

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE EDUCATION AUTHORITY HELD ON 16 MAY 2019 AT 1.30 PM IN ANTRIM BOARD CENTRE

1. PRESENT Rev R Herron (Chair)

Rev A Adams	Sir Gerry Loughran
Ms Á Andrews	Mr G Lundy
Mr D Cargo	Mr N McCausland
Mr J Craig	Dr I McMorris
Mrs M Culbert	Mr O McMullan
Dr M Dynan	Mr K Mulvenna
Mrs S Kelly	Miss R Rainey

2. IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs K Scott, Mr M Baker, Mrs P Cooney, Mr M McConkey, Mr J Unsworth, Ms L McCall, and for part of the meeting Mr F Bailie, Mr D Canmore, and Mr T Matchett.

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

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Mr G Doran, Dr A McMorran, and Ms S O'Connor.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11 APRIL 2019

On the proposal of Dr Dynan, seconded by Mrs Kelly, the Committee agreed the minutes* (E/5/19/3) of the meeting held on 11 April 2019.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6.1 EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (9.1)

Mrs Scott said that the key note speaker at the Educational Leadership Conference held on 15 May 2019 in Belfast had been Professor J Hattie, a world renowned educationalist on professional learning strategies. The conference had been well attended by principals across the region and feedback on the event had been very positive. The Committee noted that an annual event would be held for school leaders which would give focus to educational leadership.

6.2 CASTLEWELLAN PRIMARY SCHOOL (10.6)

A Member drew attention to adverse comments in the community following EA's decision to commence pre-publication consultation on the proposal to discontinue Castlewellan Primary School with effect from 31 August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter. He referred to the very negative publicity that had been given to the impact of the proposal on the minority community in the area and he sought assurance that officers would be engaging with the school and local community/political representatives to provide support and assurance on the actions which were being taken by EA to address the school's needs.

Mr McConkey referred to the school's challenging circumstances and said that EA officers had met school representatives the previous week. He also said that NICIE was liaising with Annsborough Integrated Primary School and that EA would be working alongside NICIE to support the needs of the community. He undertook to ensure that officers engaged with community/political representatives in the area to provide assurances on this matter.

***Action:** Officers to engage with community/political representatives in the area to provide assurances on the actions which were being taken to address the needs of Castlewellan Primary School.*

7. EDUCATION DIRECTORATE CORE FUNDING - FINANCE REPORT

Mr Baker presented the finance report* (E/5/19/6) which showed a projected overspend at year end of £241k (0.8%). He drew attention to costs associated with teacher absence and said that officers were engaging with HR colleagues on actions to be taken forward to manage this pressure area. The Committee noted the report.

8. EFFECTIVE USE OF APPS BY SCHOOLS

Mr Baker presented a paper* (E/5/19/7) providing information on app usage on the C2K education network, the beneficial use of apps, challenges and supports available to schools via the EN(ni) Service, and security protocols.

A Member queried the onus of responsibility in a school to ensure that apps were being used in line with information governance regulations. Mr Baker said that apps accessed through the C2K network were covered through its security protocols. Apps accessed and downloaded outside the network were not covered through C2k's security protocols and depended on the school to select and ensure secure access. This responsibility therefore resided with the school principal. EA did not control the use of apps outside its own networks.

A Member said that some schools were approached by third party companies in respect of software packages. She drew attention to potential lack of understanding in schools around the risks associated with external software packages. A Member said that companies also sought to sell ipads and separate networks to schools and he queried the number of schools which had purchased an additional network. Mr Matchett said that approximately 50,000 wireless devices were connected to the C2K network each day across the school estate. In the past 18-24 months, many schools had cancelled third party networks and had returned to the C2K wireless service. The Member said that engaging with all schools on user needs would support the effective development of the new Education Technology Service.

A Member said that apps were an effective and beneficial part of the overall ICT strategy. He queried how officers sought to disseminate best practice to schools in the use of apps. Mr Matchett said that C2K showcased schools which had won awards or had been highly commended in order to share peer to peer best practice. He referred to an upcoming conference for schools which would showcase an app on mental health and well-being called 'Mindsight' which had been developed by pupils from Mercy College and Belfast Boys' Model.

Members referred to the effects of technology on young people, particularly challenges relating to addiction and gaming and associated child protection risks. A Member suggested that schools should identify an e-safety officer among their staff who would work alongside pastoral teams. Mr Matchett said that C2K supported schools through the provision of policy and advice. This included frequent face to face safeguarding sessions, on-line supports including e-safety

zone (resources for schools and teachers) and 'Safer Internet Day' held in February each year, as well as conferences which highlighted e-safety considerations. A Member referred to challenges for schools in respect of managing the use of mobile phones during the school day. Mr Matchett said that blocks on the network were costly and could potentially impact on emergency calls.

