

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 20 MAY 2025

Education and Communities Committee

Tuesday 20 May 2025 at 2pm

Present: Councillors Armstrong, Brennan, Clocherty, Hellyer, McGuire, McVey, Quinn, Reynolds, Robertson and Wilson and Rev D Burt, Rev F Donaldson and Mr J Docherty, Church Representatives, 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 - Inclusive Communities
Eddie Montgomery	Interim Director - Environment
Iain Cameron	Principal Accountant (Education & Communities)
Mary McCabe	Finance Manager (Education & Communities)
Sarah Christie	Cultural Services Manager
Yvonne Gallacher	Quality Improvement Manager – Early Years, Education Services
Laurence Reilly	Principal Educational Psychologist
Lorna Coote	Service Manager - Educational Resources & Facilities Management
Diane Sweeney	Senior Committee Officer
Lindsay Carrick	Senior Committee Officer
Karen MacVey	Members' & Committee Services Team Leader

The meeting was held at the Municipal Buildings, Greenock with Councillors Quinn, Reynolds and Wilson, and Ms McEwan attending remotely.

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

255 **Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest** 255

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Nelson and Ms MacDonald, Parent Representative.

Councillor Wilson declared an interest in Agenda Item 17 (School Transport Contracts (Mainstream)) – Results of Tenders for Contracts 2025/26, 2026/27 & 2027/28).

256 **2024/25 Communities Revenue Budget Update** 256

There was submitted a report by the Interim Chief Financial Officer and the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development advising Committee of the projected position of the 2024/25 Communities Revenue Budget.

Decided: that it be noted that the Committee's Revenue Budget is currently projected to underspend in 2024/25 by £51,000 (0.9%).

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257	<p>Communities Capital Programme Progress and Asset Related Items</p> <p>There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Interim Chief Financial Officer (1) providing performance information for the Communities part of the Education & Communities Committee, and (2) providing an update in respect of the status of the projects which form the Communities Capital Programme and Asset related items.</p> <p>Decided:</p> <p>(1) that the current position of the 2024/28 Capital Programme be noted; and</p> <p>(2) that the progress on the following projects be noted (a) Leisure Pitches Asset Management Plan/Lifecycle Fund, (b) King George VI Community Hub, (c) Boglestone Community Centre – Childcare Early Adopter Project, (d) Bank Street Community Hall, and (e) the Asset Transfer Working Group updates on (i) Wellington Allotments, (ii) KGV Bowling Club, (iii) Larkfield waste ground/Larkfield Guerilla Gardens (Banff Road/Fife Drive), (iv) Guides at Kilmacolm, (v) Broomhill Way shop unit/Broomhill Beats, (vi) Inverclyde Veterans Network, (vii) Coppermine Community Hub, (viii) Upper Larkfield Tenants Hall (Larkfield Housing Association), (ix) Kilmacolm Eco Group, (x) Wellington Park Bowling Club, and (xi) Riverside Club (formerly Old Mans Club).</p>	257
258	<p>Communities Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives</p> <p>There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on the Communities aspects of the service.</p> <p>Decided:</p> <p>(1) that the updates on the following be noted (a) libraries as community spaces, (b) staff development (libraries), (c) Children and Young People (libraries), (d) Adult Services (libraries), (e) the Watt Institution developments, (f) Inverclyde Music Service, (g) Early Adopter Community, (h) Fairer Futures Partnership, (i) Young Person Substance Use Work, (j) Place Standard Tool, (k) Community Conversations, (l) Invergrow, (m) Tesco Partnership with Youth Services, and (n) CLD staffing review; and</p> <p>(2) that it be remitted to officers to provide an update to a future meeting on the Tesco Partnership with Youth Services pilot project to provide a drop-in youth club within the Greenock store café.</p>	258
259	<p>Inverclyde Multiply Project</p> <p>There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development informing Committee of the achievements made during the 'Multiply: Make Numbers Count' initiative which ran from July 2023 to 31 March 2025.</p> <p>Decided:</p> <p>(1) that the impact of the Multiply project be noted; and</p> <p>(2) that it be noted that the project ended on 31 March 2025.</p>	259
260	<p>Watt Institution Collections Care and Conservation Policy</p> <p>There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development presenting the Watt Institution's updated Collections Care and Conservation Policy for approval.</p>	260

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Decided:

- (1) that the contents of the report be noted;
- (2) that the Collections Care and Conservation Policy, as appended to the report, be approved; and
- (3) that the thanks and appreciation of the Committee be conveyed to staff for their work on the various projects and initiatives running within the Watt Institution and Library Services.

