

**EDUCATION AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Education Committee held in Antrim Board Centre on 11 January 2018 at 1.00 pm

PRESENT Rev R Herron (Chair)

Rev A Adams	Sr C Hegarty
Ms Á Andrews	Sir Gerry Loughran
Mr D Cargo	Mr G Lundy
Mr J Craig	Dr A McMorrán
Mrs M Culbert	Dr I McMorris
Mr G Doran	Mr O McMullan
Dr M Dynan	Ms S O'Connor
Mrs B Hale	Miss R Rainey

The Chair welcomed Mr Lundy to his first meeting of the Committee.

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr G Boyd, Mr J Collings, Mr M Baker, Mr J Unsworth, Mrs K Scott, Ms L McCall, Mr C McNickle and for part of the meeting Mr R Sayers, Mr M McDermott and Mr J Martin.

The Chair welcomed Mr McNickle to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Mr R Pollock and Ms N Toman.

Mrs Hale left the meeting at 1.45 pm.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9 NOVEMBER 2017

The minutes* (E/1/18/3) of the meeting held on 9 November 2017 were agreed on the proposal of Dr McMorris and seconded by Dr Dynan.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

4.1 MUSIC SERVICE (5)

A Board Member workshop to consider proposals in respect of a future delivery model for the Music Service would be held on 18 January 2018.

4.2 TRAINING PROGRAMME 2016/17 FOR BOARDS OF GOVERNORS - EVALUATION REPORT (6.1)

Mrs Scott confirmed that officers would avail of the reconstitution process in 2018 to seek information from newly appointed Governors on personal contact details and their preferences for training venues.

4.3 EXTENDED SCHOOLS' PROGRAMME - ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17 (6.2)

Mrs Scott said that finance made available for schools in clustering arrangements could only be accessed by schools within a local community.

Mrs Scott referred to materials which were made available to the Irish medium sector through Fronter.

Mr Craig entered the meeting at 1.55 pm.

4.4 IRISH MEDIUM EDUCATION (6.3)

A report on Irish medium education would be provided to the Committee at its February meeting.

4.5 CONTROLLED SCHOOLS' SUPPORT COUNCIL (CSSC) - MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND WORKING PROTOCOL (7)

The Committee noted that the Board of the CSSC had agreed the Memorandum of Understanding and the working protocol.

4.6 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 523 - DRUMLINS INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL : DISCUSSION ON DE LETTER DATED 31 OCTOBER 2017 (8.11)

The DE letter would be discussed later in the meeting (minute 9.1).

4.7 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 535 - ROWANDALE INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL : DISCUSSION ON NURSERY UNITS (8.12)

A paper would be presented to the Committee in due course on proposals in respect of nursery units attached to a controlled primary school which had not proceeded or had not been approved over the past 18 months.

5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATION PARTNERS

The Committee agreed to engage with each of the education partners in the order that meeting requests had been received. The education partners would be invited to attend meetings of the Committee individually and these meetings would be held prior to the end of June 2018.

The Chair said that the Chief Executive of NICIE had written to request a meeting with the Education Committee to discuss transformation of schools to integrated status. The letter had indicated that a DE official could also accompany NICIE to the meeting to discuss DE's guidance on Integrated Education and Transformation (Integration Works - Transforming Your School). It was agreed that this matter could be discussed as part of the Committee's engagement with NICIE. Mr Collings undertook to respond to the Chief Executive of NICIE.

***Action:** Facilitate meetings with the education partners in the order that meeting requests have been received; and convey the Committee's decision on a meeting around Transformation to the Chief Executive of NICIE.*

6. MAJOR CAPITAL WORKS - TRACKER DOCUMENT

Mr Sayers presented the report* (E/1/18/6) which set out the status of major capital works (projects with a value of more than £500k) in the controlled and non-controlled sectors.

A Member referred to a number of projects which were dependent on site or land acquisitions. He queried whether DE would endeavour to resolve matters through compulsory vesting orders. It was reported that while all efforts would be made in the first instance to progress matters through local negotiation, this facility could be used where appropriate.