A Member said that newly qualified teachers were generally unaware of constraints on information governance within schools and he queried the level of training provided through post-graduate or under-graduate courses on social media platforms. Mr Baker said that EA continued to highlight to schools the importance of new teachers understanding all safe usage policies.

Members raised queries on the apps supported by C2K and on the facility to unblock specific apps to be used by schools. Mr Matchett summarised the apps currently in use across schools and said that an arbitration group, comprising regional support staff at management level, considered school requests to unblock apps. The turnaround period for the arbitration process was 24 hours.

A Member commented that no safe usage policy currently existed for teaching staff.

Mr Baker referred to the recommended actions which were being taken forward by officers, as set out in the paper, to support effective and secure communication and information governance in schools. He said officers were currently developing a checklist for schools. EA would continue to promote and disseminate online safety information to governors, principals and teachers, and would ensure that online communication was covered in Information Governance (GDPR) training for schools. EA would enhance online safety information to provide guidance on the use of apps inside and outside the C2K network. EA would also continue to support the sharing of best practice in the use of apps by demonstrating to schools the positive use of apps. He confirmed that EA would be including apps in the Education Technology Service process to identify the feasibility of providing schools with an in-house suite of apps which would be hosted within the new network.

A Member queried the process to facilitate telecommunication masts on the school estate. Mr Baker said that this query would be forwarded to Operations and Estates.

Mr McMullan left the meeting at 2.33 pm.

A Member queried arrangements to ensure that wifi connection in schools was fully optimised. Mr Matchett said that this could be covered as part of a school survey or during visits to schools.

The Committee noted the paper.

Action: *Query relating to the process to facilitate telecommunication masts on the school estate to be forwarded to Operations and Estates.*

9. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

9.1 STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

Mrs Scott presented a paper* (E/5/19/8.1) setting out revised strategic leadership responsibilities of the Directorate's management team. The new model identified one Assistant Director as having strategic leadership responsibility for a specific service area as well as leadership responsibility within each of the three localities. This would seek to

ensure locality presence. It was noted that the model would be further reviewed after the permanent appointment of the Director of Education.

The Committee noted the paper.

9.2 MUSIC SERVICE - STRATEGIC REVIEW

Mr McConkey said, following a workshop held on 26 February 2018, the Committee had agreed to implement three key steps as part of a review of the Music Service. These related to the creation of a common charging policy, addressing employment inconsistencies within each office, and developing and implementing a review proposal. He presented a paper* (E/5/19/8.2) setting out progress made since the workshop to implement the Committee's recommendations and the actions to be taken forward to enable options on a model for the Music Service to be presented to the Committee for consideration by March 2020.

Mr Canmore and Mr Bailie gave a presentation** on the review assumptions, the financial context, and the review enablers. The four phases of the review were outlined: visioning involving user stakeholder engagement and feedback, cost and benefits analysis, agreement and planning, and implementation.

A Member highlighted the importance of undertaking benchmarking at the start of the review. Mr Bailie said that this exercise had been completed and would be undertaken on an annual basis.

A Member emphasised the importance of ensuring equality of access for all children and young people. He said he would welcome details around the common charging policy. Mr Bailie said that the vision was to ensure equality of access for all. This would include social equality, rural proofing, and pupils with additional needs. Further detail on the common charging policy would be presented to the Committee in due course. He said that consideration was currently being given on how to measure linkages between the Music Service and school improvement as well as shared education.

A Member said that the paper should identify at the outset the contribution of the Music Service to shared education.

A Member sought clarification on the membership of the stakeholder user group. He was informed that the group would comprise school representatives from different sectors across the three localities. The membership of the group would be provided to Members once its membership had been agreed.

Discussion ensued on the proposed services of a professional services partner. A Member said the service was discretionary and he considered there was significant expertise in-house to carry out a cost and benefits analysis. He said that EA had used Prince 2 methodology to conduct other reviews and he considered that this framework should be used to support the review of the Music Service. Mrs Scott undertook to give consideration to the review being taken forward within the framework of Prince 2 methodology and to report back to the Committee.

The Committee noted the paper.

