

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

Education and Communities Committee

Tuesday 5 September 2023 at 2pm

Present: Councillors Armstrong, Brennan, Brooks (for Wilson), Clocherty, Crowther (for Daisley), Law, McGuire, McVey, Moran, Quinn and Robertson, Mr J Docherty, Church Representative, and Ms P McEwan, Teacher Representative.

Chair: Councillor Clocherty presided.

In attendance:

Ruth Binks	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development
Tony McEwan	Head of Culture, Communities & Educational Resources
Michael Roach	Head of Education
Anne Sinclair	Managing Solicitor (for Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services)
Hugh Scott	Service Manager, Community Learning & Development, Community Safety & Resilience and Sport
Eddie Montgomery	Head of Physical Assets
Mary McCabe	Finance Manager (Education & Communities)
Yvonne Gallacher	Quality Improvement Manager – Early Years, Education Services
Diane Sweeney	Senior Committee Officer
Lindsay Carrick	Senior Committee Officer
Karen MacVey	Members' & Committee Services Team Leader
PJ Coulter	Corporate Communications Officer (Media Relations)

The meeting was held at the Municipal Buildings, Greenock with Councillors Law and McGuire attending remotely.

The following paragraphs are submitted for information only, having been dealt with under the powers delegated to the Committee.

428 Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

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Apologies for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Daisley, with Councillor Crowther substituting, Councillor Wilson, with Councillor Brooks substituting, and Rev D Burt.

No declarations of interest were intimated, but certain connections were intimated for the purposes of transparency as follows:

Agenda Item 2 (Communities Revenue Budget Report – Final Outturn 2022/23 and 2023/24 Projected Outturn at 30 June 2023) – Councillors Brooks, Clocherty and Quinn.

Agenda Item 3 (Communities Capital Programme Progress and Asset Related Items) - Councillors Brooks, Clocherty and Quinn.

Agenda Item 5 (Update to Inverclyde Leisure Funding Agreement and Annual Governance Review) - Councillors Brooks, Clocherty and Quinn.

429 Communities Revenue Budget Report – Final Outturn 2022/23 and 2023/24 Projected Outturn at 30 June 2023

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There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer and the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development advising Committee of the 2022/23 Communities Revenue Budget final outturn and the 2023/24 Revenue Budget position at 30 June 2023.

Councillors Brooks, Clocherty and Quinn declared connections as members of the Board of Inverclyde Leisure. They also formed the view that the nature of their connection and of the item of business did not preclude their continued presence in the meeting or their participation in the decision-making process and were declaring for transparency.

Decided:

- (1) that the final outturn for the 2022/23 Communities Revenue Budget and the current projected underspend for 2023/24 of £391,000 as at 30 June 2023 be noted;
- (2) that it be noted that (a) £323,000 of the projected underspend relates to Inverclyde Leisure utility costs and is due to reduced unit rates, (b) this budget is ringfenced and cannot be used for any other purpose, and (c) any excess budget will be returned to the non-pay inflation contingency; and
- (3) that the following virements be approved: (a) £25,000 from the Community Grants Fund to Community Hall Waivers, and (b) £120,000 from the Environment & Regeneration Committee relating to 7½ John Wood Street.

430 Communities Capital Programme Progress and Asset Related Items

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There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Chief Financial Officer providing (1) performance information for the Communities part of the Education & Communities Committee, and (2) an update in respect of the status of the projects which form the Communities Capital Programme and Asset related items.

Councillors Brooks, Clocherty and Quinn declared connections as members of the Board of Inverclyde Leisure. They also formed the view that the nature of their connection and of the item of business did not preclude their continued presence in the meeting or their participation in the decision-making process and were declaring for transparency.

Decided:

- (1) that the current position of the 2023/26 Capital Programme be noted; and
- (2) that the progress on the following projects be noted (a) Leisure Pitches Asset Management Plan/Lifecycle Fund, (b) Waterfront Leisure Centre Training Pool Moveable Floor, (c) Community Hub King George VI, (d) Bank Street Community Hub (32nd Scouts), (e) Parklea Branching Out, and (h) the Asset Transfer Working Group updates on (i) Larkfield Community Halls, (ii) Morton in the Community, (iii) Martial Arts Academy, and (iv) Crawfordsburn Centre.

431 Communities Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives

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There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on the Communities aspect of the service.

Decided: that the updates on the following be noted (a) Substance Use Officers, (b) Food Growing Strategy/Invergrow Project, (c) Multiply Project, (d) Participatory Budgeting, (e) LBGTQ+ Peer Support Group, (f) Early Adopter Community – Affordable Out of School Childcare, (g) Emergency Powers Report – Summer Activity Funding, (h) Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces – Capital Fund, (i) Inverkip Primary School Crossing Patrol, (j) I Am Me Scotland Platform – Antisocial Behaviour Module, (k) Community Safety Strategy 2023-26 and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy

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2023-26, (l) Battery Park Lighting, and (m) Mentors in Violence Prevention.

432 Pilot Provision of Condoms in Libraries 432

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development seeking agreement for a pilot programme to have free condoms available in Inverclyde Libraries as part of the response to a rise in diagnosis of Sexually Transmitted Infections in recent years.

