

**EDUCATION AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Education Committee held on 14 September 2017 at 2.00 pm in Arvalee School and Resource Centre, Omagh

PRESENT Rev R Herron (Chairperson)

Rev A Adams	Sir Gerry Loughran
Mr D Cargo	Dr A McMorrán
Mr J Craig	Dr I McMorris
Mr G Doran	Mr O McMullan
Dr M Dynan	Mr R Pollock
Rev R Herron	Miss R Rainey

Mr E Jardine was in attendance

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr G Boyd, Mr J Collings, Mrs L Gardiner, Mrs K Scott, Mr J Unsworth, Mr M McConkey and Ms L McCall.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ms Á Andrews, Mrs M Culbert, Mrs B Hale, Sr C Hegarty 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 13 JUNE 2017

The minutes* (E/9/17/3) of the meeting held on 13 June 2017 were agreed on the proposal of Miss Rainey and seconded by Dr Dynan.

4. MATTER ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

STEM MODULE (7.2)

Mrs Gardiner said that schools had been informed of the operational arrangements concerning the STEM module for the current academic year. She outlined the new management arrangements which were in place concerning the STEM module. Members were made aware of challenges with regard to the availability of teaching associates to deliver the new programme. Officers had subsequently received legal and procurement advice on this matter and were in the process of liaising with a number of other STEM related organisations to invite to tender as partners to deliver the STEM module programme to schools after the Hallowe'en period. At the same time, officers would be exploring opportunities and seeking alternative sources of funding in order to provide for a sustainable way forward for the STEM programme, as had been discussed at the last meeting of the Committee.

Mrs Gardiner said that a report would be presented to the Committee later in the year on business sponsorship.

Members appreciated the efforts made in support of a sustainable way forward for this teaching resource.

5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

5.1 APPRECIATION

The Chair expressed appreciation to the Principal and Board of Governors of Arvalee School and Resource Centre for facilitating the meetings of the Education Committee and the Shared Education Committee. He wished the Board of Governors, staff and pupils of Arvalee School continued success in their new premises.

The Chair also expressed appreciation to Mr S Bradley for the presentation on the Strule Campus provided earlier in the day and the tour of the site.

A Member commended all those involved in the successful delivery of the project to date. He hoped that the vision for the campus would continue to incentivize all the stakeholders to continue to maximise on all sharing opportunities in the future.

5.2 CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE CONTROLLED SCHOOLS' SUPPORT COUNCIL (CSSC) AND COMHAIRLE NA GAELSCOLAÍOCHTA (CnaG)

The Committee noted correspondence* (E/9/17/5.1) received from CSSC and CnaG and the responses provided by the Chair. An invitation had been extended to representatives of both organisations to meet the Education Committee on an informal basis on 12 October 2017 to discuss the respective roles and relationships of these education partners.

The Chair sought the Committee's view on inviting representatives from all the sectoral bodies to the informal meeting on 12 October 2017. He considered that this would provide an opportunity for all the partners to be made aware of each other's role. If this was agreeable, the EA could then seek to subsequently engage with each of the sectoral bodies on an individual basis in order to finalise a Memorandum of Understanding setting out the relationship and specific roles and responsibilities of each organisation with whom the EA engaged on an operational basis.

It was agreed that the invitation would be extended to the sectoral partners to meet the Education Committee, on an informal basis, on 12 October 2017.

A Member sought clarification regarding the definition of 'sectoral body' and the number of sectoral partners to be invited. The Chair said that he had in mind those with whom EA officers engaged on an operational basis in the delivery of services (ie CCMS, CSSC, NICIE, CnaG and GBANI).

A Member requested that a briefing report on the sectoral partners should be provided to the Committee in advance of the meeting on 12 October. Another Member requested that a timetable should be drawn up to set out suggested dates for the EA to engage with its sectoral partners.

Action: *Invitation to be extended to the sectoral partners (listed above) to meet the Education Committee, on an informal basis, on 12 October 2017; information, as requested, to be presented to Members.*

6. EDUCATION DIRECTORATE RISK REGISTER - JUNE 2017

Mr Collings presented the Directorate's Risk Register* (E/9/17/6) and pointed out that the risks relating to school improvement, area planning and shared education had reduced as a result of the restructuring of the School Development Service and the appointment of Assistant Directors within the Directorate. It was noted that the risk relating to Community Planning remained unchanged.

Members commented on the presentation of the document. Given that risk management was a priority of Board Members, it was agreed that the information presented to the Committee in future quarterly reports should be simplified and provide detail on the actions taken to mitigate against risk in the last quarter. Furthermore, all Committees of the Board should receive the relevant Risk Register by Directorate in truncated format with the exception of the Audit and Risk Committee which would continue to review the Corporate Risk Register on a quarterly basis.

