

**EDUCATION AUTHORITY  
MINUTES OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Education Committee held in Antrim Board Centre on 12 October 2017 at 2.30 pm

**PRESENT**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr G Boyd, Mr J Collings, Mrs K Scott and Ms L McCall.

**1. OFFICE OF CHAIR**

*Ms Toman left the meeting at 2.49 pm. Mr Collings and Mrs Scott withdrew from the meeting.*

Mr Boyd said that the Board at its meeting on 28 September had agreed a way forward on the appointment of committee chairs. The Board had agreed:

- that the current Committee structure would remain;
- that it would endorse the existing Committee chairs for the remainder of the term of the EA Board; and
- in endorsing those Committee chairs, it would review Standing Order 10.3 before the end of the term of the current Board to ensure that the methodology for appointing Committee chairs was consistent with best practice.

Rev Herron confirmed that he was willing to be re-elected as Chair subject to Members' agreement.

On behalf of Ms Toman and himself, Mr McMullan wished to record that they would not take part in this process until the review of Standing Order 10.3 had been carried out. He pointed out that this was no reflection on the abilities of the Chair. Mrs Culbert said she also dissented from the Board's position.

In the absence of any further proposals, Rev Herron was confirmed in office of chair.

*Mr McMullan left the meeting at 2.51 pm. Mr Collings and Mrs Scott re-entered the meeting.*

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

*Mr McMullan and Ms Toman re-entered the meeting at 2.52 pm.*

### 3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2017

The minutes\* (E/10/17/3) of the meeting held on 14 September 2017 were agreed on the proposal of Miss Rainey and seconded by Dr Dynan.

### 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

#### 4.1 EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE 2017 (7.1)

A Member referred to recent media coverage given to examination re-marking. She considered that the imposition of these charges on low income families was a financial barrier and queried the possibility of the EA making representation to CCEA on this issue. It was noted that schools were required to support a pupil who sought to have their examination re-marked. Schools should have a charging policy in place which could include re-marking of examinations. It was noted that should an appeal be upheld, the cost of the re-mark was refunded by CCEA.

Officers undertook to explore the Member's query further.

**Action:** *Investigate the issue of support to cover the cost of re-marking in respect of low income families.*

#### 4.2 IRISH MEDIUM WORKSHOP - 13 JUNE 2017 (8)

A Member said that she was concerned that the EA had no separate strategy or approach for Irish Medium Education (IME). She referred to specific challenges within the sector which included legacy issues, immersion pedagogy, and training in the sector in general. She considered that a Board Member working group should be established to explore and address these strategic issues. She expressed concern that the recommendations contained within the Irish Medium School Leaders' Working Group (IMSLWG) Report could not be taken forward due to lack of funding. She also expressed concerns with approaches adopted by this Group.

The legislation relating to IME was referenced. Article 89 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (Irish Medium Education) placed specific duties on DE to encourage and facilitate the development of Irish Medium education.

Mr Collings said that DE and EA were required to carry out specific statutory responsibilities with regard to IME. EA's support for the sector would be set out in the EA Business Plan. DE had requested the EA to engage and work in partnership with the new Leaders' Group, which had been established by the IM community, to develop the approach to IME and to take forward where possible the recommendations contained in the IMSLWG Report. One of the benefits of the new IM learning community was to promote a higher level of engagement within and between schools.

*Mr McMullan left the meeting temporarily at 3.07 pm. Mrs Hale left the meeting at 3.07 pm.*

A Member referred to the meeting with the sectoral partners held earlier in the day and to the presentations provided by each. He said that the EA should be encouraging all its sectoral partners to engage in a Memorandum of Understanding. This would promote and develop methods of sharing that would have collaborative advantage. He hoped all the sectoral bodies would engage in this new working arrangement for the betterment of all pupils in all schools.

A Member said that there was limited information being provided to Members and the wider community on the EA's approach to IME, Integrated Education and Early Years. Mr Collings confirmed that a Memorandum of Understanding would provide this detail.

A Member said that she was interested in understanding division of responsibilities; she had concerns over duplication of resources.

A Member commented that individual meetings with each of the sectoral partners would flesh out the detail on roles and responsibilities.

This matter relating to sectoral partners would be discussed later in the meeting.

*Ms Toman left the meeting temporarily at 3.16 pm.*

#### **4.3 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 519 - DRUMRAGH INTEGRATED COLLEGE (9.3)**

A Member queried if guidance had yet been provided by DE on how the various pieces of legislation should be addressed in EA responses to DE. He was particularly mindful that the EA response to this Development Proposal had specifically asked the Minister to take cognisance of the Drumragh Judgment. Mrs Scott advised that the DE response, once received, would be presented to the Committee for attention.

### **5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

#### **TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME BOARD MEMBER SUB-GROUP**

The Board, at its meeting on 28 September 2017, had agreed that the Transformation Programme Board Member Sub-Group would comprise one representative from each of the EA Committees plus any other interested Members.

On the proposal of Rev Adams, seconded by Miss Rainey, the Committee appointed Rev R Herron to serve on the Transformation Programme Board Member Sub-Group.

**Action:** *Rev R Herron to serve on the Transformation Programme Board Member Sub-Group.*

### **6. INFORMAL MEETING WITH SECTORAL PARTNERS**

*(Ms Toman re-entered the meeting at 3.20 pm.)*

At a meeting held earlier in the day, the Committee had met the following representatives:

- Ms R Marshall, Chief Executive, the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE);
- L Ó Flannagáin, Chief Executive, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG);
- Ms G McGrath, Director for Education, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS);
- Ms N O'Neill, Director, the Governing Bodies' Association (GBA) NI; and
- Mr B Mulholland, Chief Executive, and Ms J Millar, Head of Education Support, the Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC).

