Place Award Nominee 2012 in promotional material. An annual award ceremony will take place, at which the winners will receive a cash award of up to £150,000.

The report indicated that Information and Culture in North Ayrshire had recently been successful in attracting funding from LEADER and from the Scottish Government's Libraries Excellence and Gaelic Funds. The Executive recently agreed to support a Cultural Partnership in North Ayrshire, to involve communities in developing a Culture Strategy. All schools now have a Cultural Ambassador.

The report proposed that three consecutive bids be made to the Creative Places fund, i.e.

- 2012 - Irvine Harbourside, to focus on improving the visitor offer, including partnerships among the Harbour Arts Centre, Irvine Bay Regeneration Company, Irvine Burns Club, the Scottish Maritime Museum and local businesses. The bid will include a Harbourside festival and a legacy of public art, including a heritage trail and plaques;
- 2013 - Largs and the North Coast, to focus on the 750th anniversary of the Battle of Largs, to complement the planned activities and to provide a legacy of the anniversary, and
- 2014 - The Three Towns, to focus on the work of the Heritage Centre and Friends of the Heritage Centre, to develop a heritage trail and related civic opportunities. A current funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund has already been submitted and work can progress between now and 2014 to position this area for a Creative Places bid in that year.

Members sought, and received, clarification on a number of aspects relating to the report, including the identification of partner funding opportunities.

The Education Executive approved the proposed funding applications.

## **6. Garnock Campus Site Selection - Progress Report on Site Visits and Regeneration Impact Assessment**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education & Skills) on progress made regarding the Garnock Campus site selection since August 2011.

At its meeting on 24 May 2011, the Education Executive agreed, subject to confirmation of a full funding agreement with the Scottish Government (a) that at the end of school session in June 2015, the provision of education at Garnock Academy and Moorpark and Glengarnock Primary schools be discontinued and that pupils transfer to the new school; (b) that in August 2015, Garnock pool close and reopen in the new campus at an agreed date as detailed in the report and consultation documentation appended thereto; and (c) that the campus be sited at site 12 North Lochshore.

Subsequently, the decision in relation to siting the new Academy at site 12 North Lochshore was the subject of a request for call in and was considered by the Scrutiny Committee on 6 June 2011. The request was upheld and the Scrutiny Committee considered the call-in and agreed to recommend to the Education Executive that a Members Seminar be arranged to allow Members to examine the wide range of information in more detail.

A seminar on the proposals was held on 2 August. A report on the outcome of the call in by the Scrutiny Committee was submitted to the Education Executive the same day.

Following consideration of the report, the Education Executive agreed that (a) site visits be arranged for all Members; (b) a further seminar be arranged following the site visits; (c) the project should not be progressed with more than one preferred site; (d) the scope of the project should remain unchanged; (e) an independent consultant should be engaged to undertake a Regeneration Impact Assessment of the project; (f) clarification should be sought from Scottish Enterprise on the location of the proposed site 12 and that this should be pegged out prior to any site visits; and (g) a comprehensive consultation exercise on the school closures had been undertaken in line with the statutory process and further consultation was not required.

In terms of the Regeneration Impact Assessment, and following consultation between officers from Education, Planning and Economic Development, a consultants brief was developed, as detailed in appendix 1 to the report. Details of the submissions received were detailed in the report, and Yellow Book has been appointed to undertake the work. It is intended that the study will be carried out between October and December 2011, and presented to elected Members in January 2012.

In terms of site visits, all Elected Members were invited to visit the sites on 9 September 2011. Issues arising were detailed in appendix 2 to the report. The proposed timetable for immediate project actions were detailed in appendix 3 to the report.

The Chair invited Councillors R. Barr and Dickson, who were present, to participate in the discussion. Members sought, and received, clarification on a number of issues arising from the report, including

- the proposed disposal of Glengarnock Primary School
- the number of bus journeys required in terms of pupil transfer to Site 12, North Lochshore
- the possibility of disenfranchising the users of the Garnock pool and other sports facilities depending on the final site selection and
- the costs involved in the project

The Education Executive (a) noted the progress report; agreed (b) to receive a further report on completion of the Regeneration Impact Assessment on the short-listed sites for the proposed new Garnock campus; (c) that a short life member/officer group be established, consisting of local members (Wards 6 and 7), the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the main Opposition party, to consider the outcomes of the site visits and the Regeneration Impact Assessment and make recommendations regarding the site; and (d) the proposed programme timeline for information to Members.

## **7. Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE)**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education & Skills) on the results of the recent survey, requesting Elected Members to identify the key themes for Validated Self-Evaluation.

At its meeting on 2 August 2011, the Education Executive agreed that Education and Skills should progress with Validated Self-Evaluation, and that the papers presented be referred to all Elected Members to decide the themes for Validated Self-Evaluation.