Action: *Truncated Risk Registers by Directorate to be presented to the relevant Committees on a quarterly basis.*

7. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

7.1 EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE 2017

The Committee noted CCEA press releases* (E/9/17/7.1) on pupils' results at GCSE and GCE A Level in 2017 based on provisional figures provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications. The outcomes showed that students in NI continued to make steady improvements in GCSE outcomes with small rises across the indicators. The information also showed continued strong performance by students in GCE A Level examinations.

Members paid tribute to pupils' achievements. They also commended the work and commitment of teachers, particularly in a year that had involved syllabus change. It was agreed that Mr Boyd and Mr Collings would write to schools to acknowledge the achievements and to thank schools for these successes at a time when schools were experiencing financial challenges.

Members referred to the comment in the press release that in general female pupils continued to out-perform their male counterparts. A Member said that engagement could take place with the CSSC on the performance of Protestant working class boys. A Member referred to the inequality of results by gender and considered that the School Development Service should give attention to approaches to styles of learning that would provide for equality of opportunity to both male and female pupils.

Mrs Gardiner said that officers had worked with cohorts of schools over the years to pilot projects and initiatives in classrooms that would enable boys to learn more effectively. There were current examples of schools which had been successful in closing the performance gap between males and females. Mr Collings said that such evidence of good practice would be disseminated to all schools.

Action: *Schools to be commended on pupils' results at GCSE and GCE A Level.*

7.2 INSPECTION SUMMARY 2016/17

The Committee noted the summary* (E/9/17/7.2) of published inspection findings for 2016/17 including a breakdown of findings by phase and management type. The paper also set out information on schools in the formal intervention process and the performance of schools which had experienced follow-up inspections where the overall findings of the original inspection had been satisfactory or below. Mrs Gardiner said that the two new inspection models, effective from January 2017, relating to Sustaining Improvement Inspection and Monitoring Inspection had facilitated a significant increase in the number of inspections due to the different risk-based approach.

The Committee noted that action short of strike action had impacted significantly on school inspections in 2016/17. Mrs Gardiner referred to the analysis of schools, within phase and management type, where action short of strike action had resulted in the ETI being unable to reach a conclusion on the quality of provision and particularly the number of schools which had been identified as a high priority for future inspection. Where the ETI had identified urgent safeguarding issues at a school, it had indicated that it would return to that school within six weeks to monitor and report on the arrangements for safeguarding.

Mrs Gardiner reported that the vast majority of priority schools which experienced follow-up inspections during 2016/17 had improved by at least one inspection grade. She confirmed that overall the targeted support to these schools had been effective.

A Member paid tribute to the support provided to schools by the School Development Service.

Members paid tribute to the nursery school sector for the high quality of outcomes evidenced through inspections.

7.3 LEARNING LEADERS – YEAR 2 ACTION PLAN

Mr Unsworth presented the Action Plan* (E/9/17/7.3) for year 2 of the Learning Leaders' Strategy for Teacher Professional Learning. The Action Plan had been developed by DE in conjunction with the EA and other education partners on the Strategic Oversight Group.

The five key areas of the Action Plan were noted. Mr Unsworth said that a report would be presented to the Committee at a future meeting on specific pieces of work which the EA was taking forward to support the strategy.

8. IRISH MEDIUM WORKSHOP - NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2017

Members were reminded of the issues discussed at the workshop held on 13 June 2017. This included the Authority's activities in support of the Irish medium sector.

Mrs Gardiner said that Mr Baker and she had met CnaG colleagues over the summer months, at DE's request, to discuss how the Authority was fulfilling its duties with regard to Irish medium education (IME). The recommendations in the Irish Medium School Leaders' Working Group (IMSLWG) Report had been discussed and some practical aspects had been agreed. This included dates and venues for initial meetings of the IM Learning Community. She said that an allocation of funding (£14k) had been received to support the ongoing work of the IM Learning Community and the Leaders' Group.

Mrs Gardiner said that meetings had also taken place with CnaG colleagues to discuss the IM bursary scheme. CnaG had been tasked to progress a business case for the scheme for September 2017 to March 2018 and to compile a summative evaluation report on the impact of the bursary scheme to date. This report would be presented to the Committee prior to consideration being given to future business cases for an IME bursary scheme. She said that CnaG had reported that there had been no uptake on the annual summer scheme and therefore no bursaries had been allocated for that purpose in the current year.

Mrs Gardiner said that EA and CnaG colleagues would continue to consider the out-workings of the recommendations contained in the IMSLWG Report.

