

Education Committee
5 March 1996

Irvine, 5 March 1996 - At a Meeting of the Education Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Thomas Morris, Irene Oldfather, Margaret Highet, Patrick Browne, James Clements, Thomas Dickie, John Donn, Samuel Gooding, Father Matthew McManus, Peter McNamara, David Munn, Alan Munro, David O'Neill, Robert Rae and Reverend John Taylor.

In Attendance

The Director of Education, the Heads of Education Services, the Head of Revenue Services and a Corporate Policy Officer (Mrs. King).

Chair

Mr. Morris in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Thomas Barr, Stewart Dewar, John Sillars and George Steven.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 23 January 1996, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Scheme of Delegation

Submitted report by the Chief Executive, copies of which had previously been circulated, on the Scheme of Delegation to the Education Committee approved by the Corporate Strategy Committee at their Meeting on 27 February 1996.

The Committee agreed to note the Scheme of Delegation.

3. Service Delivery Plan

Submitted report by the Director of Education highlighting (a) plans for the delivery of Education Services in North Ayrshire from 1 April 1996 whose priorities aim to minimise disruption to the process of teaching and learning in schools during the transfer of responsibilities in April 1996 and to secure the involvement of staff, parents and school boards in planning for the future; and confirming (b) details on how those priorities can be progressed. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee fully supported these aims and proposals and agreed to approve the Education Department Service Delivery Plan.

4. Priorities for Policy Review

Submitted report by the Director of Education, copies of which had previously been circulated, confirming the initial phase of areas of Education Policy which have been identified during discussions with Head Teachers and Advisory Service Staff as warranting priority review and detailing how the review process might be undertaken.

The Committee agreed (a) that reviews of policy in the areas identified should now be initiated; and (b) that proposals for North Ayrshire Council policies in each of these areas should be submitted to the Committee in due course.

5. Special Educational Needs

Submitted report by the Director of Education providing background information on provision for children with special educational needs, highlighting current and future issues in this area and seeking approval for the expenditure required to continue such provision. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

There are 394 children and young people in North Ayrshire who have special educational needs, 163 of whom have placements within the area's 4 special schools. The remainder attend mainstream schools where appropriate support is provided or schools outwith North Ayrshire because their needs cannot be met locally.

The Committee acknowledged the issues facing the area of special educational needs now and in the future and recognised the demands which this service places on resources given the need to maintain continuity of provision.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the terms of the report; (b) to authorise the Director of Education to incur the necessary expenditure to provide appropriate placements and provision for North Ayrshire children who have special educational needs; and (c) to receive further reports on policy review and practice in this area as the process advances.

6. Special Education Needs: Joint Working Issues

Submitted report by the Director of Education on the outcome of discussions on issues of potential joint working arrangements with other authorities in the area of special educational needs. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

Following consideration of the options available it is evident that in line with its stated preference North Ayrshire Council can stand alone in the following services in a cost effective manner and without detriment to those services:-

- (a) Psychological;
- (b) Visual Impairment;
- (c) Micro-technology;
- (d) Language and Communication;
- (e) Hospital Education;
- (f) Traveller Education;
- (g) Home Visiting; and
- (h) Bi-lingual Support.

Only in the case of the Hearing Impairment service is there seen to be a strong argument for providing a unified service for the three Ayrshire Authorities with each being responsible for a pro rata share of the running costs based on pupil population and with East Ayrshire operating as lead authority.

The Committee acknowledged the benefits of having North Ayrshire run its own services wherever possible in that financial monitoring and control would be improved and accountability to

the Director of Education and the Education Committee would be made more direct.

The Committee agreed to approve these proposals for future working arrangements within each service.

7. Grants in 1996/97

(a) Pre-5 Voluntary Sector

Submitted report by the Director of Education, copies of which had previously been circulated, listing applications for grant awards which have been received from Pre-5 organisations in the Voluntary Sector.

Applications on the list include those from (i) established groups, some of which currently have "direct agency agreements" with Strathclyde Regional Council guaranteeing them financial support over a fixed number of years; and (ii) a number of organisations which are seeking funding for the first time and some of whom have requested similar agreements with North Ayrshire Council.

Specific awards had been recommended in certain cases but in the light of the Government's subsequent agreement to include North Ayrshire in the pilot year of the proposed Nursery Voucher Scheme the level of assistance would require to be reviewed. Additionally, the Committee recognised that financial constraints made it necessary to limit grant awards and meant that no support could be given to new applications or for any applications for direct agency agreements.