The sectoral partners had provided an overview of their organisation's role and responsibilities.

Mr Collings said that the sectoral partners would reflect on the invitation to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the EA. In any case, EA officers would continue to work with each of its partners and build on current relationships. He said that the CSSC had already agreed to enter into a MOU and this draft document would be presented to the Membership and

Teaching Appointments Committee at its next meeting for initial consideration prior to its consideration by the Education Committee.

Members discussed approaches to build on current relationships and engagement outside the terms of a MOU.

The Chair confirmed that meetings would take place in the first instance with the CSSC and CnaG in response to their letters requesting such a meeting. Thereafter, individual meetings with the other sectoral partners would be facilitated.

A Member said that consideration would need to be given to the governance aspects of the MOU.

A Member urged all Board Members to promote a culture of sharing and collaboration within the body responsible for nominating them.

## **7. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **EDUCATIONAL VISITS - INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS 2017**

*Ms O'Connor left the meeting temporarily at 3.25 pm.*

Mrs Scott presented the draft guidance\* (E/10/17/7.1) for schools. She explained the guidance was designated as 'interim' as it would require consultation with schools and stakeholders in the current academic year. She said that the draft guidance superseded previous guidance on educational visits compiled by the legacy organisations and other educational bodies and contained a number of additions. These included a section on communicating with parents, advice in the event of a terrorist attack, and updated advice on roles and responsibilities.

Members agreed that the document should be revised to incorporate: the introduction of new legislation in 2018 on data protection; more specific information in relation to transport and child protection considerations; and more specific information in respect of the communications around governance. The glossary would be revised to refer to 'other maintained schools'.

It was noted that separate guidance existed for youth group activities. This fell within the remit of the Children and Young People's Services Directorate.

Subject to these amendments, the Committee agreed to recommend the adoption of the Interim Guidance for Schools on the proposal of Miss Rainey and seconded by Dr McMorris.

**Action:** *Amendments agreed to Interim Guidance on Educational Visits for Schools.*

*Mr Pollock left the meeting at 3.30 pm.*

## **8. AREA PLANNING**

### **8.1 Development Proposals No 526 - 530**

*DP No 526 Altishane Primary School - proposal to discontinue; DP No 527 Loughash Primary School - proposal to discontinue; DP No 528 St Joseph's PS, Glenmornan - proposal to discontinue; DP No 529 St Patrick's PS, Dunamanagh - proposal to discontinue; and DP No 530 Establishment of 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)*

CCMS had requested that these five Development Proposals be withdrawn from consideration at the current meeting. It was anticipated that the proposals would be presented to the Committee for consideration at its November meeting. This was agreed.

## **8.2 Taughmonagh Primary School**

*Proposal to increase the admission number from 25 to 30 with an annual phased increase in the enrolment number from 174 to 210 with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter*

Mrs Scott presented the papers\* (E/10/17/8.1) 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 Mr Cargo, seconded by Mr Craig, the Committee agreed to recommend that the EA would commence pre-publication consultation on the above proposal.

## **8.3 Movilla High School**

*Proposal to discontinue Movilla High School with effect from 31 August 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter*

*Proposal to establish a Key Stage 3 campus of Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College on the Movilla High School site; the approved enrolment of Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College to increase from 1,420 to 1,840 with an admission figure of 300. This proposal is linked to the proposal in respect of Movilla High School.*

Mrs Scott presented the papers\* (E/10/17/8.2) which set out the rationale in respect of the request to commence pre-publication consultation on the above proposals.

Members considered the Case for Change and the summary paper. Members discussed at length the steady decline in enrolment at Movilla High School over a number of years, the proximity of other non-selective post primary schools, the current accommodation, the educational experiences of the pupils, and the school's financial situation.

In order to ensure the best possible outcomes for non-selective post primary pupils in the Newtownards area, the Committee agreed that consideration of the two proposals would be deferred to enable officers to examine alternative options in respect of the second proposal. A paper would be presented to the Committee for consideration at a subsequent meeting.

**Action:** *Paper to be presented to the Committee at a subsequent meeting on alternative options for non-selective post primary pupils in the Newtownards area.*

*During discussion of this item Ms O'Connor re-entered the meeting at 3.44 pm; Ms Toman left the meeting at 3.55 pm, re-entered at 4.08 pm and left at 4.10 pm; and Mr McMullan left the meeting at 4.30 pm.*

## **8.4 Development Proposal No 536 - St Joseph's College**

*Proposal to increase the admission number from 120 to 150 with an annual phased increase in the enrolment number from 664 to 970 with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter*

Mrs Scott presented the papers\* (E/10/17/8.4) 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 two responses received to the consultation process. In response to a query, Mrs Scott confirmed that there was significant population growth in the area. Members also considered the comments as set out in the draft EA Response to the Department of Education.

On the proposal of Dr Dynan, seconded by Sr Hegarty, the Committee approved the Response\* (Appendix D) for submission to DE along with the publication of the Proposal.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Members noted that the venue for the Board meeting on 26 October 2017 was Lisneal College.

## **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled for 9 November 2017.

The meeting ended at 4.30 pm.

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**CHAIRPERSON**

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**DATE**

\* Paper issued with agenda    \*\*\* Paper tabled