

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE EDUCATION AUTHORITY HELD ON 14 MARCH 2019 AT 1.00 PM IN ANTRIM**

**1. PRESENT** Rev R Herron (Chair)

Rev A Adams	Sir Gerry Loughran
Ms Á Andrews	Mr G Lundy
Mrs M Culbert	Dr I McMorris
Mr G Doran	Mr O McMullan
Dr M Dynan	Ms S O'Connor
Mrs S Kelly	Miss R Rainey

**2. IN ATTENDANCE**

Ms S Long, Mr M Baker, Mrs P Cooney, Mr J Unsworth, Mr M McConkey, Ms L McCall and for part of the meeting Mrs R Bell, Mr R Sayers, Mr A Harbinson, Ms J McIlgorm, and Ms M Gribben.

Representatives from the Governing Bodies' Association: Mr T McDaid, Chair, and Ms N O'Neill, Chief Executive.

Ms A Campbell attended in her role as Board Room Apprentice.

**3. APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Mr D Cargo, Mr J Craig, Dr A McMorran and Mr R Pollock.

**4. GOVERNING BODIES' ASSOCIATION (GBA) - ENGAGEMENT**

The Chair welcomed Mr McDaid and Ms O'Neill to the meeting.

Ms O'Neill said that the voluntary grammar sector comprised 50 schools which included selective and non-selective education, co-educational and single sex schools, non-denominational and Catholic schools, as well as boarding and prep departments. All schools were independently managed by a Board of Governors which employed its own teaching and non-teaching staff. The sector had over 750 governors, approximately 3,376 teachers, and approximately 48,000 pupils. This figure represented almost one third of post primary pupils. GBA had represented the interests of voluntary grammar schools for over 70 years.

Mr McDaid said that GBA's Executive Committee, comprising 12 elected members and 7 co-opted members, met monthly throughout the academic year. A Management Committee met to consider staffing and funding matters. GBA engaged consultants on a part time basis to support area planning work. It received a budget from DE and subscriptions from member schools. Mr McDaid referred to GBA's strong policy development and advocacy functions and said that Members of the GBA represented the sector on a wide range of educational bodies. He said that GBA was very keen to work with EA to enhance working relationships and address key areas of concern.

Ms O'Neill said that GBA's relationship with EA was well established in some areas. GBA valued the support provided in areas such as shared education and area planning. She drew attention to recent meetings with the Chief Executive Designate and the Acting Director of Finance and ICT. She said that GBA representatives served on the Area Planning Steering Group, three local area planning groups and one working group. She acknowledged that in some areas, perhaps due to resource issues, relationships between EA and GBA were not as well advanced. The development of the Memorandum of Understanding was therefore

welcomed. She highlighted that GBA was keen to work with EA to add its knowledge of the sector to deliver improved outcomes for all pupils across the education sector. She drew attention to challenges around the current structures and processes for area planning, particularly that many area planning outcomes could not be delivered without some stream of guaranteed capital development. The challenge for GBA was to develop confidence in the area planning process and support schools after a development proposal approval. She drew attention to a recent exercise where GBA had brought together a number of schools which had gone through change as a result of area planning and had become less sustainable. GBA was currently working on a paper to outline these experiences.

Mr McDaid said that a number of voluntary grammar schools had expressed interest in participating in shared education. As GBA was keen to encourage and facilitate shared education, it looked forward to working with EA in support of potential partnership arrangements. A Member queried scope for widening access to pre-existing shared education partnerships. Mr Baker said that schools could join existing partnerships within PEACE IV and the Signature Programme. Arrangements could be facilitated on request from a school and in agreement with a partnership. A Member pointed out that shared education also related to socio-economic conditions.

Ms O'Neill said that the greatest challenge to the sector was funding. With salary costs amounting to approximately 90% of school spend, the sector was facing challenges between balancing the budget and curriculum choice. GBA wished to work with EA and other sectors to give a common voice to this challenge and to be involved in the area of transformation.

A Member queried if there was any progress being made with regard to separate entrance examinations to selective schools. Ms O'Neill said that the admissions policy was the responsibility of a Board of Governors. It was pointed out that while GBA had no responsibility with regard to entrance examinations, work was taking place to bring the two entrance examinations into one.