The Committee agreed (i) to approve the terms of the report; and on that basis (ii) to take the decisions listed in Appendix E1; and (iii) to receive a further report on the levels of award where grants have been approved in principle.

(b) Adult Returners: Creche Grants

Submitted report by the Director of Education, copies of which had previously been circulated, on applications for grant to support creche provision in schools.

The Committee acknowledged that the total budget available to support creche provision in schools in 1996/97 is £17,400 and that recommended awards had been applied in proportion to their level of funding in 1996/96.

The Committee agreed to approve the grant awards listed in Appendix E2.

(c) Adult Education Provision

Submitted report by the Director of Education, copies of which had previously been circulated, on applications from voluntary organisations for grant to support their provision of adult education.

The Committee acknowledged that the total budget available to support such adult education provision in 1996/97 is £45,000 and that recommended awards had been applied to reflect the level of funding in 1995/96.

The Committee agreed to approve the grant awards listed in Appendix E3.

(d) Supporting School Provision

Submitted report by the Director of Education, copies of which had previously been circulated, on applications for grant from voluntary organisations to provide services which can support the delivery of educational programmes within schools e.g. workshops in art, drama and

music.

All but one of the applications recommended for approval (i.e. the Scottish Parent Teacher Council) related to organisations which previously received funding on the basis of a region-wide programme. An exception had been suggested in this single case given that the organisation would provide access to advice and support services which would encourage the development of parent partnerships in education. In other cases consideration had been given to the impact of the contribution made by the organisations on the constituents of North Ayrshire and adjustments have been made to the level of award recommended to reflect more accurately the level of service anticipated from each organisation.

The Committee agreed to approve the grant awards listed in Appendix E4.

(e) Footwear and Clothing Grants

Submitted report by the Director of Education, copies of which had previously been circulated, on the statutory requirements in relation to the provision of footwear and clothing grants for pupils.

In the light of the current financial restrictions the report recommended adoption in 1996/97 of SRC's current criteria for eligibility in relation to pupils at any schools under the management of North Ayrshire Council with the level of grant being maintained at £50.

The Committee agreed to approve the terms of the report.

8. Establishment of Appeals Committees

Submitted report by the Director of Education, copies of which had previously been circulated, detailing arrangements for the establishment of Appeals Committees to consider appeals in respect of placing requests, early entry requests, exclusions and Records of Needs for children with special educational needs.

The Committee acknowledged the statutory requirements in relation to the establishment of these Committees and the proposals for their operation whilst noting the intention to nominate members of the Committee's Appeals Sub-Committee and members of local attendance councils, a list of which had previously been circulated, to serve on these Committees.

The Committee agreed to approve the procedures recommended in relation to the establishment composition and operation of Appeals Committees.

9. School Transport

Submitted report by the Director of Education, copies of which had previously been circulated, on arrangements for securing contracts for school transport.

The Education Committee had already agreed to continue the policies of SRC thereby involving the Strathclyde Passenger Transport Executive in the process of awarding transport contracts to the value of £1.3m (except in the case of children with special needs where arrangements are made directly by the Education Department). On the basis of a 5 year agreement with the Executive (with adjustments being made for inflation) the continued use of their services for securing and monitoring transport within their area would cost North Ayrshire Council £60,000 per annum. Additionally the Executive could provide a similar level of service for areas outwith their area of responsibility, viz. Arran and Cumbrae at a cost of approximately £7,000 to £8,000.

The arrangements for this provision include the division of North Ayrshire into 5 blocks for tendering purposes and it is proposed to apply differing contract periods for different areas depending on the availability of contractors and the likely level of best service and value for money.

The Committee agreed after discussion (a) to continue to secure mainstream school transport contracts through the services of the PTE; and (b) to seek tenders for mainstream school transport contracts as detailed in Appendix E5.

10. North Ayrshire Schools Football Association

Submitted report by the Director of Education on discussions with North Ayrshire Schools Football Association on possible Council sponsorship of the annual under 15 competition which takes place this year on 4 June at Winton Park in Ardrossan. This would cost £300 in 1996 (including the cost of the trophy) and £200 in subsequent years.