Actions: *Members' comments to be taken on board. Membership of the stakeholder user group to be provided to Members once its membership is agreed. Consideration to be given to the establishment of the review of the Music Service within the framework of Prince 2 methodology and report back to Committee.*

10. AREA PLANNING

10.1 STRATEGIC AREA PLAN FOR SCHOOL PROVISION 2017/20 AMENDED FINAL DRAFT ANNUAL ACTION PLAN - EXTENDED YEAR 3

Mr McConkey said that EA's letter to the Permanent Secretary had set out Members' concerns with regard to area planning processes and had sought approval to extending the strategy for a further year to the end of March 2021. This was to ensure that all work streams in the plan could come to a conclusion and to allow for a robust evaluation of the 2017/20 Strategic Area Plan, leading to effective engagement and collaboration with all stakeholders, particularly schools, in the preparation of the new Strategic Area Plan.

A Member sought assurance that the development proposal publication dates in the document were realistic and achievable. Mr McConkey said that EA had worked with the educational partners to review the publication dates for all identified work streams and those work streams carried forward from the previous annual action plan. The additional year would support deliverability in tandem with the funding allocated to area planning through the Transformation Programme. He said the funding had enabled recruitment to commence within EA's area planning transformation team. Some officers had already taken up post and some would commence in September 2019 to support the 16 transformation projects which were being taken forward jointly by DE, EA and CCMS.

Mrs Scott said that approval of the amended plan meant that EA could commence communication with schools named in or affected by the action plan in May and June.

On the proposal of Mr Lundy, seconded by Miss Rainey, the Committee approved the amended action plan (E/5/19/9.1) for 2019/21 for submission to DE for endorsement.

Miss Rainey left the meeting at 3.37 pm.

10.2 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 594 - CARNALBANAGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

Mr McConkey presented the papers* (E/5/19/9.2) 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. Mr McConkey outlined the engagement undertaken with CCMS and NICIE on the schools in the locality experiencing sustainability issues.

A Member sought clarification that the proposal to be brought forward by CCMS in respect of Seaview Primary School would be considered at the same time as Development Proposal No 594. Mr McConkey confirmed that EA and CCMS had collaborated to ensure synchronisation of the process for the pre-publication stage of the two proposals.

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

Dr McMorris left the meeting at 3.42 pm.

10.3 GREATER AHOGHILL AREA

- DP No 595 Longstone Primary School - Proposal to discontinue with effect from 31 August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter

- DP No 596 Fourtowns Primary School - Proposal to increase its admissions number from 41 to 45, with annual phased increase in the enrolment number from 290 to 315, with effect from 1 September 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter
- DP No 597 Groggan Primary School - Proposal to increase its enrolment number from 137 to 154 with effect from 1 September 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter

Mr McConkey presented the papers* (E/5/19/9.3) 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. A Member raised a query in respect of the date of establishment of the new build at Fourtowns Primary School.

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

Action: *Provide information on the date of establishment of the new build at Fourtowns Primary School.*

10.4 MOVILLA HIGH SCHOOL

Mr Cargo declared an interest in Abbey Primary School.

- Movilla High School to discontinue with effect from 1 September 2024 or as soon as possible thereafter (proposal to be read in conjunction with the following Development Proposals TBC)
- Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College to increase its admissions and enrolment numbers from 242 to 290 and 1,420 to 1,800 respectively with effect from 1 September 2020 (proposal is linked to and predicated upon Department of Education approval for DP TBC - the proposed discontinuance of Movilla High School)
- Glastry College to increase its admission and enrolment numbers from 110 to 120 and 600 to 775 respectively with effect from 1 September 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter with a further increase of the admission number to 150 and enrolment number to 900 after the closure of Movilla High School on 1 September 2024 or as soon as possible thereafter (proposal is linked to and predicated upon Department of Education approval for DP TBC - the proposed discontinuance of Movilla High School)
- Nendrum College to increase its admission and enrolment numbers from 80 to 120 and 400 to 600 respectively with effect from 1 September 2020 (proposal is linked to and predicated upon Department of Education approval for DP TBC - the proposed discontinuance of Movilla High School)
- Regent House Grammar School to increase its admission and enrolment numbers from 210 to 240 and 1,420 to 1,570 respectively with effect from 1 September 2020 (proposal is linked to and predicated upon Department of Education approval for DP TBC - the proposed discontinuance of Movilla High School)

Mr McConkey presented the papers* (E/5/19/9.4) which set out the rationale in respect of the request to commence pre-publication consultation on the above proposal. Summary information was provided on the previous decisions taken by the Committee in respect of Movilla High School.

Members considered the Case for Change and the summary paper. Consideration was given to current enrolment numbers and the quality of education in the school as evidenced by ETI and the school's attainment history.

Mrs Scott drew attention to issues concerning sixth form pathways for pupils in the Newtownards area.

