

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **EDUCATION COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 19 January 2012 at 4.00pm.

Present: Councillors PETER NIELD, MARGARET THOMSON, ALISON ANDREWS, BRIAN BOYD, MAIRI EVANS, JEAN LEE, DAVID LUMGAIR, DAVID MAY, DONALD MORRISON, ROB MURRAY, DAVID FAIRWEATHER, JOHN RYMER, COLIN BROWN, PAUL VALENTINE and SHEENA WELSH.

Church

Representatives: Mr DAVID ADAMS, Mrs PATRICIA MILLAR and Mr BILL SIMPSON.

Teacher

Representatives: Mr DAVID DRYSDALE and Mr PHILIP JACKSON.

Councillor NIELD, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Bob Myles and Mark Salmond, with Councillors David Fairweather and Colin Brown substituting respectively.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Committee agreed to note that no declarations of interest were made.

3. MINUTES

(a) Previous Meeting

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 November 2011](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

(b) Special Cases Sub-Committee

The [minute of meeting of the Special Cases Sub-Committee of 20 December 2011](#), a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted (**APPENDIX I**).

4. STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2011

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 11 February 2010, there was submitted [Report No 51/12](#) by the Director of Education advising members of the publication of the recently completed first annual Standards and Quality Report on the work of the Angus Education Service.

The Report indicated that for the past several years, Angus schools and Education Support Services had prepared and published self evaluation reports on a triennial basis. It had been increasingly felt that there would be merit in aligning service-wide self-evaluation procedures with the procedures in place in individual establishments and support services. Arrangements had now been made to prepare and publish Education Service Standards and Quality Reports on an annual basis rather than the previous triennial basis. This was, therefore, the first annual Report on the work of the Angus Education Service, which had been structured on the basis of the framework outlined in the Quality and Management in Education 2 (QMIE 2) publication which was designed to evaluate the education functions of Scottish Councils.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note and endorse the contents of the recently completed annual Standards and Quality Report on the Angus Education Service;

- (ii) to note that copies of the Standards and Quality Report were available electronically and in the Members' Lounge; and
- (iii) to note that the Standards and Quality Report would be the starting point for the imminent Validated Self Evaluation exercise to be conducted jointly by the Council and Education Scotland.

5. VALIDATED SELF EVALUATION (VSE) – PRESENTATION

Anna Boni, Education Scotland and Neil Logue, Director of Education, gave a presentation to members on Validated Self Evaluation.

The presentation gave the background to Validated Self Evaluation, how it aimed to support and challenge the work of education authorities through HMIE and the Council working in partnership, and how it was anticipated that it would work. A brief overview of the five key areas for consideration, as selected by the Council, was also given.

The Convener, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Ms Boni and Mr Logue for their informative presentation.

6. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS 2011/2012

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 20 January 2011, there was submitted [Joint Report No 50/12](#) by the Director of Education and the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the Service Level Agreements currently in place between the Education Department and third party providers during 2011/2012.

The Report indicated that, in common with other local authorities, funding was provided by the Council to external parties to deliver services and the use of Service Level Agreements within the Education Department ensured the provision of a range of essential education services throughout Angus.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note the ongoing commitment by the Education Department to partnership working with voluntary sector service providers.

7. A NATIONAL ANTI-BULLYING APPROACH FOR SCOTLAND'S CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

There was submitted [Report No 52/12](#) by the Director of Education providing members with information on a revised national Anti-Bullying approach.

The Report indicated that a national approach to anti-bullying for Scotland's children and young people had first been published in 2010 and had recently been re-issued following a series of national anti-bullying events. The purpose of the 'national approach' document was to communicate and promote a common vision and aims, and ensure that work across all agencies and communities contributed to holistic anti-bullying practices in Scotland. Local authorities had a duty to promote and ensure the care and welfare of children and young people and must therefore have appropriate and up to date policies, procedures and guidelines.

It had been recognised nationally that the current Angus approach was comprehensive and well considered. Angus Council Education Service was committed to updating the policy and procedures during 2012 to take full account of revised national guidance and of ever-changing technologies and related challenges.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and

- (ii) to note the continuing arrangements to provide support to Angus schools in preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in schools.

8. COMMISSION ON RURAL EDUCATION: CALL FOR EVIDENCE

There was submitted [Report No 53/12](#) by the Director of Education advising members of the terms of an Angus Council Officer response to the call for evidence issued by the Commission for Rural Education.

