

**EDUCATION AUTHORITY  
MINUTES OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Education Committee held in Antrim Board Centre on 13 October 2016 at 1.00 pm

**PRESENT:** Rev R Herron (Chairperson)

Rev A Adams	Sir Gerry Loughran
Ms Á Andrews	Dr A McMorrán
Mrs M Culbert	Dr I McMorris
Dr M Dynan	Mr R Pollock
Sr C Hegarty	Miss R Rainey

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr J Collings, Ms L Gardiner, Mr R Gilbert, Ms K Scott, Ms L McCall and for part of the meeting Ms R Nicholl.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Fr T Bartlett, Mr D Cargo, Mr J Craig and Ms S O'Connor.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2016**

The minutes\* (E/10/16/3) of the meeting held on 8 September 2016 were agreed on the proposal of Miss Rainey and seconded by Sr Hegarty.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**4.1 WORKING GROUP ON KEY INEQUALITIES IN EDUCATION (4.3)**

Mr Collings reported that the Working Group, at its first meeting on 10 October 2016, had agreed that officers would research and present information on a number of schools which were identified as examples of good practice where key inequalities were being addressed. Officers would also develop a pro forma which would assist the investigative research for the Working Group's next meeting on 1 December 2016.

**4.2 INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION INTO THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN DE LA SALLE COLLEGE (6.1)**

*(Mrs Culbert declared an interest in this item.)*

Mr Collings reported that the Education and Training Inspectorate would be carrying out a full inspection in De La Salle College. A Member commented on the further workload that would be placed on teachers as a result of a full inspection.

Mr Collings advised that Mrs Duffield was working with CCMS colleagues on capacity building with regard to the recommendation concerning HR provision.

#### **4.3 EVALUATION OF GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2015/16 (6.3)**

Mr Collings said that the Governor Team would be working with the Communications Manager to develop a Governor section on the EA website. He also reported that the Governor Training Programme for 2016-17 had been sent to principals the previous week. Principals had been asked, in their role as secretary to Boards of Governors, to circulate the programme to all Governors.

Members were mindful that Governors were volunteers and highlighted that professional support should be made available to Governors wherever possible. It was noted that Governors were included within the ETI process.

Mr Collings said that various EA Committees had discussed the importance of supporting Boards of Governors. He said that a review would be carried out on effective governance in schools. The Chair of the Membership and Teaching Appointments Committee commented on the considerations given to governance by that Committee. The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee commented on the work progressing with regard to the Working Group on School Surpluses and Deficits and the need for training for schools on financial management.

Officers advised that the ETI framework was being further developed with regard to governance. Work was therefore progressing to ensure that relevant training was provided to Boards of Governors to align with the ETI inspection process.

#### **5. BUDGET 2016/17 – IMPLEMENTING SAVINGS PROPOSALS**

Mr Collings outlined seven savings measures within the Education Directorate as set out in the paper\*\* (E/10/16/6). He advised that quarterly monitoring reports on all savings measures would be presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

A Member queried progress with regard to the review of the Music Service.

*(Sir Gerry Loughran declared an interest during discussion of the Music Service. The principal of the school of which he was chair was the conductor of the Ulster Orchestra.)*

Mr Collings said that the existing Heads of Service within the Music Service had been informed of the financial challenges. He also outlined the recruitment process which had commenced within the Service. Mr Boyd said that Members had indicated their full support to the Music Service at previous meetings. Consequently, a bid had been included for the Service in the October monitoring round. He reported that, at the GAR meeting on 10 October, DE officials had stated that no money would be forthcoming in the October monitoring round. It was noted that any proposals regarding increased charging within the Music Service would require equality screening. A Member pointed out that officers would benefit from engaging with external individuals who made significant contributions to Music with regard to any review of the Music Service.

Discussion ensued in respect of projected savings within C2K. Members noted that 26 members of staff within C2K had expressed interest in the voluntary exit scheme. While all VES applications would be scrutinised by senior management, the VES process would provide the

EA with an opportunity to reshape the C2K provision. Members asked that care would be taken to ensure sustainability of the service as they were mindful that significant investment had been spent in this area to train staff. They considered that C2K provided an effective administrative tool for schools but highlighted that a review of the provision was essential so as to ensure that it became an effective mechanism for improving outcomes for children and young people. Mr Collings confirmed that a review of C2K was taking place.

A Member queried other initiatives being targeted to produce savings. Mr Collings referred to service reviews within the Directorate. He confirmed that the Extended Schools' Programme would not be impacted by any EA savings measure.

Mr Boyd gave an update on recent negotiations involving teachers' pay and the potential impact on industrial action in schools.

Mr Gilbert also referred to negotiations with Trade Unions on an issue relating to assessments carried out by teachers, particularly in the post primary sector.