Mr McConkey outlined the four options in the paper, and set out the preferred option (option b). In respect of option b, officers would engage with DE to identify a site and seek approval for a major capital investment for the relocation of Glastry High School. Mrs Scott said that the Chief Executive of CSSC and she had visited the Chair and Principal of Glastry High School to discuss the options and the school had been supportive of option b.

Members queried whether officers had involved CSSC colleagues in drawing up the options. Mr McConkey said that CSSC was represented on the local area planning group and was supportive of the strategic position concerning schools in the area. Mrs Scott said that once the Committee provided direction on a preferred option, officers would engage with CSSC colleagues to consider the out-workings of that option.

Ms Andrews and Mrs Culbert left the meeting at 4.00 pm.

A Member queried whether new and planned housing development in the area was factored into EA's projected enrolment numbers. Mr McConkey said that DE provided guidance to EA on the publication of development proposals and he outlined factors which were used to support EA's planning assumptions. These included NISRA's statistics on live birth projections and information per ward as well as projected growth patterns. EA was also required to ensure that 10% capacity existed within the system. He said this capacity had been built into the overall numbers across the five schools. A Member requested a copy of DE's guidance on the publication of development proposals.

Mr McConkey reminded Members that DE had not yet taken a decision on the proposal relating to Strangford College in order that consideration would be given by DE to an area planning solution for the overall area. Mr McConkey said that EA officers were working with Bangor Grammar also and it was anticipated that an associated development proposal would be brought forward by the school as part of the area solution.

Mrs Kelly left the meeting at 4.20 pm.

The Committee considered that the Case for Change did not adequately reflect its longer term strategic vision for the area and agreed that it should be amended to highlight EA's vision for an area planning solution involving major capital investment. On the proposal of Dr Dynan, seconded by Sir Gerry Loughran, the Committee agreed to recommend that EA would commence pre-publication consultation on the above proposal in accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

Rev Adams left the meeting at 4.28 pm.

Actions: *Case for Change to be amended. Copy of DE's guidance on the publication of development proposals to be provided to the Member.*

10.5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 575 - ACADEMY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Proposal to increase the admission number from 56 to 58 with an annual phased increase in the enrolment number from 395 to 406 with effect from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mr McConkey presented the papers* (E/5/19/9.5) 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, 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.

A Member said this was an example of the issue raised with the Permanent Secretary around bureaucracy relating to small non-controversial variations. He acknowledged the work being taken forward by DE's working group to consider decreases in admission and enrolment numbers. However, this proposal related to a very small increase in admission and enrolment numbers which had no impact on neighbouring schools. He considered that this issue should be further pursued with DE within strand two of the Transformation Programme around barriers to area planning.

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

Dr Dynan left the meeting at 4.30 pm.

Action: *Issue concerning small increases in admission and enrolment numbers to be further discussed with DE with a view to incorporating this into strand two of the Transformation Programme relating to area planning.*

10.6 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL OUTCOMES

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

- Development Proposals No 464 and 465 - Forge Integrated Primary School:
 - To establish a 52 place part-time nursery unit at the school with effect from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter
 - To establish an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Centre at Key Stage 1 and a General Learning Support Centre (LSC) at Key Stage 2 at the school with effect from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter
- Development Proposal No 561 - Holy Trinity Primary School:
To decrease the admission and enrolment numbers from 120 to 90 and 935 to 630 respectively with effect from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter
- Development Proposal No 571 - Erganagh Primary School
To discontinue with effect from 31 August 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter

Mr McConkey reported that DE had also approved the following:

- Development Proposal No 545 - Belfast Boys' Model School - to increase its admissions number from 151 to 200 with an annual phased increase in the enrolment number from 905 to 1250 with effect from 1 September 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter.
- Development Proposal No 546 - Belfast Model School for Girls - to increase its admissions number from 160 to 200 with an annual phased increase in the enrolment number from 950 to 1250 with effect from 1 September 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Mr McConkey said the approvals had resource implications for both schools. In response to a Member's query, Mr McConkey undertook to provide further detail on the requirements for additional accommodation at both schools.

The Committee noted that the following Development Proposal had not been approved:

- Development Proposal No 535 - Rowandale Integrated Primary School

To establish a statutory nursery unit at the school to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter. DE had acknowledged the evidence of demand for pre-school provision in an Integrated setting in the area. However, DE had indicated that the analysis pointed to the likelihood of over-provision in the area should the proposal be approved, with the possibility of displacing existing provision.

Action: *Provide further detail on the requirements for additional accommodation at Belfast Boys' Model and Belfast Model School for Girls.*

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 13 June 2019.

The meeting ended at 4.32 pm.

CHAIRPERSON

* Paper issued with agenda

DATE

** Paper tabled