

**EDUCATION AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Education Committee held in Antrim Board Centre on 8 September 2016 at 1.30 pm

PRESENT: Rev R Herron (Chairperson)

Rev A Adams	Dr A McMorrان
Mr J Craig	Ms S O'Connor
Sr C Hegarty	Mr R Pollock
Sir Gerry Loughran	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 Mrs C Duffield.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ms Á Andrews, Fr T Bartlett, Mr D Cargo, Mrs M Culbert, Dr M Dynan, Dr I McMorris and Ms N Toman.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9 JUNE 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2016 were agreed on the proposal of Rev Adams and seconded by Miss Rainey.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

4.1 IRISH MEDIUM WORKSHOP (4.1)

Mr Collings reported that the workshop would be held on 10 November 2016 at 10.30 am. All Members of the Board would be invited.

4.2 SCHEME FOR THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE (5)

Members noted that the Senior Legal Adviser was reviewing all Committee Schemes.

4.2 KEY INEQUALITIES IN EDUCATION - WORKING GROUP (6.1)

Mr Collings reported that the first meeting of the Working Group would take place on 10 October 2016 at 2.00 pm.

5. OVERVIEW OF COMMITTEE BUSINESS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

The Committee noted a paper** detailing a programme for the year ahead. The paper was informed by the interim senior staffing structure which reflected the remit of the Directorate.

The Chair queried the appropriate governance structure for the Music Service. Mr Collings confirmed that the EA Senior Management Team was of the view that the Music Service was more appropriately placed within the Education Directorate.

6. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

6.1 INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION INTO THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN DE LA SALLE COLLEGE - REPORT

The Committee noted the Report* (E/9/16/7.3) of the independent panel appointed to investigate the circumstances in De La Salle College dated August 2016.

Mr Collings advised that he had been invited by DE to serve on a programme board which was being established to oversee the implementation of an action plan which would take forward the recommendations contained in the Report. He outlined the membership of the programme board whose first meeting would take place on 22 September 2016.

Particular attention was given to the urgent recommendation which asked that CCMS and the EA should facilitate the allocation of an experienced HR specialist to the school on a full-time basis for the 2016/17 school year. Mrs Duffield advised that the EA was liaising with CCMS to ensure that the HR specialist support provided to the school would respect and deliver on this recommendation. Members were in agreement with the approach outlined by Mrs Duffield and urged caution about setting a precedent.

Mr Collings said that a further paper would be presented to the Committee at its October meeting on those recommendations contained in the Report that required action by the EA.

A Member asked if the urgent recommendation requesting the ETI to schedule a full inspection in the school as soon as practicable had been agreed with the ETI. Mr Collings undertook to clarify this and report back to the Committee.

Action: *Ascertain position regarding urgent recommendation involving ETI to carry out a full inspection at the school as soon as practicable.*

6.2 PROVISIONAL GCE AND GCSE RESULTS 2016

Members noted the CCEA press releases and presentation* (E/9/16/7.1) which were based on provisional figures provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications for GCSE and GCE A Level 2016 results for pupils in NI. The indicative figures showed that pupils continued to make steady improvements in GCSE examinations and a strong performance at GCE A Level.

Mr Collings said that a more detailed analysis of GCSE and GCE outcomes would be presented to the Committee once data had been validated and made available by DE. He would also present a paper to the Committee at a future meeting on a number of identified priority schools in the context of the School Improvement Strategy.

Members were delighted with the indicative results at GCE and GCSE levels. They discussed the benefit of social media to immediately raise awareness of performance results and other relevant information. The Chair of the Board outlined the media activities that had taken place on the day of the GCE and GCSE examination results.

6.3 EVALUATION OF GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2015/16

Mr Collings said that a report on communication issues impacting on Governors would be presented to the Committee at its October meeting.

Mrs Scott presented the Report* (E/9/16/7.2) setting out the training and support programme for members of Boards of Governors of all schools in 2015/16. She said that colleagues in all EA departments had been consulted in order to compile the programme. In addition, a governor skills and training audit had been devised for the purposes of consulting with governors on their training and development needs. The feedback from this audit had informed the prioritisation of courses in specific areas of need for 2015/16. The priority areas from the audit were child protection and safeguarding, school improvement, recruitment and selection, and finance.

Members noted and were in agreement with the ongoing work to provide support and training to Governors as detailed in the Report.

A Member queried if chairs of Boards of Governors were obliged to attend training on 'The Role of the Chairperson'. She considered that attendance on this course could impact significantly on the effectiveness of a Board of Governors. A Member said that the Membership and Teaching Appointments Committee (MTAC) had commented on the benefit of ensuring that the office of chair was rotated around members and to limiting the term of office to two terms. Mrs Scott said that training on the Role of the Chairperson was not mandatory and was not restricted to chairs only. She said that the EA encouraged the appointment of sub-committees within a Board of Governors and the appointment of a chair and a vice-chair to these sub-committees to enhance governance and experience.

A Member said that one of the recommendations within the draft Report of the Working Group on School Surpluses and Deficits related to the need for a Finance Report to appear as a standing item on the agenda of a full meeting of a Board of Governors. He queried if there was any requirement within the Scheme of Management for Controlled Schools for such a Finance Report to be presented and, also, if training could be provided on school surpluses and deficits within the governor training programme.