The Chair referred to the arrangements whereby EA was now the funding authority for voluntary grammar schools. Ms O'Neill said that the process had steadied after the initial changeover. She referred to cash flow arrangements and said that schools had alerted GBA to stock takes. This matter, along with other financial matters, had been discussed at a recent productive meeting with the Acting Director of Finance and ICT.

*Ms O'Connor left the meeting at 3.40 pm and re-entered at 3.41 pm.*

A Member queried if GBA experienced challenges in securing governors with appropriate skillsets for voluntary grammar schools. Mr McDaid said that a skills audit would be carried out. On occasion, Boards of Governors would approach organisations with particular skills, for example an accounting firm, to seek to identify individuals with particular skillsets. Mr Unsworth said that EA's Governor Training Programme provided training courses on financial management. The challenge for EA was to ensure that sufficient courses were available for all governors wishing to avail of financial management training. He said that a number of governors representing the voluntary grammar sector had attended those courses.

The Chair thanked Ms O'Neill and Mr McDaid for their presentation\*\* and engagement with Members and the two guests left the meeting.

## 5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

### CYPS DIRECTORATE - ISSUE RAISED IN THE MEDIA

Mrs Bell provided a report on a matter raised in the media. This included an overview of the circumstances surrounding the case, the responses provided to the media, actions taken by EA in recent days, and follow up actions to be taken.

On the proposal of Rev Adams, seconded by Miss Rainey, it was agreed that this matter would be discussed in committee.

*Mr M Baker, Mrs P Cooney, Mr J Unsworth, Mr M McConkey, Mrs R Bell, Mr R Sayers, Mr A Harbinson, Ms J McIlgorm and Ms M Gribben withdrew from the meeting.*

A Member queried the reason for discussing the matter in committee. Ms Long advised that it was on account of the level of detail to be discussed by Members. The Member asked for the record to show that he was against discussing the matter in committee.

Members discussed areas relating to the case and actions taken by EA.

*During the discussion in committee, Mrs Culbert left the meeting temporarily at 2.47 pm and re-entered at 2.48 pm.*

On the proposal of Rev Adams, seconded by Miss Rainey, the Committee agreed to resume the meeting.

*Mr M Baker, Mrs P Cooney, Mr J Unsworth, Mr M McConkey, Mr R Sayers, Ms J McIlgorm and Ms M Gribben re-entered the meeting.*

The Chair said that while in committee, on the proposal of Mr McMullan and seconded by Rev Adams, the Committee had agreed a course of action to be taken, including that Ms Long would provide a further report to the Board, at its meeting on 28 March 2019, on progress against those actions. Ms Long had also undertaken to ensure that a copy of a report drawn up by EA's Disability Champion would be circulated to Members through the appropriate forum.

**Actions:** *Ms Long to provide a further report on the matter to the Board at its meeting on 28 March 2019; and copy of the report drawn up by EA's Disability Champion to be circulated to Members.*

## 6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded of the requirement to declare interests, as appropriate, during the course of the meeting.

## 7. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 FEBRUARY 2019

On the proposal of Miss Rainey, seconded by Dr Dynan, the Committee agreed the minutes\* (E/3/19/3) of the meeting held on 14 February 2019.

## 8. MATTER ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

### STRATEGIC AREA PLAN FOR SCHOOL PROVISION 2017-2020 DRAFT ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2019/20 (YEAR 3) (10.1)

The Chair advised that a letter had issued to the Permanent Secretary setting out Members' concerns around the overall progress made against the strategic plan and, in particular, that Ministerial objectives would not be fully realised on account of structural constraints within the area planning process. He said that this matter was also being raised at the next meeting of DE's Transformation Programme Board.

## **9. CHAIR'S BUSINESS (Continued)**

### **9.1 CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

The Chair paid tribute to Mr Boyd for his contributions to the work of the Committee and conveyed the Committee's best wishes to him on his retirement.

As this was the last meeting of the Committee in EA's four year term of office, the Chair thanked all Members and officers for their support to the Committee and the work of the Education Directorate.

The Chair congratulated Mr McConkey on his appointment as Acting Assistant Director of Education.

### **9.2 OPTIMISING ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING COACHING MODEL**

Mrs Cooney said that funding had been secured to implement a pilot coaching model for principals in the current academic year. DE had also committed to provide funding to roll the coaching model out to all principals in the 2019/20 academic year.