A Member queried if the Authority intended to develop a strategy for IME. Mr Collings said that DE and EA carried out specific statutory responsibilities with regard to IME. However, no separate strategy would be developed. He reminded the Member that the EA would be developing a Memorandum of Understanding with each of its sectoral partners, including CnaG, which would set out the relationships and specific roles and responsibilities of each organisation.

The Committee approved the note* (E/9/17/8) of the workshop on the proposal of Miss Rainey, seconded by Dr Dynan.

9. AREA PLANNING

9.1 REVISED GUIDANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Mrs Scott presented DE Circular No 2017/09* (E/9/17/9.1) giving updated guidance on the publication of a Development Proposal.

The Committee noted that the guidance had been updated to take account of the consideration to be given to recommendations arising from judicial review decisions, and revised Area Planning support structures (the reduction of five Area Planning Local Groups [APLGs] based on former ELB boundaries to three regional APLGs based on Local Government District Councils). The guidance also set out an amended Case for Change template which enabled the EA to incorporate its comments on a Development Proposal within that document.

A Member queried if a mechanism could be devised to allow Members to have a better understanding of how Development Proposals presented to the Committee for consideration were reflected within the Strategic Area Plan. Mr Collings undertook to action this within the reporting mechanism.

Action: *Devise mechanism to allow Members to have a better understanding of how Development Proposals, presented to the Committee for consideration, are reflected within the Strategic Area Plan.*

9.2 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 517 - GAELSCOIL ÉADAIN MHÓIR

Proposal to increase admissions and enrolment numbers from 21 to 26 and 145 to 182 respectively with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Mr McConkey presented the papers* (E/9/17/9.2) 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 summary paper and 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 responses received to the consultation process

Members considered the comments as set out in the draft EA Response to the Department of Education. This included the consideration that the surplus places in the Derry City Irish medium primary sector would be addressed by the IM sector.

On the proposal of Mr Doran, seconded by Mr McMullan, the Committee approved the Response* (Appendix D) for submission to DE, along with the publication of the Proposal.

9.3 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 519 - DRUMRAGH INTEGRATED COLLEGE

Proposal to increase enrolment numbers from 580 to 675. This would permit an increase in admission numbers from 96 to 111 and to increase sixth form provision from 100 to 120 with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter.

(The Chair declared an interest in this item as he served on the Board of Governors of Omagh Academy.)

Mr McConkey presented the papers* (E/9/17/9.3) 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 summary paper and 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 responses received to the consultation process. All nine respondents, including a response from the Controlled Schools' Support Council, had objected to the proposal which they considered would have a negative impact on local post primary schools in the area.

Members considered the comments as set out in the draft EA Response to the Department of Education which sought not to support the Development Proposal due to its adverse effect on neighbouring post-primary schools. Mr McConkey said that a similar proposal had been brought forward by the Board of Governors of Drumragh Integrated College in 2012. He drew attention to the Minister's decision on that proposal including the outcome of the Judicial Review in 2015.

Members discussed the EA's role as planning authority and as management authority with regard to Development Proposals. They noted that Article 64 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 placed specific duties on DE to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education. They discussed the Drumragh Judgment and noted that this Judgment could have significant impact across all schools and within the Strategic Area Plan.

On the proposal of Dr McMorris, seconded by Miss Rainey, the Committee agreed to:

- publish the Proposal;

- amend the Response (Appendix D) for submission to DE to include a reference that the Minister, in considering the Development Proposal, should take cognisance of the Drumragh Judgment; and
- seek guidance from DE on how the various pieces of legislation, including the Drumragh Judgment, should be addressed in EA's response to DE.

9.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 520 - MAGHERALOUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Proposal to discontinue with effect from 31 August 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Mr McConkey presented the papers* (E/9/17/9.4) 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 summary paper and Case for Change. This included the rationale for the proposal, the sustainability of the school and the impact of the proposal on schools in the locality. They noted that no responses had been received to the consultation process. Members also considered the comments as set out in the draft EA Response to the Department of Education.

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

9.5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 521 - ST MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL, BROLLAGH

Proposal to discontinue with effect from 31 August 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Mr McConkey presented the papers* (E/9/17/9.5) 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 summary paper and 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 process. Mr McConkey outlined the previous consideration given to this Development Proposal by the Minister and the subsequent actions which had been taken by CCMS. He also outlined the considerations which had been given to rurality and transport requirements.

Members considered the comments as set out in the draft EA Response to the Department of Education.

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

9.6 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 522 - ST ITA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BELFAST

Proposal to increase admission numbers and enrolment numbers from 82 to 90 and 574 to 630 respectively with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Mr McConkey presented the papers* (E/9/17/9.6) 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 summary paper and 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 a response received to the consultation process.

Members considered the comments as set out in the draft EA Response to the Department of Education.

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

(Mr McMullan left the meeting at 4.00 pm.)