## **6. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **6.1 LEARNING LEADERS' STRATEGY**

Mr Collings referred to the actions being taken forward in response to the recommendations contained within DE's strategy document 'Learning Leaders : A Strategy for Teacher Professional Learning' (2016).

The Committee noted the progress report\* (E/10/16/7.1). A Member commended officers for the work in this area.

### **6.2 SCHOOL INSPECTION OUTCOMES 2015/16**

Mr Collings presented the Report\* (E/10/16/7.2) which summarised the inspection outcomes of schools between 1 September 2015 and 30 June 2016. Members welcomed the report's revised format which provided greater detail by phase and sector and set out comparative information.

Members acknowledged that the School Development Service (SDS) had been impacted significantly in recent years by the voluntary exit scheme. They commended officers within the SDS for their valuable work in supporting schools, particularly in the post inspection process. However, they raised concerns with regard to the level of support available to schools before inspections took place.

A Member commented on the number of schools which had been identified as requiring improvement within leadership and management. He queried the support available from the SDS to focus attention in this area.

Mr Collings said that resources within the SDS were being utilised as efficiently and effectively as possible to target early intervention. At present, he was engaging with principals on effective support mechanisms. He advised that all DE resources were being reviewed to maximise flexibility within the SDS.

A Member referred to the inspections by management type and the number of subsequent follow up inspections within the controlled and maintained sectors. He said that there was a role for the Controlled Schools' Support Council in this area. Mr Collings advised that,

regardless of management type, the SDS was required to respond and assist schools with ETI comments.

Ms Gardiner outlined the system level support currently being provided for schools in a range of ways, including the governor training programme, leadership programmes such as PQH, programmes for newly appointed principals and vice principals, emergent leadership programmes, support for literacy and numeracy co-ordinators and the beginning teachers' programme.

Mrs Scott said that intensive individualised support was provided for schools where important or significant areas for improvement had been identified through inspection. This support included the use of associates and current teachers as well as partnering arrangements with schools.

Mrs Scott outlined a change to district inspector role within the ETI. A school would now receive 48 hours' notice from the ETI that a monitoring inspection would take place. This type of inspection could provide the trigger for a full inspection. She advised that a review of roles and responsibilities within the SDS was taking place and different models of intervention were being developed. It was the intention of officers, following engagement with principals and staff, to present the detail on intervention models to the Committee at a future meeting.

Members noted that the agenda item 'Schools Causing Concern' would be considered by the Committee at its November meeting.

The Committee commended the work of staff in the School Development Service.

### **6.3 EXTENDED SCHOOLS' PROGRAMME : ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16**

Ms Nicholl presented the report\* (E/10/16/7.3) which set out an overview, analysis and evaluation of the Extended Schools' Programme for 2015/16 and gave indicators of effective practice across a range of key themes. Members noted that the total DE allocation for the Programme for 2015/16 was £10.653m. Ms Nicholl said that funding was allocated individually to schools by DE using criteria based on social deprivation measures. Additional funding (15%) was allocated to schools for working in clusters and a further 15% was allocated to clusters where parental engagement was evidenced. Ms Nicholl advised that 543 schools were participating in the Programme in 2015/16 which was an increase of 47 schools on the previous year.

Members paid tribute to the positive and encouraging work evidenced within the Programme. The additional resource made available to cluster groups with parental engagement reaffirmed the importance of the role of parents in their children's education.

Consideration was given to the three recommendations in the report. These were a strategic review of the funding streams impacting on schools, counselling provision for primary schools, and mainstreaming Extended Schools' funding in order to reduce bureaucracy on schools.

A Member commented that the recommendations took account of cross departmental working. She queried whether officers were liaising with Health colleagues to discuss sharing resources. Ms Nicholl said that a regional group had been established to consider school action plans within the Programme. This group was currently reviewing its role and the role of other departmental bodies.

A Member highlighted the importance of a school counsellor in a challenging school.

Members were of the view that the funding for the Extended Schools' Programme should remain separate from a school's core funding. Ms Nicholl said that the majority of schools, in the tenth year of the programme, would have the capacity to manage the Programme themselves. Mr Collings referred to the resource required within the SDS to support the Programme. The intention was that consideration would be given to reducing the bureaucracy that the Programme placed on schools and to manage the Programme within the overall framework.

A Member received confirmation that the Extended Schools' Programme was an earmarked initiative.

A Member queried the process by which additional monies were made available by DE to Irish Medium schools in Extended Schools' cluster groups. She considered that this funding could be allocated in a more strategic manner. Ms Nicholl said that this strand of funding was intended to enhance the use of the Irish language within the cluster groups. She undertook to discuss the matter with DE officials.