A paper on the pilot coaching model would be presented to the Committee at its April meeting.

## **10. MAJOR CAPITAL WORKS - TRACKER REPORT**

*Mrs Culbert declared an interest in De La Salle College and Mr Lundy declared an interest in St Ronan's College.*

Mr Sayers presented the bi-annual tracker report\* (E/3/19/7) setting out the status of all controlled and non-controlled major capital works (projects with a value greater than £500k). Since the last presentation of the report to Members, a further 16 schools had been included as part of the School Enhancement Programme announcement in January 2019. These schools were at feasibility study stage.

Mr Sayers said that steps were being taken to increase the rate at which projects would be delivered from first being announced to commencing work. He said that EA was working with DE to facilitate a call in 2019 for further capital investment.

A Member acknowledged the significant support received from EA in support of a project at a non-controlled school.

The Chair said that the Shared Education Committee had agreed to receive a similar tracker report in respect of Shared Education campus projects. Mr Sayers undertook to provide such a report to the Shared Education Committee.

Mr Sayers said that a Member had previously queried reasons for delays in projects advancing in previous years. He provided information on projects which had been taken forward between the periods 2006-2012 and 2012-2018. For the period 2006-2012, little or no consideration had been given to area planning, particularly in the earlier years. This had impacted positively on the timeframe for projects to move forward. Business cases for this period had not been required to be as robust as current business cases and therefore projects had advanced more quickly. Projects announced during this period had also potentially not been given the same scrutiny as currently was the case prior to announcement, and a waiting list culture had existed.

For the period 2012-2018, Mr Sayers said that the area planning process had added to the timeframe at the early stage of a project. Business cases were evidence based and more complex and business case addendums were now more likely to be required in the life of a

project. He said that almost all projects announced would now be built and no waiting list culture existed. He also drew attention to the implementation of new funding streams in recent years with different governance arrangements, for example Fresh Start, Shared Education, and School Enhancement Programmes.

The Committee noted the report.

**Action:** *Tracker report to be provided to the Shared Education Committee.*

#### **11. EDUCATION DIRECTORATE FINANCE REPORT AS AT 31 JANUARY 2019**

Mr Baker presented the finance report\* (E/3/19/8) which provided an overview of core funding as at 31 January 2019. In general all budget lines were forecast to be within budget for 2018/19.

The Committee noted the report.

*Mr McMullan left the meeting temporarily at 3.21 pm.*

#### **12. DIRECTORATE RISK REGISTER - FINAL QUARTER**

The Committee noted the Risk Register\* (E/3/19/9) detailing the Directorate's four main risks.

#### **13. EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES - SCHOOL AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

The Chair welcomed Ms J McIlgorm and Ms M Gribben from C2K to the meeting.

Mr Baker said that EA had undertaken a wide ranging consultation and information gathering exercise with educational users and stakeholder organisations to gain feedback on the future needs of Education Technology Services (ETS). The feedback was to assist in the development of a specification of user requirements for the ETS project. He presented the report\* (E/3/19/10) detailing the methodology and activities carried out between April and December 2018 to gather requirements for ETS. Attention was drawn to engagement with the Senior User Forum (senior teacher representatives across sectors) and the Technical User Forum (technical staff mainly in post primary and special schools). Attention was also drawn to responses received from 520 schools and 25,000 pupils including engagement with Governors.

Mr Baker said that the current C2K contract had been extended to March 2021.

A Member requested that a summary consultation report, which would include the key themes identified from the consultation, should be provided to the Committee. Ms McIlgorm said that this report was currently in draft format and would be provided to the Committee in due course.

A Member drew attention to concerns around the proliferation of apps being used in schools. She queried whether apps used in schools were supported by the C2K network. She also queried C2K's ability to adapt to changing environments.

*Mr McMullan re-entered the meeting at 3.27 pm.*

Mr Baker said that a report would be provided to the Committee at its May meeting on the breadth of apps used in schools, including apps used as part of the C2K network, the associated risks, and possible training needs of staff and governors around the use of apps. The report would also set out responsibilities around the use of apps for C2K, EA, and Boards of Governors. He said that EA would seek to support schools and promote good use of apps within a secure environment.