Members welcomed the document. They commented on delays between some announcement dates and project completion dates. Mr Sayers said that he would provide more detailed information on individual projects to Members upon request.

It was noted that the tracker report would be presented to both the Education Committee and the Finance and General Purposes Committee on a biannual basis.

7. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

7.1 LEARNING LEADERS' STRATEGY - REPORT

Mr Unsworth presented the report* (E/1/18/7.1) which provided an update on progress in implementing the strategy for teacher professional learning. It also set out the programmes being provided by EA in this area during 2017/18.

A Member commented that the majority of the programmes related to building senior leadership capacity. He considered that similar focus should also be given to junior and middle leadership programmes. Another Member said that teachers needed targeted support at the early stages of leadership training.

Mr Unsworth referred to the activity taking place in the current year which included programmes for KS 2 / 3 Literacy and Numeracy Co-ordinators. He said that officers would be working with other education partners to develop a new leadership framework which would take account of the earliest stage of a teacher's career and development through junior, middle and senior leadership.

A Member welcomed that development and dissemination of good practice in all aspects of teacher professional learning was a main strand within the Strategy.

Mr Unsworth advised that progress reports would be presented to the Committee each term on the implementation of the strategy. These reports would give particular focus to programmes managed by the EA.

The Committee noted that Mr S Comer and Ms A Morrow had been appointed Heads of Service to support professional learning and development.

7.2 DE GUIDANCE ON INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRANSFORMATION

The Committee noted DE's guidance document 'Integration Works - Transforming Your School' (December 2017)* (E/1/18/7.2). It also noted that a hard copy of the guidance would issue to schools during January 2018.

A Member referred to various factors which would be considered by parents when choosing to send their children to integrated schools. It was agreed that these matters would be discussed as part of the wider engagement with NICIE. Mr Baker said that DE's guidance document on Integration was supported by relevant DE circulars. These circulars could be provided to Members upon request.

Mr Baker said that DE encouraged a continual process of engagement on integration. A Member pointed out that the EA, in discharging its statutory functions to encourage and

facilitate the development of both integrated and Irish medium education, was also to be mindful of area planning considerations, particularly the issue concerning avoidance of displacing children from an already funded setting. This matter would be considered later in the meeting (minute 9.1).

A Member requested that an evaluation report should be provided to the Committee on the religious balance of the pupil cohort within controlled integrated and grant maintained integrated schools with a view to considering whether the EA could provide support to these schools where they continued to have low enrolments from a minority community.

A Member referred to the role of Catholic Trustees to support schools with integration. Mr Baker confirmed that the role of the Catholic Trustees was outlined in the DE circulars.

The Committee noted that Mr S Bradley had been appointed Head of Service for Sectoral Support.

Action: *An evaluation report to be provided to the Committee in due course in respect of the controlled integrated and grant maintained integrated sector.*

8. INEQUALITIES WORKING GROUP - NOTE OF WORKSHOP

Mr Collings presented the note of the meeting held on 23 November 2017* (E/1/18/8). Particular focus was given to the six broad themes identified within the draft Audit of Inequalities.

Mr McDermott referred to a query raised at the workshop in respect of the Executive's Child Poverty Strategy which had been published in March 2016 and would continue until 2019. He advised that he had engaged with DE officials on the actions which related to Education within the strategy and he would report back to Members on progress in this area in due course.

Mr McDermott said that the Finance and General Purposes Committee, at its meeting held on 9 January 2018, had considered the Audit of Inequalities. Following input from Members, the document would be reviewed and presented to the Committee in March for further consideration along with the Equality Action Plan and the Disability Action Plan.

In response to a Member's query, Mr McDermott confirmed that the Audit of Inequalities took account of rurality issues.

Members discussed the reporting mechanism to consider the work of the Inequalities Working Group given that its remit was child centred as well as relating to education and workforce issues. It was agreed that officers would consider the governance of this area and report back to Members.