The Committee considered it important to support initiatives of this kind and agreed (a) to sponsor the North Ayrshire Schools Football Competition on an annual basis; (b) that the Convener be asked to present the trophy for this year's event; and (c) to note ongoing investigations into alternative ways in which North Ayrshire Council might support efforts in other

areas.

11. Conferences/Seminars etc.

Submitted invitation to attend a Conference in relation to the Paul Hamlyn Project on Special Entry Initiatives being held at Glasgow Caledonia University on Monday 22 April 1996.

The Committee agreed to authorise the Chairman and 2 officers to attend.

12. Urgent Items

The Chair had agreed that the following items be considered as a matter of urgency.

13. Pre School Education

Submitted report by the Director of Education confirming that the Scottish Office have accepted the Council's bid to undertake a pilot project in relation to the Pre-5 Nursery Voucher Scheme which will cover the whole of North Ayrshire. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

Proposals to progress the project involve the preparation of detailed implementation plans in consultation with Head Teachers and the voluntary sector and the establishment of an Evaluation Group comprising elected members, officers and practitioners. Parents throughout North Ayrshire would also require to be fully informed and consulted on the project.

The Committee agreed (a) that detailed implementation plans should now be prepared for presentation to the Committee; (b) that an Evaluation Group be established to monitor the implementation of the pilot scheme with the Vice-Chair (Irene Oldfather) as its Chair; and (c) that public meetings be arranged at which the implications of the pilot scheme can be explained and consultation can take place.

14. Membership of the Education Committee

Submitted report by the Director of Education on progress in securing additional representation to the Education Committee as agreed at the previous Meeting on 23 January 1996. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee noted that the outstanding vacancy for a third Church representative has now been advertised, that discussions had been initiated on the selection of a parent representative and that Mr. Gordon Smith of Kilwinning Academy had been nominated as the teacher representative.

On the basis of the report, the Committee agreed (a) to accept the nomination of Mr. Smith as a representative of the teaching profession on the Education Committee; and (b) to receive a further report in relation to the outstanding representation.

15. Education Briefing

Submitted invitation to attend the Education Briefing being organised by COSLA in Edinburgh on 22 March 1996.

The Committee agreed to authorise the Vice-Chairs and one officer to attend.

The Meeting ended at 2.50 p.m.

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Appendix No **E1**

PRE-5 VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS - 1996/97

Organisation	Total SRC Grant 1995/96	North Ayrshire Apportionment of SRC 1995/96 Grant	1996/97 Bid to North Ayrshire Council	Decision on Grant Application
Former Region-Wide Projects				
Association of Strathclyde Link-Up Groups	£1,500.00	£91.20	£139.00	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
Action for Sick Children	£812.00	£67.64	£134.00	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
Mobile Projects Association Scotland	£1,000.00	£50.00	£500.00	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
Strathclyde Pre-School	£182,394.00 (direct agency)	£11,326.67	£12,833.00	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed

Play Association				
Strathclyde Childminding Association	£20,442.00 (direct agency)	£1,232.65	£2,252.00	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
Strathclyde Early Years Voluntary Sector Forum	£19,932.00 (direct agency)	£1,211.87	£2,000.00	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
One Plus - One Parent Families	£13,633.00 (direct agency)	£2,726.60	£3,000.00	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
Local Projects				
East Irvine Nursery Action Group (Broomlands)	£20,690.00 (direct agency)	£20,690.00	£20,922.00 (includes inflation)	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
East Irvine Nursery Action Group (Bourtreehill)	£20,690.00 (direct agency)	£20,690.00	£20,922.00 (includes inflation)	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
Parkhouse Playgroup (SEN) Ardrossan - Bid 1 (0-5 years)	£8,167.00 (direct agency)	£8,167.00	£8,258.00 (includes inflation)	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
Parkhouse Playgroup	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£4,712.00	Approved in principle but with

(SEN) Ardrossan - Bid 2 (Special Needs)				the exact award to be confirmed
Beith Nursery Ltd.	£18,500.00 + £400 emergency	£18,500.00	£22,000.00 (direct agency status requested)	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
Springside Playgroup Irvine	£2,400.00	£2,400.00	£3,108.00 (direct agency status requested)	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
Hand in Hand (Nurseries) Ltd. Kilbirnie	£18,500.00 + £3,450 emergency	£18,500.00	£21,000.00	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
Fullarton Pre-5 Project Irvine	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	Approved in principle but with the exact award to be confirmed
Largs Pop-in Creche	Not funded	Not funded	£2,069.00	Agreed to refuse (new application)
Millbank Nursery Dreghorn	Not funded	Not funded	£1,000.00 (direct agency status requested)	Agreed to refuse (new application)
Shiskine Playgroup, Arran	Not funded	Not funded	£2,220.00	Agreed to refuse (new application)