Mrs Scott said that this matter would be referred to the Director of Finance and the Directorates could liaise on how best to deliver key messages. She said that the main focus for a Board of Governors was to raise standards and to ensure the robust planning and management of school finances. Governors were advised of their responsibilities as set out in the Scheme of Management for Controlled Schools.

A Member queried the engagement and consultation with the Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC) on governor training. Mrs Scott said that the CSSC would now be invited as a stakeholder to participate in designing future governor training programmes. She drew attention to previous consultation with the CSSC to design and develop assessor training in connection with Teaching Appointments.

Members noted the various methods used to provide training to governors. Attention was drawn to a specific problem in accessing on-line training. Mr Gilbert advised that the streaming issue was being investigated and a report would be provided to MTAC in due course.

(Mr Craig left the meeting at 2.17 pm.)

Mrs Scott said that all comments from Members would be taken on board.

8. AREA PLANNING

8.1 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

8.1.1 KILLYLEAGH INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Proposal to establish a nursery unit for 26 part time pupils with effect from 1 September 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mr Gilbert presented the paper* (E/9/16/8.1.1).

On the proposal of Ms O'Connor, seconded by Mr Pollock, the Committee agreed to recommend that the EA should enter into local consultation on the establishment of a part time nursery unit (26 places) at Killyleagh Integrated Primary School.

8.1.2 MONEYREA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Proposal to establish a nursery unit for 26 part time pupils with effect from 1 September 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mr Gilbert presented the paper* (E/9/16/8.1.2).

On the proposal of Miss Rainey, seconded by Sr Hegarty, the Committee agreed to recommend that the EA should enter into local consultation on the establishment of a part time nursery unit (26 places) at Moneyrea Primary School.

8.1.3 SCOIL AN DROCHOID

Proposal to enter into pre-publication consultation with stakeholders on:

- (i) Transforming from voluntary to controlled status and relocating the school from its current location (Lower Ormeau Road, Belfast) to the site of Ulidia Resource Centre, Ormeau Road, Belfast; and
- (ii) Establishing an Autistic Spectrum Disorder Centre at KS1 and a General Learning Support Centre at KS2.

Mr Gilbert presented the paper* (E/9/16/8.1.3) which incorporated the DE Business Case and the feasibility study.

On the proposal of Miss Rainey, seconded by Sr Hegarty, the Committee agreed to recommend that the Board should enter into pre-publication consultation with stakeholders in relation to the Article 17 Transfer from voluntary to controlled status, the proposal to relocate the school and to establish learning support centres.

8.1.4 GAELSCOIL AN TSEANCHAI - UPDATE

- (i) DP 450 Proposal to discontinue Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí as a Grant Maintained Irish Medium Primary School with effect from 1 September 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter
- (ii) DP 451 Proposal to establish a new Controlled Irish Medium Primary School to be known as Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí with effect from 1 September 2016

Mr Gilbert said that the Committee, at its meeting on 11 February 2016, had agreed to recommend that the Board should approve the draft EA Response which

was supportive of the transformation in the school's status from a Grant Maintained Irish Medium primary school to a Controlled Irish Medium primary school. Subsequent to that agreement, the Committee had been informed at its meeting on 10 March 2016 that DE had issued communication to advise that the transfer would be taken forward under Article 17 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

Mr Gilbert said that further DE communication had been received requesting EA approval to the publication of the Development Proposal and consideration of a Response. The Committee reaffirmed its prior agreement and position as set out in the EA Response (Appendix C to E/2/16/8.3) and agreed to recommend, further to the most recent DE communication, that the Authority should publish the Development Proposal.

8.1.5 CRANMORE INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Proposal to establish a nursery unit for 26 part time pupils with effect from 1 September 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mr Gilbert presented the paper* (E/9/16/8.1.5) and the draft EA Response**.

On the proposal of Ms O'Connor, seconded by Mr Pollock, the Committee agreed to recommend that the Authority should publish the Development Proposal and approve the Response** for submission to DE.

8.1.6 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL OUTCOMES

The Committee noted the paper* (E/9/16/8.1.6) setting out the Minister's decisions to the following Development Proposals:

- (i) Approval to Development Proposal No 448 - Forth River Primary School
Proposal to reduce the enrolment number of the school from 232 to 210 in line with the school's admission number of 30 with effect from 1 September 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter
- (ii) Non-approval to Development Proposal No 452 - Gaelscoil an Lonnáin
Proposal to relocate the school from its current site on the Falls Road, Belfast to the site of the former St Comgall's Primary School, Falls Road, Belfast with effect from 1 September 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter

The Board noted that the Minister, in his letter dated 20 June 2016, had decided not to approve this proposal due to unresolved sustainability and long term viability concerns at the school and within Irish Medium primary provision generally in Belfast. The Minister had stated that DE, CnaG and EA should work together through the existing area planning governance structures and processes to encourage and facilitate strategic development of sustainable Irish Medium primary provision in Belfast, in line with statutory duty.

8.2 AREA PLAN 2017-20 : PROGRESS REPORT

Mr Gilbert said that the draft Area Plan had been approved by the Board at its meeting on 30 June 2016 and had been submitted to DE in July. EA officers were currently engaging with DE on the level of background detail to be included in the document. He advised that

the draft Area Plan would again be presented to the Board, with DE's comments, for approval prior to public consultation in October / November. It was intended that the Plan would be finalised in early 2017 and implemented from 1 April 2017.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 13 October 2016.

The meeting ended at 2.35 pm.

CHAIRPERSON

DATE

* Paper issued with agenda *** Paper tabled