The Committee agreed to the three recommendations in the report subject to an amendment to the third recommendation, ie that consideration would be given to reducing the bureaucracy placed on schools by the Programme and to manage the Programme within the overall school improvement framework. It agreed that the Regional Extended Schools' Group would continue to report to the Education Committee.

**Action:** Recommendation to be amended in line with Members' comments.

## **7. COMMUNITY PLANNING**

Mr Gilbert outlined the role of District Councils in community planning and their obligations to engage with the EA and CCMS as statutory partners. He said that Councils would be producing community plans around the start of the New Year and those plans would be presented to Members in due course.

A Member queried the role of Board Members in the development of these community plans.

Mr Gilbert said that each Council was required to have its own Strategic Planning Group. Representatives of the EA and CCMS served on this Group for each of the 11 District Councils in order to engage in the community planning process. In addition, EA officers were engaging with Councils at an operational level.

Mr Collings said that local community events would be brought to the attention of Board Members in order to encourage attendance and participation of Members.

## **8. AREA PLANNING**

### **8.1 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**

#### **8.1.1 FORGE INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Three interlinked proposals:

**DP 463** – to relocate Forge IPS from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter (former Knockbreda High School site identified as the preferred option for relocation, subject to the completion of all relevant statutory approvals including Economic Appraisal and Community Planning)

**DP 464** - to establish a 52 part-time place Nursery Unit at Forge IPS from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter, subject to the approval of DP 463

**DP 465** - to establish an ASD Centre for children at Key Stage 1 and a general LSC for children at Key Stage 2 in Forge IPS from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter, subject to the approval of DP 463

Mr Gilbert outlined the background to the three proposals\* (E/10/16/9.1.1). He attention to the consultation which had taken place and the comments received from a number of parties.

Recognising that the publication of the Development Proposals would provide a full public consultation opportunity for all, the Committee agreed on the proposal of Dr McMorris, seconded by Miss Rainey, to recommend that the Development Proposals be published.

**8.1.2 ANTRIM GRAMMAR SCHOOL** - to increase the approved admissions number from 105 to 112 with effect from 1 September 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mr Gilbert said that the EA was seeking to develop a strategic way forward for the town of Antrim. He presented the proposal\* (E/10/16/9.1.2) and outlined the consultation which had taken place with schools in the locality. It was noted that the proposal would not increase the school's approved enrolment number.

On the proposal of Mr Pollock, seconded by Sr Hegarty, the Committee agreed to recommend the publication of the Development Proposal.

**8.1.3 PARKHALL CONTROLLED INTEGRATED COLLEGE** - to establish post 16 provision for 130 pupils with effect from 1 September 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter

*(Dr McMorran declared an interest. He had been a mentor to the current principal of Parkhall Integrated College when the principal had been a beginning teacher.)*

Mr Gilbert gave background information on the school campus and outlined the current arrangements for young people in Antrim to avail of non-selective post 16 provision. He presented the proposal\* (E/10/16/9.1.3).

Members were supportive of the intention within the proposal. They noted the school's current budgetary position as set out within the Case for Change but expressed concern that the projected financial plan over the ensuing three year period was identifying significant deficit. Mr Gilbert outlined recent engagement with the principal and Governors of the school. Discussion ensued in relation to staffing at the school, costs associated with a split school site and other circumstances contributing to such a deficit.

Members stated that they could not support a proposal where a school had not demonstrated its ability to manage its resources within agreed targets.

On the proposal of Dr McMorris, seconded by Miss Rainey, the Committee agreed to recommend that officers would work with the school on this matter in order to present an amended and viable Chase for Change, along with the Development Proposal, to the Committee at its meeting on 10 November 2016.

***Action:** Work with school on the Case for Change and present the Development Proposal and revised document to the Committee at its November meeting.*

#### **8.1.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL OUTCOMES**

The Committee noted the papers\* (E/10/16/9.1.4, 9.1.5 and 9.1.6) setting out the Minister's decisions to the following Development Proposals:

- DP 449 Gaelscoil Eanna, Newtownabbey - approved with modification (26 part-time nursery places).
- DP 453 Glencraig Integrated Primary School - approved with recommendation that within the timeframe of the new Area Plan the EA will, in conjunction with NICIE, undertake to increase integrated provision in the wider local area.
- DP 467 and DP 468 Carr's Glen Primary School - approved.

#### **8.2 AREA PLANNING : UPDATE**

Members noted that the Minister intended to launch the Strategic Area Plan 2017-20 for public consultation on 17 October 2016. Members would receive copies of the document and the associated press release.

### **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on 10 November 2016.

The meeting ended at 3.30 pm.

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**CHAIRPERSON**

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**DATE**

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