

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS COMMITTEE HELD ON 10 MAY 2018 AT 10.30 AM IN ANTRIM BOARD CENTRE

1. PRESENT

Mrs P Carville	Sir Gerry Loughran
Mrs M Culbert	Mr O McMullan
Dr M Dynan	Ms S O'Connor
Mr E Jardine	

2. IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs K Scott and Mr C McNickle.
Ms L Currie, Principal, Lurgan Junior High School.

3. OFFICE OF CHAIR

Mrs Scott informed Members that the two year term for the Office of Chair, of the Community Use of Schools Committee, had concluded on 08 March 2018. Members noted that the Board had agreed, in September 2017, that it would endorse the existing Committee Chairs for the remainder of the term of the EA Board.

On the proposal of Sir Gerry Loughran, seconded by Mrs Carville, the Committee agreed that Mrs Culbert should resume the Office of Chair for the remainder of the term of the EA Board.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded of the requirement to declare interests where appropriate during the course of the meeting.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2018

The minutes* (CUOS/5/18/4) of the meeting held on 12 February 2018 were agreed on the proposal of Mrs Carville and seconded by Dr Dynan.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6.1 CASE STUDY CURRIE PRIMARY SCHOOL (7)

Mrs Scott reminded Members of the offer for a meeting of the Committee to be held at Currie Primary School, Belfast. Members noted that the post of Head of Transformation had been advertised. The transformation lever around new relationships with schools will provide an opportunity for a more cohesive strategic direction in supporting individual schools as part of the Transformation Programme.

6.2 TREATMENT OF ACCUMULATED REVENUE BY SCHOOLS OUTSIDE THE TERMS OF LMS (8.2)

Mrs Scott informed Members that officers from Education, Finance and Internal Audit had been working on comprehensive guidance for all schools on the management and control of Private School Funds and that it would be available for schools for the 2018/19 academic year. The Committee would consider the guidance at the next meeting of the Committee.

A Member requested information on whether the disclosure of private school funds was subject to a threshold being met. This would be investigated.

Action: Committee to consider guidance for all schools on the management and control of Private School Funds. Officers to ascertain whether the disclosure of private school funds was subject to a threshold being met.

7. COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS – LURGAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs Culbert welcomed Ms Currie to the meeting. Ms Currie outlined how various sporting organisations had utilised the sporting facilities at Lurgan Junior High School, including Glenavon Football Club (GFC) and Lurgan Ladies' Hockey Club, both of which had youth squads who used the facilities on a regular basis. She referred to the positive impact of sport on young people's confidence and self-esteem and highlighted how this increased students' expectations in the classroom.

Ms Currie outlined the investment, in 2010, from Big Lottery (£0.5m), Sports Northern Ireland (£0.5m), and the former Southern Education and Library Board (£0.3m) which had funded two synthetic pitches at the school. Ms Currie highlighted how a partnership agreement between the former Craigavon Borough Council and the school had enabled costs to be shared. The floodlight meters continued to be monitored on a daily basis and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council reimbursed the school for costs incurred after school hours.

Ms Currie informed Members that the school's rugby pitch had been refurbished in 2016/17 and GFC had contributed £30,000 to this work. GFC's senior team used the pitch to train on a weekly basis and the school made use of the pitch Monday to Friday during school hours. Ms Currie welcomed the fact that the community had invested significantly in the school and, in return, the school had responded by promoting sport to develop qualities in children and young people including resilience, self-esteem and self-worth. She also highlighted how participation in sport played an important role in reducing childhood obesity, diabetes and mental health problems.

A Member queried the relationship between the school and GFC. Ms Currie said that monthly meetings between the school and GFC directors had enabled a positive working relationship to develop. Ms Currie outlined future plans for school investment and it was noted that GFC was an active partner in planning for the future. She welcomed the strong working relationship with GFC and was mindful that future growth should also involve other community partners such as Lurgan Celtic Football Club and Lurgan Ladies' Hockey Club.

A Member queried the school's relationship with Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and whether the Council had a strategic plan to develop and maintain shared resources. Ms Currie confirmed that an EA officer attended the monthly meetings with GFC and liaised with the Council. The Chair of the Board stressed the importance of EA playing a strategic role as a statutory Community Planning partner and informed Members of a planned meeting with NILGA on this matter.

A Member expressed the view that the facilities should be used to promote cross community engagement, including use by the GAA. Ms Currie referred to the positive experiences of pupils from both Lurgan Junior High School and St Ronan's College Lurgan during shared education sports days. A Member paid tribute to the work of Ms Currie in promoting shared education in Lurgan in recent years and, in addition to PE, Ms Currie outlined other shared classes including Music, R.E. and History.

A Member referred to the management overheads incurred by the school and Ms Currie informed Members that the administration required to organise the bookings was subsumed into existing clerical posts. It was noted that there was no income generation from the use of the

facilities. A discussion took place on the issue of funding for school facilities that were open to the community and a Member expressed the view that the Irish Football Association, the GAA and Ulster Rugby should invest in school facilities to promote sport for children and young people.

(Sir Gerry Loughran declared an interest as a family member was a member of a soccer academy)

The Chair thanked Ms Currie for her presentation and Ms Currie left the meeting. A Member expressed the view that guidance was required for future projects where schools planned to open sports facilities for community use. Members noted that an Education Officer would be recruited with responsibility for community use of schools. The planned engagement with NILGA would also support an improvement in working relationships between EA and local government.

(Mr Jardine left the meeting temporarily at 11:55 am and returned at 11:57 am. Mr McMullan left the meeting temporarily at 11:57 am and returned at 11:59 am)

A discussion ensued on the controlled sector in Lurgan and on the Dickson Plan. It was confirmed that provision in the area was a matter for the Education Committee within the area planning process.

The Chair of the Board concluded by highlighting that a strategic plan to develop community use of school facilities would be taken forward by the Transformation Programme Members' Sub-Group.

8. PROJECTS FOR NOTING

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND SPORT NI FUNDING 2018-19

Mrs Scott presented a paper* (CUOS/5/18/8.1) and informed the Committee that discussions had been ongoing between EA and the Department for Communities (DfC) in relation to the need to adopt a more collaborative approach to funding sports facilities. A pilot scheme had been successfully implemented in 2017-18, which funded sports facilities at Waringstown Primary School; St Mary's Primary School Pomeroy, Parkhall Integrated College; and Hillcroft Special School.

(Mrs Carville left the meeting at 12:10 pm)

Members noted that DfC, in partnership with Sport NI, had secured additional funding of £750,000 for 2018-19, to enhance existing school sports facilities for community use. The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs had also indicated a willingness to commit a further £500,000 towards this scheme. An internal EA steering group had been set up to agree a strategy for considering how this project should be taken forward, including criteria by which schools would be selected for inclusion.

The Committee noted the paper.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 12.12 pm.

Chair

Date

*Paper circulated with the agenda