The Report indicated that the call for evidence questionnaire issued by the Commission in mid-October 2011 had been designed to obtain comment on each aspect of the remit of the Commission. The response, as detailed within the Appendix to the Report, had been prepared by an officer Working Group comprising Senior Officers, members of the Educational Development Service and Head Teachers.

COUNCILLOR NIELD, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR THOMSON, MOVED THAT THIS COMMITTEE AGREES:-

- (I) TO NOTE AND ENDORSE THE TERMS OF THE OFFICER RESPONSE TO THE COMMISSION'S CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE, AS DETAILED IN THE APPENDIX TO THE REPORT; AND
- (II) TO NOTE THAT THE RESPONSE HAD BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION TO COMPLY WITH THE SUBMISSION DEADLINE OF 12 JANUARY 2012.

Councillor Welsh, seconded by Councillor Valentine, moved, as an amendment, that this Committee agrees:-

- (i) to remove the words 'and endorse' from recommendation (i) above; and
- (ii) to note recommendation (ii) above.

On a vote being taken, the members voted:-

For the motion:

Councillors Nield, Thomson, Andrews, Boyd, Lumgair, May, Fairweather, Rymer, Brown, Mr Adams and Mrs Millar (11).

For the amendment:

Councillors Evans, Lee, Morrison, Murray, Valentine, Welsh and Mr Simpson (7).

No vote:-

Mr Drysdale and Mr Jackson (2).

The motion was declared carried and became the finding of the meeting.

9. NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON THE COMMON CORE OF SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND VALUES FOR THE CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE IN SCOTLAND: KEY MESSAGES

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 August 2011 and Article 7 of the minute of meeting of the Social Work and Health Committee of 22 September 2011, there was submitted [Joint Report No 54/12](#) by the Director of Education and the Director of Social Work and Health advising members of the key messages from the Scottish Government's consultation exercise on the common core of skills, knowledge, understanding and values for the children's workforce in Scotland.

The Report indicated that between March and June 2011, the Scottish Government had carried out a consultation exercise seeking views on the skills, knowledge and values which everyone who worked with children, young people and families could be expected to demonstrate. In total, 105 responses had been submitted to the national consultation and a summary of the key findings had been issued in October 2011.

The key responses to the consultation would now be considered by the Common Skills National Working Group who would revisit the scope of the 'common core'. A revised version of the 'common core' would be developed by the Working Group and feedback from the consultation exercise would inform that process. A key task of the Working Group would be to identify a meaningful and deliverable 'common core' that was appropriate for every employee and volunteer who worked with children, young people and families, and which took due account of the outcomes of the national consultation exercise. On completion of the revised core, it was likely that the Working Group would re-engage with respondents and other key stakeholders in order to consider plans for implementation of the finalised 'common core'. The strength of local partnership structures and collaboration meant that the Angus Children's and Learning Partnership was well placed to respond to the promotion and implementation of a 'common core', once finalised.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note, in particular, the key messages arising from the responses to the national consultation exercise, as detailed in Section 3 of the Report; and
- (iii) to note the intended next steps.

10. THE EQUALITY ACT 2010: CONSULTATION ON AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES DUTY

There was submitted [Report No 55/12](#) by the Director of Education advising members of the terms of an Angus Council officer response to the Scottish Government's Consultation on Auxiliary Aids and Services Duty.

The Report indicated that the Equality Act 2010 Auxiliary Aids and Service Duty was likely to have implications for the Council and the response to the consultation document, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report, had been drafted by officers in the Education Service, in discussion with allied health professionals and colleagues working in other local authorities.

The Scottish Government had advised that, following the closing date for the consultation, all responses would be analysed and forwarded to the UK Government and a Report on the consultation would be issued early 2012. Angus Council officers would await further information and guidance prior to preparing an Action Plan for the implementation of the new duty.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note the terms of the officer response to the national consultation, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report, which had been submitted to the Scottish Government to comply with the deadline of 2 January 2012.

11. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Committee resolved, in terms of Standing Order 27(2), that the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following item so as to avoid the possible disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraphs 6, 8 and 9.

12. BRECHIN COMMUNITY CAMPUS: FUNDING UPDATE

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 November 2011, there was submitted [Report No 56/12](#) by the Director of Education providing members with an update in relation to the Scottish Government grant funding parameters for the project to replace Brechin High School. Appended to the Report was a detailed funding update analysis.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note the recommendations contained in the Report.