The themes detailed in the earlier report were:

- Early Years: - nursery classes, community nurseries, partnership nurseries, early years framework, 3-8 transitions;
- Getting it Right for Every Child: - Health and Wellbeing, Partnership Forums, Child Protection, integrated working, pastoral support;
- Curriculum for Excellence: - learning and teaching, 3-18 curriculum, benchmarking, assessment, continuous professional development, stakeholder involvement;
- Raising Attainment and Achievement: - learning and teaching, raising aspirations, relevance of curriculum, monitoring and tracking, support and tracking;
- Additional Support for Learning: - meeting learners' needs, staged intervention framework, support for learning, additional support needs provision;
- Skills for Life & work: - MCMC, partnerships, skills development, PSE;
- Literacy and Numeracy Development: - learning and teaching, family literacy, financial capability, monitoring and tracking, and
- Learning Community - Cluster Development: - seeking to use the process as part of the further development of the learning community including stakeholder engagement, future devolved budgets etc.

The report indicated that Elected Members had identified the key themes which would benefit from the scrutiny effected by Validated Self-Evaluation as:

- Early Years;
- Raising Attainment & Achievement, and
- Meeting all learners' needs.

The Education Executive agreed the key themes for Validated Self-Evaluation as set out in the report.

## **8. Impact of Improvement Planning on Raising Attainment and Achievement (Auchenharvie Academy Presentation)**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education & Skills) on arrangements for improving the quality of attainment and achievement in Auchenharvie Academy.

In August 2011, the Education Executive agreed to receive a presentation from secondary headteachers on the impact of improvement planning on raising attainment and achievement. Arising therefrom, an opportunity was made available for Elected Members to visit Auchenharvie Academy on 13 October and 6 Members, as detailed in the report attended.



Auchenharvie Academy was inspected by HMIE in January 2010 and the report published in March 2010. The school, and the authority have since worked successfully to take forward the main points for action identified in the original report. Progress made by the school has been evaluated by the authority and a report issued to parents.

A number of strategies identified in a recent report published by Durham University on improving learning and attainment are among the range of strategies detailed in the Auchenharvie Academy follow-through report.

The headteacher of Auchenharvie Academy, Mr S. Quinn, was in attendance and gave a presentation to Members on the impact of improvement planning. Following the presentation Mr Quinn was asked, and responded to a number of questions from Members on the following:

- Current school discipline, and comparison with previous years;
- The role of parents and how they get involved in the life of the school,
- The school management team and leadership.

The Education Executive thanked Mr Quinn for his informative presentation and noted the efforts made by Auchenharvie Academy in raising attainment and achievement.

## **9. Curriculum for Excellence Progress Report for Curriculum for Excellence Management Board**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education & Skills) on the report that will be provided to the Curriculum for Excellence Management Board.

The Curriculum for Excellence Management Board requested that the Scottish Government work with partners to produce two annual reports on progress with delivering Curriculum for Excellence, in December 2011 and December 2012. Local authorities are key to providing a full picture of this progress. It was agreed that the reports should be framed around Curriculum for Excellence entitlements, details of which were contained within the report. Authorities were requested to submit progress reports by 2 October 2011.

The report indicated that all schools in North Ayrshire met in cluster groups to evaluate their progress against the key areas. Information from HMIE reports, follow-through reports, school reviews and schools' standards and quality reports have also informed the detail in the report.

The progress made and challenges identified in delivering the six Curriculum for Excellence entitlements was detailed in appendix 1 to the report.

Noted.

#### **10. Designated School Closure Days: Session 2011/12**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education & Skills) of designated school closure days for North Ayrshire Council.

The terms and conditions for teaching staff have been amended with the introduction of the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) Circular 11/26 dated 12 July 2011. Part of this agreement is an amendment to the number of days designated as school holidays.

The school holidays for session 2011/12 have been agreed and ratified with the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT). The number school holidays traditionally has been 66 days in total, spread throughout the school session and commencing on 1 September each year. The actual number of days teachers will not be in school will not change. The SNCT Agreement indicates that the number of days designated as holidays has now changed to 40 spread through the school session. The remaining 26 days will now be designated as "school closure days" and allocated by each individual local authority. The reasons behind the change were detailed in the report.

The proposed allocation of days was discussed at LNCT and a sub-group made up of Education and Skills, Human Resources and the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), and a revised allocation of school holidays and school closure days agreed as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Noted

#### **11. Member/Officer Working Group on Raising Attainment: Minutes of Meeting held on 28 September 2011**

Submitted report on the Minutes of the Meeting of the Member/Officer Working Group on Raising Attainment held on 28 September 2011.

A Member/Officer Working Group on Raising Attainment was set up in 2008 with the first meeting being held in November that year.

The Group consists of the Leader of the Council, Education Portfolio holder and North Ayrshire's representative on COSLA's Education, Children and Young People Executive, together with representation from primary and secondary schools, psychology service, quality improvement service and community development. The focus of the group is attainment and achievement in secondary schools, and the range of relevant factors were detailed in the report.

A meeting of the Member/Officer Raising Attainment Working Group took place on 23 September 2011. The Minutes were contained in Appendix 1 to the report.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 3.55 p.m.