A Member welcomed that one of the six themes in the Audit of Inequalities was 'emotional health and wellbeing'. He considered that the EA had a responsibility to broaden the concept of measuring success for pupils and schools.

The Committee agreed the content of the note on the proposal of Miss Rainey and seconded by Sr Hegarty.

Action: *Officers to consider the reporting mechanism for the Inequalities Working Group.*

9. AREA PLANNING

9.1 DE LETTER DATED 31 OCTOBER 2017 – PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION AND THE STATUTORY DUTY TO ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE INTEGRATED AND IRISH MEDIUM EDUCATION

The Committee noted that Mr Boyd's letter* (E/1/18/9.1) dated 7 December 2017 to the Deputy Secretary was a combined response from both the Education and Children and Young People's Services departments. It also noted that a response was still awaited from DE.

Members highlighted the urgency of receiving guidance from DE in this area given that the EA had been asked to implement what appeared to be a significant change in approach to pre-school provision. They noted that Development Proposals were coming forward for consideration which would be impacted by DE's letter of 31 October 2017.

The Chair of the Board said that the matter would be raised at the next GAR meeting with the Permanent Secretary. A report on that discussion would be provided to the Committee at its February meeting.

Action: Seek clarity at the GAR meeting on the nuances of DE policy and report back to the Committee at its February meeting.

9.2 PROVIDING PATHWAYS - STRATEGIC AREA PLAN FOR SCHOOL PROVISION 2017-2020 : ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2017/18 - PROGRESS REPORT

Mrs Scott presented a paper* (E/1/18/9.2) which provided an overview of progress against the 2017/18 annual action plan. She pointed out that 8 actions within the report had reached decision stage, 15 had either been published or were awaiting publication and 13 actions were in the formal consultation phase.

A Member received confirmation that any outstanding actions at the end of the year would automatically be included within the following year's action plan.

The Committee noted the report.

Mrs Culbert left the meeting temporarily at 2.46 pm.

9.3 PROVIDING PATHWAYS - STRATEGIC AREA PLAN FOR SCHOOL PROVISION 2017-2020 : ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2018-19 (YEAR TWO)

The first draft of the annual action plan (year two) had been considered by the Board at its meeting on 14 December 2017. The Board had agreed the plan subject to various amendments, as raised by Members, being incorporated into the plan and subject to scrutiny of the sub-group structure. The Board had delegated authority to the Education Committee to review the amendments to the document which would allow the plan to be submitted to DE in January and enable engagement to commence with schools named in or affected by the plan prior to its publication in March 2018.

The Committee had received the annual action plan* (E/1/18/9.3) with the agenda for the current meeting.

Mr Collings presented a paper** which detailed only the revisions made to the plan. This paper was explained in detail. It was noted that scrutiny had been given to the sub-group structure.

Mrs Culbert re-entered the meeting at 4.50 pm.

Mr Collings presented a letter** dated 8 January 2018 from the Chief Executive of the Catholic Schools' Trustee Service and Mr Boyd's response** dated 9 January 2018.

In accordance with the Board's approval, the Committee agreed that it was content with the revisions to the annual action plan.

Action: *Response to be provided to the Catholic Schools' Trustees following the Committee's consideration of this item.*

9.4 CASTLEWELLAN PRIMARY SCHOOL AND ANNSBOROUGH INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL

The following proposals to be read in conjunction with each other:

- A new controlled integrated primary school with an enrolment number of 86 and admissions number of 12 to be established with effect from 31 August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter
- To facilitate the establishment of a new controlled integrated primary school, Castlewellan Primary School to discontinue with effect from 31 August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter
- To facilitate the establishment of a new controlled integrated primary school, Annsborough Integrated Primary School to discontinue with effect from 31 August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mrs Scott presented the papers* (E/1/18/9.4) which set out the rationale in respect of the request to commence pre-publication consultation on the above proposal.