Millport Pre-School Playgroup, Cumbrae	Not funded	Not funded	£1,500.00	Agreed to refuse (new application)
West Kilbride Playgroup & Parent and Toddler Group	Not funded	Not funded	£1,200.00	Agreed to refuse (new application)

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Appendix No E2

APPENDIX E2

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

ADULT RETURNERS - CRECHE GRANTS - 1996/97

Organisation	Total SRC Grant 1995/96	1996/97 Bid to North Ayrshire Council	North Ayrshire Council Grant 1996/97
Irvine Royal Academy	£8,435.00	£11,705.00	£6,500.00
Greenwood Academy	£5,374.00	£8,811.00	£4,170.00
St. Andrew's Academy	£7,784.00	£10,095.00	£6,000.00
Arran High School	£817.00	£1,050.00	£730.00
TOTAL	£17,400.00		

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Appendix No **E3**

GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS - ADULT EDUCATION 1996/97

Organisation	Total SRC Grant 1995/96	North Ayrshire Apportionment of SRC 1995/96 Grant	1996/97 Bid to North Ayrshire Council	North Ayrshire Council Grant 1996/97
University of Glasgow	£93,700.00	£1,874.00	£6,250.00	£1,600.00
Works Educational Association (WEA Teaching and Direct Agency)	£116,000.00	£7,052.00	£40,303.00	£6,300.00
Irvine Unemployed Advice and Resource Centre	£34,500.00	£34,500.00	£36,225.00	£32,700.00
WEA 3 Towns Resource Fund	£1,600.00	£1,600.00	£2,830.12	£1,400.00
Argyle Community Association	£1,700.00	£1,700.00	£7,560.00	£1,500.00
Whitlees Community Association	£1,700.00	£1,700.00	£7,347.60	£1,500.00

	TOTAL	£45,000.00		
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Appendix No **E4**

GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTING SCHOOL PROVISION - 1996/97

Organisation	Total SRC Grant 1995/96	North Ayrshire Apportionment of SRC 1995/96 Grant	1996/97 Bid to North Ayrshire Council	North Ayrshire Council Grant 1996/97
Scottish Development Education Centre	£860.00	£49.02	£150.00	£50.00
Jamiat Ittihad-UI-Muslimin	£5,180.00	£725.20	£14,000.00	£200.00
Scottish Council for Educational Technology	£15,766.00	£898.66		£800.00
Scottish Council for Research in Education	£15,766.00	£898.66		£800.00
The Scottish Ballet	£11,200.00	£638.40	£3,750.00	£500.00
Scottish Parent Teacher Council	Not funded	Not funded	£126.00	£100.00
Scottish Opera	£11,200.00	£638.40	£2,750.00	£500.00
Scottish Mask and Puppet	£5,600.00	£330.00	£800.00	£300.00

Centre				
Scottish Maritime Museum	£800.00	£256.00	£4,500.00	£250.00
TAG Theatre Company	£12,480.00	£711.36	£10,350.00	£500.00
Glasgow Zoo	£28,000.00	£1,596.00	£2,200.00	Agreed to refuse because there is no significant involvement with North Ayrshire Schools
The David Livingstone Centre	£2,100.00	£119.70	£3,100.00	Agreed to refuse because there is no significant involvement with North Ayrshire Schools
The Glasgow Chinese School	Not funded	Not funded	£308.00	Agreed that any support in this connection should be through funding of individual students
National Youth Orchestra of Scotland	Not funded	Not funded	£3,000.00	Agreed to support through funding of individual students
Fablevision	Not funded	Not funded	£608.00	Agreed to refuse because there is no significant involvement with North Ayrshire Schools
TOTAL	£4,000.00	Agreed that any support in this connection should be through funding of individual students		

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Appendix No E5

AREAS FOR CONTRACT RENEWALS 1996

Proposed Area	Number of Contracts	Duration of Contract
Garnock Valley	28	2 years
Irvine/Kilwinning	40	2 years
Three Towns	19	3 years
Largs	24	3 years
Arran	8	4 years
Total Number of Contracts	119	