9.7 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 531 - St Brigid's Primary School, Tirkane

Proposal to increase admission and enrolment numbers from 29 to 35 and 203 to 245 respectively, by way of an increase to the admission and enrolment numbers of the Irish Medium Unit from 16 to 22 and 120 to 154 respectively with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Mr McConkey presented the papers* (E/9/17/9.7) 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 summary paper and 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 responses received to the consultation process. Members also considered the comments as set out in the draft EA Response to the Department of Education.

On the proposal of Rev Adams, seconded by Mr Doran, the Committee approved the Response* (Appendix 3) for submission to DE along with the publication of the Proposal.

9.8 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 533 - ST COLUMBAN'S COLLEGE, KILKEEL

Proposal to close the College, including the Learning Support Centre, with effect from 31 August 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 534 - ST LOUIS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL, KILKEEL

Proposal to increase the admission number from 80 to 130 and the enrolment number from 570 to 860 commencing 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter. The school will continue with the use of academic selection criteria as part of a bilateral approach to admissions.

Mr McConkey presented the papers* (E/9/17/9.8) 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 summary paper and Case for Change. This included the rationale for the proposal, the sustainability of both schools, the impact of the proposal on schools in the locality and responses received to the consultation process. Mr McConkey said that the concerns raised by the consultees had been captured in the draft EA Response in respect of the scale of the proposed increase in approved enrolment and admission numbers at St Louis' Grammar School. He also advised that the CYPs Directorate was strategically reviewing special educational needs and would be considering the best option for those pupils currently attending the Learning Support Centre at St Columban's College.

Members considered the comments as set out in the draft EA Response to the Department of Education.

On the proposal of Dr Dynan, seconded by Dr McMorris, the Committee approved the Response* (Appendix D) relating to DP No 533 (St Columban's College) for submission to DE along with the publication of the Proposal.

On the proposal of Dr Dynan, seconded by Dr McMorris, the Committee approved the Response* (Appendix D) relating to DP No 534 (St Louis' Grammar School) for submission to DE along with the publication of the Proposal.

9.9 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS - OUTCOMES

The Committee noted the paper* (E/9/17/9.9) advising that DE approval had been given to the following Development Proposals:

- DP 481 Integrated College Dungannon
Approved with modification - to extend the admissions number from 90 to 110 and the enrolment number from 500 to 700 with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter.
- DP 483 Mill Strand Integrated Primary School
Approved with modification - to increase the admissions number from 30 to 58 and the enrolment number from 232 to 406 commencing in September 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter.
- DPs 503, 504, 505, 506, 507 Christian Brothers' School, Corpus Christi College, St Rose's Dominican College and St Louise's College
To establish a new Catholic 11-19 co-educational post primary school with an enrolment number of 1000 and admission number of 150 to year 8 (being in effect an amalgamation of Christian Brothers' School, Corpus Christi College and St Rose's Dominican College) with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter.
To reduce the admission number of St Louise's College from 356 to 220 and the enrolment number from 2280 to 1500 and become co-educational with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter.
- DPs 512, 513 and 514 Carrickfergus College and Downshire High School
To establish a new co-educational non-selective controlled post primary school in Carrickfergus for pupils aged 11 – 18 with an approved admission number of 210 and an approved enrolment number of 1250 with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter. Carrickfergus College and Downshire High School to discontinue.

The Committee noted that approval had not been given to the following Development Proposals:

- DP 476 St MacNissius' Primary School, Tannaghmore - proposal to make significant change in the character of the school by way of the delivery of Irish medium education rather than English medium education.
- DP 484 Mill Strand Integrated Primary School - proposal to establish an additional 26 part time nursery places at the Nursery Unit.
- DP 487 Bridge Integrated Primary School - to establish a grant maintained integrated nursery unit for 26 children on a part time basis with effect from 1 September 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter.
- DP 490 Dalriada School - to increase the admissions number from 125 to 130 in year 8 with an increase in enrolment number from 815 to 897 pupils commencing in September 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

COMMUNICATION FROM AN ELECTED MEMBER

A Member referred to a communication which he had received from an Elected Member in the West Belfast area expressing concerns at the real financial pressures facing schools.

Mr Boyd provided a report on the financial pressures within the Education sector. He advised that he had recorded a message for all school principals on the financial position following DE's letter to schools on this subject. In addition, Mr Collings would be engaging with principals between September to November in order to discuss issues relating to teaching and learning and the current financial climate.

(Sir Gerry Loughran left the meeting at 4.11 pm.)

Mr Boyd said that the concerns raised by the Elected Member could be directed to his office.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee would next meet on 12 October 2017.

The meeting ended at 4.13 pm.

CHAIRPERSON

DATE

* Paper issued with agenda *** Paper tabled