Members considered the Case for Change and the summary paper. They discussed schools in the locality, the special unit provision, parental demand in the area, and future sustainability considerations.

On the proposal of Ms O'Connor, seconded by Dr McMorris, the Committee agreed to recommend that the EA would commence pre-publication consultation on the above proposal.

9.5 CULNADY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Proposal to discontinue with effect from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mrs Scott presented the papers* (E/1/18/9.5) which set out the rationale in respect of the request to commence pre-publication consultation on the above proposal.

Members considered the Case for Change and the summary paper.

On the proposal of Ms O'Connor, seconded by Miss Rainey, the Committee agreed to recommend that the EA would commence pre-publication consultation on the above proposal.

9.6 MAGHABERRY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Proposal to increase the admissions number from 30 to 41 with an annual phased increase in the enrolment number from 223 to 287 with effect from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Mrs Scott presented the papers* (E/1/18/9.6) which set out the rationale in respect of the request to commence pre-publication consultation on the above proposal.

Members considered the Case for Change and the summary paper.

On the proposal of Miss Rainey, seconded by Sr Hegarty, the Committee agreed to recommend that the EA would commence pre-publication consultation on the above proposal.

9.7 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NOS 526, 527, 528, 529 AND 530

The following proposals to be read in conjunction with each other:

- Development Proposal No 526 - Altishane Primary School - proposal to discontinue
- Development Proposal No 527 - Loughash Primary School - proposal to discontinue
- Development Proposal No 528 - St Joseph's Primary School, Glenmornan - proposal to discontinue
- Development Proposal No 529 - St Patrick's Primary School, Dunamanagh - proposal to discontinue
- Development Proposal No 530 - to establish a new Catholic Maintained co-educational primary school (being in effect an amalgamation of Altishane PS, Loughash PS St Joseph's PS, Glenmornan, and St Patrick's PS, Dunamanagh)

Mrs Scott presented the papers* (E/1/18/9.7) for publication and provided a summary of key areas for the Committee's consideration including that, in accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, the EA had undertaken formal consultation with the Board of Governors and Trustees of schools which might be affected by the proposal.

Members considered the Case for Change. This included the rationale for the proposals, the sustainability of the schools, the impact of the proposals on schools in the locality and responses received to the consultation process. They also noted correspondence relating to a potential legal challenge.

Members discussed opportunities for shared education in this area and received confirmation that shared education would have been discussed by the education partners within the Area Planning Local Group meetings.

Mr Collings suggested that the transformation programme should acknowledge the support which was necessary to establish amalgamated schools.

A Member said that attention should be given to the small schools' factor within the Common Funding Formula.

Members considered the comments set out in the draft EA Response to DE.

On the proposal of Mr Lundy, seconded by Ms O'Connor, the Committee approved the response* (Appendix D) for submission to DE along with the publication of the Proposal.

9.8 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 536 - GAELSCOIL NA BHFÁL

Proposal to decrease the enrolment number from 290 to 196 in line with the school's admissions number of 28 with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mrs Scott presented the papers* (E/1/18/9.7) for publication and provided a summary of key areas for the Committee's consideration including that, in accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, the EA had undertaken formal

consultation with the Board of Governors and Trustees of schools which might be affected by the proposal.

Members considered the Case for Change. This included the rationale for the proposal, the sustainability of the school, the impact of the proposal on schools in the locality, and the response received to the consultation. Members considered the draft EA response to DE.

On the proposal of Dr McMorris, seconded by Mr Lundy, the Committee approved the response (as set out in the Case for Change) for submission to DE along with the publication of the Proposal.

9.9 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS - SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

The Committee noted that DE had approved the following Development Proposals:

- DP 520 Magheralough Primary School - to discontinue with effect from 31 August 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter; and
- DP 522 St Ita's Primary School - to increase the admission and enrolment numbers from 80 to 90 and 574 to 630 respectively with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 8 February 2018.

The meeting ended at 3.20 pm.

CHAIRPERSON

DATE

* Paper issued with agenda ** Paper tabled