Decided: that approval be given to Inverclyde Libraries becoming a distribution point for free condoms.

433 Access to Free Sanitary Products Update 433

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on the implementation and progress of the Scottish Government's commitment to provide free access to sanitary products in schools and the wider community.

Decided: that the Committee note the progress made in 2022/23 and next steps to be taken in 2023/24.

434 Active Schools Performance 2022/23 434

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development informing the Committee of the Active Schools Team performance for the school year 2022/23.

Decided: that the contents of the report, and in particular the improvements in performance in 2022/23, be noted.

It was agreed in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

435 Update to Inverclyde Leisure Funding Agreement and Annual Governance Review 435

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on matters relating to the Funding Agreement and Annual Governance Review of Inverclyde Leisure.

Councillors Brooks, Clocherty and Quinn declared connections as members of the Board of Inverclyde Leisure. They also formed the view that the nature of their connection and of the item of business did not preclude their continued presence in the meeting or their participation in the decision-making process and were declaring for transparency.

Decided: following consideration, the Committee agreed to the actions recommended in the report, all as detailed in the private appendix.

The Communities business concluded at 3.10pm. The Committee commenced consideration of the Education items of business at 4pm with Ms McEwan joining the meeting by video conference and Mr Docherty attending the Municipal Buildings.

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436 Education Revenue Budget Report – Final Outturn 2022/23 and 2023/24 Projected Outturn at 30 June 2023 436

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer and the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development advising Committee of the 2022/23 Education Revenue Budget final outturn and the 2023/24 Revenue Budget position at 30 June 2023.

Decided:

- (1) that the final outturn for the 2022/23 Education Revenue Budget and the current projected overspend for 2023/24 of £358,000 as at 30 June 2023 be noted; and
- (2) that it be noted that the Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development and Heads of Service will review areas where non-essential spend can be reduced in order to bring the Education budget back on target, and that progress against this and other proposals, if required, will be reported to the next meeting.

437 Education Capital Programme 2023/26 - Progress 437

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Chief Financial Officer (1) providing performance information for the Education part of the Education & Communities Committee, and (2) providing an update in respect of the status of the projects which form the Education Capital Programme.

Prior to discussion of this item the Convenor requested that officers provide the Committee with information on Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) within Inverclyde Council schools. The Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Head of Physical Assets provided a verbal update, advising that (1) schools which required it had been assessed by engineers, with the guidance being that the school estate is safe to open, (2) one school, St Michael's Primary School, contains some RAAC and parents have been made aware of this, (3) guidance from the Institution of Structural Engineers and the Scottish Government is being followed, and (4) options will be considered for the removal of RAAC at St Michael's Primary School.

Decided:

- (1) that the current position of the 2023/26 Capital Programme be noted; and
- (2) that the progress on the following projects be noted (a) general lifecycle works, (b) CO² Monitors in Schools, and (c) Free School Meals.

438 Education Services Improvement Plan 2023-24 438

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development presenting the Education Services Improvement Plan 2023-24 for approval prior to publication.

Decided: that the content and publication of the Education Services Improvement Plan 2023-24 be approved.

439 Education Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives 439

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on local and national projects and initiatives linked to education.

Decided:

- (1) that the updates on the following be noted (a) Care Inspectorate inspection

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outcomes for (i) Binnie Street Children’s Centre, (ii) Blairmore Nursery School (now known as Blairmore Early Learning Centre), and (iii) MORE Childminding, (b) the national discussion on ‘Let’s Talk Scottish Education’/Hayward review, (c) National Education Bodies, (d) Withers Review of the Skills System, (e) school uniform consultation response, (f) Placing Requests 2023, (g) requirement to maintain teacher numbers and the length of the pupil week, (h) Lomond View Academy Stakeholder Engagement, and (i) update on Tier 2 and Tier 3 Mental Health Services; and
 (2) that the appreciation of the Committee be extended to (a) Binnie Street Children’s Centre, (b) Blairmore Early Learning Centre, and particularly (c) MORE Childminding for the gradings achieved at their recent Care Inspectorate inspections.

440 Secondary Gaelic Education in Inverclyde – Consultation on Catchment Area for GME Provision at Inverclyde Academy 440

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development (1) providing an update on the proposal for establishing an offer of Gaelic Secondary Education provision for the academic year beginning August 2024 within Inverclyde Academy, and (2) seeking approval for the statutory consultation process, as documented in appendix 1 to the report.

Decided:

- (1) that approval be given to the proposal for establishing an offer of Gaelic Secondary Education provision for the academic year beginning August 2024 within Inverclyde Academy; and
- (2) that the final proposal for the statutory consultation be approved.

441 Amendments to the Inverclyde Policy on Admissions and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools 441

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development seeking approval for changes to the Inverclyde Policy on Admissions and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools, a copy of the amended policy being appended to the report.

Decided: that the amendments to the Inverclyde Policy on Admissions and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools, as detailed at section 4 of the report, be approved.

It was agreed in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

442 Governance of External Organisations – Early Years Private, Voluntary and Independent Providers in Partnership with Inverclyde Council 442

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on matters relating to the governance of Early Years private, voluntary and independent providers that are in partnership with Inverclyde Council.

Decided: following consideration, the Committee agreed to note the content of the report, all as detailed in the private appendix.