Ms McIlgorm said that feedback showed that apps were useful in the classroom and schools had an appetite for using apps. She said there was scope through the procurement process to engage with suppliers on this issue and minimise risks within the education community.

A Member raised questions on providing advice and guidance to teachers on the use of apps and on a school's ability to establish a school website independent of the C2K network. Ms Gribben drew attention to training needs in schools on the use of apps and said that this would be included in the statement of user requirements. Ms McIlgorm said that advice and guidance on the use of apps would be further promoted through teacher collaboration. She said that schools were able to purchase domains outside the security of the C2k network in order to host school websites.

The Committee noted the report.

**Action:** *Summary consultation report on school and stakeholder engagement to be provided to the Committee in due course; and report on the use of apps in schools to be provided to the Committee at its May meeting.*

## **14. AREA PLANNING**

### **14.1 STRATEGIC AREA PLAN FOR SCHOOL PROVISION 2017-2020 DRAFT ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2019/20 (YEAR 3)**

Mr McConkey said that the draft annual action plan for 2019/20, agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 14 February 2019, had been forwarded to the Department of Education for endorsement. The Permanent Secretary had indicated that, following receipt of EA's letter setting out Members' concerns with regard to the area planning process, he wished to consider the letter in conjunction with the draft annual action plan before providing a response. Mr McConkey said that as EA had planned to publish the 2019/20 annual action plan on 5 April 2019, EA might now be required to look at contingency arrangements depending on the Permanent Secretary's response.

### **14.2 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 576 - KILLYLEAGH CONTROLLED INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Proposal to decrease admissions and enrolment numbers from 25 to 18 and 175 to 126 respectively with effect from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mr McConkey presented the papers\* (E/3/19/11.2) 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, 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, current sustainability of the school, the impact of the proposal on schools in the locality and responses received to the consultation.

In response to a Member's query, Mr McConkey undertook to amend the narrative in the Case for Change around demand for places at the school.

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

**Action:** *Minor amendment to be made to narrative within the Case for Change.*

### **14.3 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 582 - CAMPBELL COLLEGE**

Proposal to decrease admissions number from 140 to 130 in year 8 with the enrolment number remaining at 950 with effect from 1 September 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mr McConkey presented the papers\* (E/3/19/11.3) 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, 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, current sustainability of the school, the impact of the proposal on schools in the locality and a response received to the consultation. Members also noted additional information relating to correspondence between Campbell College and stakeholders.

On the proposal of Miss Rainey, seconded by Rev Adams, the Committee approved the response for submission to DE along with the publication of the Proposal.

#### **14.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 583 - ST MACNISSIUS' PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Proposal to discontinue with effect from 31 August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter

The Chair reported that CCMS had requested EA to postpone the publication of this proposal. The proposal would therefore be presented to a future meeting for the Committee's consideration.

A Member commented on narrative in the papers which could be perceived in error in respect of viable small rural schools. Mr McConkey advised that the managing authority for this school was CCMS.

#### **14.5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 586 - GROARTY CONTROLLED INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Proposal to discontinue with effect from 31 August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mr McConkey presented the papers\* (E/3/19/11.5) 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. They noted the downturn in enrolment numbers over a number of years.

Mr McConkey drew attention to proposed housing development in the area over the next 4-10 year period. He said that officers had engaged with local politicians on this development and had agreed to undertake a community audit to ascertain parental preferences on education provision going forward.

A Member highlighted the importance of engaging with the local Council in order that planning could be factored into consideration for future needs of the area.

On the proposal of Ms O'Connor, seconded by Mr Doran, the Committee agreed to recommend that the EA would commence pre-publication consultation on the above proposal in accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

#### **14.6 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL OUTCOMES**

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

- (i) Development Proposal Nos 526-530 - Altishane Primary School, Loughash Primary School, St Patrick's Primary School (Dunamanagh), and St Joseph's Primary School (Glenmornan) - a new Catholic Voluntary Maintained co-educational, primary school with an enrolment number of 133 and admissions number of 19 with effect from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter.

- (ii) Development Proposal No 551 - Maghaberry Primary School – to increase the admission number from 30 to 41 with an annual phased increase in the enrolment number from 227 to 287 with effect from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on 11 April 2019.

The meeting ended at 3.52 pm.

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**CHAIRPERSON**

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**DATE**

\* Paper issued with agenda

\*\* Paper tabled