

ANGUS COUNCIL

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

Present: Councillors SHEENA WELSH, EWAN SMITH, COLIN BROWN, LYNNE DEVINE, JEANETTE GAUL, MARTYN GEDDES, SHEILA HANDS, DAVID LUMGAIR, DAVID MAY, GLENNIS MIDDLETON, RONNIE PROCTOR, MARGARET THOMSON and PAUL VALENTINE.

Church

Representatives: Miss SANDRA GUTHRIE and Mr BILL SIMPSON.

Teacher

Representatives: Mr DAVID DRYSDALE and Mr JIM HAMMOND.

Councillor WELSH, Convener, in the Chair.

Prior to the commencement of the business, the Convener welcomed members to the first meeting of the Education Committee following the recent election. She expressed the hope that members would continue to work together for the benefit of children in Angus.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Mark Salmond.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

With reference to Article 9(b) and 9(c) of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 15 May 2012, the Committee agreed to note the members appointed to this Committee.

4. REMIT OF THE COMMITTEE

There was submitted and noted the remit of the Education Committee.

5. APPOINTMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEES

There was submitted [Report No 335/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services dealing with the appointment of Sub-Committees of this Committee.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to appoint, in terms of Standing Orders 32 and 33, the following members to the undernoted Sub-Committees:-
- School Attendance Sub-Committee – Convener, Vice-Convener and one Parent Council representative
 - Special Cases Sub-Committee – Convener, Vice-Convener and Councillor Thomson
 - Staffing Sub-Committee – Convener, Vice-Convener and Councillor Thomson
 - Education Records Review Sub-Committee – three members of the Education Committee on a rotational basis

- Executive Sub-Committee – Convener, Vice-Convener and Councillor Thomson
 - Special Appeal Sub-Committee – Vice Convener and Councillors Devine, Houston, Proctor and Thomson.
- (ii) to note that the remit of each of these Sub-Committees was as detailed in the Report and that they would act with full delegated powers;
- (iii) to note the membership of the Angus Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers;
- (iv) to note the statutory position in relation to the Education Appeal Committee and to confirm its composition, as detailed in the Report; and
- (v) that Disclosure Scotland checks be undertaken on the members of the Education Appeal Committee, as detailed in Section 4 of the Report.

6. MINUTES

(a) Previous Meeting

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 March 2012](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

(b) Special Meeting

The [minute of special meeting of this Committee of 9 February 2012](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

(c) Angus Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers

The [minute of meeting of the Angus Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers of 8 February 2012](#), a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted **(APPENDIX I)**.

(d) Staffing Sub-Committee

The [minute of meeting of the Staffing Sub-Committee of 12 April 2012](#), a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted **(APPENDIX II)**.

7. SUPPORT FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN PREPARING FOR THE NEW NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: ADDITIONAL IN-SERVICE DAYS

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 19 April 2012, there was submitted [Report No 336/12](#) by the Director of Education advising members of the arrangements made to allocate to secondary schools only, two additional in-service days to support the introduction of new national qualifications.

The Report indicated that on 9 May 2012, the Director of Education had received notification from Scottish Government officials that Scottish Ministers had granted the request for the exceptional closure of Angus secondary schools on two additional days in the new session, and that Head Teachers and Parent Councils had been notified of this decision.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the details of the arrangements made for two additional in-service closure days to be taken in the new school session;
- (iii) to note that allocation of these dates had taken account of the arrangements already approved by the Education Committee for school term and holiday dates in session 2012-2013;

- (iv) to note that Head Teachers and Parent Councils had been notified of the dates of the additional closure days in order to provide staff and parents with maximum notice of revisions made to next session's school terms and holiday dates; and
- (v) to note that the Scottish Government and COSLA had agreed the basis for allocating to education authorities additional funding to support the introduction of new national qualifications.

8. SUPPORT FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (SQA) NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

There was submitted [Report No 337/12](#) by the Director of Education providing members with an overview of the national and local guidance available to schools in Angus to support the introduction of the new SQA national qualifications.

The Report indicated that following extended consultation, the SQA had published the final documents to support the introduction of the new suite of national qualifications. The SQA documents specified the content and mandatory assessment requirements for the new qualifications, and offered advice and guidance on approaches to learning, teaching and assessing.

Following a number of questions from Councillor May, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the details of the new national qualifications;
- (iii) to note the progress made by Angus schools in preparing for the introduction of the new national qualifications and the support which had been made available nationally and locally;
- (iv) to note the emerging concerns expressed by Head Teachers about aspects of the new SQA procedures and to note the commitment of the authority to seek related assurances from SQA;
- (v) to note that copies of the 'frequently asked questions' leaflets for parents and employers were available for perusal in the Members' Lounge and electronically on the Council's website; and
- (vi) that a training session on the new curriculum and new qualifications be arranged for all members of the Education Committee.

9. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY: DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 June 2011, there was submitted [Report No 338/12](#) by the Director of Education advising members of the progress achieved through Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in schools, and proposing further investment for 2012/2013.

The Report indicated that at present, the majority of schools and educational establishments had access to excellent IT resources. However, it was important to invest in new and emerging technologies to maximise learning and teaching opportunities and to embed ICT effectively within the school curriculum.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the importance of ICT in enhancing learning opportunities for pupils;
- (iii) to note the progress made in improving ICT provision in schools, in particular the increasing availability of wireless technology; and
- (iv) to approve the investment in 2012/2013 ICT, as detailed in Section 5 of the Report.

10. 'SCOTLAND'S SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE' PROGRAMME – PHASE 3

There was submitted [Report No 339/12](#) by the Director of Education providing members with detailed information regarding Phase 3 of the Scottish Government's 'Scotland's Schools for the Future' investment programme, setting out two broad options for funding applications to the programme and describing the application process.

The Report indicated that on 24 February 2012, the Scottish Government's Head of Schools Infrastructure Unit had written to all of Scotland's Directors of Education regarding Scotland's Schools for the Future Programme – Phase 3. The letter, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the Report, set out the context and the objectives for the third phase of the investment programme and explained the process which local authorities should follow if they wished to apply for funding.

Contained within the Report was a summary in respect of the Council's school estate strategy. Based on that position, the request to submit bids by 21 July 2012 provided insufficient time to properly consider all the options and to bring forward a definitive proposal. Accordingly, it was proposed to respond to the Scottish Government indicating that, whilst the Council would, in principle, wish to bid for funding, more time was required to enable matters to be considered in more detail, including through discussion with schools and the wider local community. Dialogue with Scottish Future's Trust/Scottish Government would also be maintained and a further Report would be prepared for a future Education Committee.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the terms of the Scottish Government's announcement;
- (iii) to note the current position with respect to the Council's School Estate Strategy;
- (iv) to note the principles of the two broad-based illustrative options, including their associated financial implications; and
- (v) to authorise the Director of Education to write to the Scottish Government to note the Council's wish to bid for funding prior to the deadline of 21 July 2012, and to seek additional time to firm up a specific proposal which would be the subject of a further Report to this Committee.

11. 'JUST PLAY' UPDATE

With reference to Article 15 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 August 2011, there was submitted [Report No 340/12](#) by the Director of Education advising members of the progress to date and proposed future developments in relation to the Angus Children's and Learning Partnership Initiative, 'Just Play – Getting It Right for the Early Years in Angus'.

The Report indicated that in the current financial climate, 'Just Play' funding had provided Angus children's services partners with the opportunity to enhance early year's services. It would allow the opportunity to strengthen and build on the existing good work already taking place across Angus in the context of the national 'Getting It Right' agenda. The initiative had attracted considerable national attention which brought welcome support to the joint efforts of Children's Services and partner organisations to secure the best possible outcomes for vulnerable children aged 0-3 years. It was anticipated that 'Just Play' approaches would become an integral feature of the Early Years Services in Angus.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the key progress since the inception of the 'Just Play' initiative;
- (iii) to note the interest, support and attention which 'Just Play' was receiving from Scottish Government colleagues; and

- (iv) to note the recommended future developments.

12. RESTORATIVE APPROACHES: UPDATE ON ROLL-OUT

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 March 2011, there was submitted [Report No 341/12](#) by the Director of Education advising members of the continuing good progress in implementing restorative approaches across schools and services.

The Report indicated that Curriculum for Excellence had a strong focus on developing the health and wellbeing of all young people and it was the responsibility of all staff to support children and young people in their overall learning and development. By providing systematic support to the implementation of restorative approaches in Angus schools and communities, the Council was committed to supporting all children to achieve their potential and enjoy a happy, fulfilling and safe school experience.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the work underway to develop restorative approaches as a key strategy in improving relationships and behaviour in Angus schools; and
- (iii) to note the progress of the roll-out to date.

13. VALIDATED SELF-EVALUATION (VSE) EXERCISE: PUBLICATION OF EDUCATION SCOTLAND'S REPORT

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 November 2011, there was submitted [Report No 372/12](#) by the Director of Education advising members of the publication by Education Scotland of its report on the VSE exercise in relation to the Council's education functions carried out in the period January-April 2012.

The Report provided an overview of the main findings and key conclusions of the VSE exercise, together with areas for further improvement and the key next steps.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note that Education Scotland had published on 19 June 2012, a Report on the VSE exercise in relation to the education functions of Angus Council;
- (iii) to note that copies of the published Report had been circulated to all members of the Education Committee; and
- (iv) to note the main outcomes of the VSE exercise and the key findings of the Education Scotland team which had been brought to the attention of senior officers prior to the publication of Education Scotland's VSE report.