The Communities business concluded at 2.20pm. The Committee commenced consideration of the Education items of business at 4pm with Rev Burt, Rev Donaldson and Mr Docherty attending the Municipal Buildings and Ms McEwan joining the meeting remotely.

261	2024/25 Education Revenue Budget Update	261
<p>There was submitted a report by the Interim Chief Financial Officer and the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development advising Committee of the projected position of the 2024/25 Education Revenue Budget.</p> <p>Decided: that the Committee notes that the Education Revenue Budget is currently projected to overspend in 2024/25 by £120,000, which is partially offset by an underspend of £51,000 for the Communities part of the Committee.</p>		
262	Education Capital Programme 2024/28 - Progress	262
<p>There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Interim 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.</p> <p>Decided:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) that the current position of the 2024/28 Capital programme be noted; and (2) that the progress on the following projects be noted (a) general lifecycle works, (b) Public Private Partnership (PPP) Schools, (c) Estate Lifecycle Programme 2025/26, (d) Artificial Pitches Asset Plan, (e) Active Panel Refresh, (f) Net Zero, (g) Insurance Fund, (h) Reinforced Aerated Autoclave Concrete (RAAC), and (i) Sufficiency Projects. 		
263	Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 – Annual Refresh and Performance Summary 2024/25	263
<p>There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development presenting the refreshed Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan for approval.</p> <p>Decided:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) that the progress made in the delivery of the Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan during 2024/25 be noted; and (2) that the refreshed Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan be approved for implementation in 2025/26. 		
264	Education Services Standards and Quality Report April 2024 – April 2025	264
<p>There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development presenting the Education Services Standards and Quality</p>		

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Report for April 2024 to April 2025 for approval.

Decided: that the Education Services Standards and Quality Report for April 2024 to April 2025 be approved for publication.

265 Education Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives

265

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

Decided:

(1) that the updates on the following be noted (a) Annual Progress Report for the Joint Action Plan on Relationships and Behaviour, (b) use of consequences in schools, (c) Relationship and Behaviour Policies – Schools and Education Authorities, and (d) Gaelic Medium Education and the appointment of a teacher at Inverclyde Academy; and

(2) that it be noted that it is the intention of officers to bring the refreshed 'Promoting Positive Relationships Policy' to the September 2025 meeting.

266 ASN Summer Provision

266

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on and proposals for the development of Additional Support Needs (ASN) summer provision within Inverclyde.

Decided:

(1) that the proposed actions, as detailed at paragraph 4.2 of the report and listed below, be approved, namely:

(a) Appoint an officer to lead on the ASN support and holiday provision and to undertake a strategic review of the totality of service offered in Inverclyde. It is proposed that this takes place at Quality Improvement Manager Level but the cost would be for an Education Officer backfill to be put in place for up to 18 months.

(b) Commission listening events to hear the views of families with young people who have ASN.

(c) Endeavour to provide additional holiday service through the third sector. This will depend on appropriate registrations being in place if needed and also their ability to recruit staff.

(d) Following feedback, explore the possibilities to adapt the stay and play sessions to introduce a soft play activity and introduce a small booking fee which can be exchanged for a coffee.

(e) Work with IL to allocate additional workers to some mainstream playschemes to provide support for those who may have previously struggled to attend. This will depend on recruitment of suitable staff.

(f) Carry out recruitment for suitably qualified staff. This allows the service to fully maximise the spaces it can offer through the existing ASN holiday provision.

(g) The changes to the priority of the allocation of places for the Play4All Out of School and Holiday care service (which is a paid for childcare service) will be implemented, thus allowing more families to access the service during the summer. Additional staffing hours for the service will be recruited to enhance the resilience of the offer during holidays.

(h) Improve the application process for ASN summer support by working with ICT to provide applications online; and

(2) that it be noted that further reports will be brought back to Committee as required.

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Councillor Wilson left the meeting at this juncture.

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| 267 | <p>Increase of Sustainable Rate for Early Learning and Childcare Funded Providers</p> <p>There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development (1) providing an update on a further review of the sustainable rate paid to Funded Providers for the provision Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), and (2) seeking agreement for an increase to the hourly rate paid to providers backdated to 1 April 2025.</p> <p>Decided:</p> <p>(1) that an increase in the hourly rate paid to all Early Years Funded Providers, including Childminders, from the current rate of £6.32 per child per hour to £6.56 per child per hour be agreed;</p> <p>(2) that it be agreed that the new rate be backdated to 1 April 2025; and</p> <p>(3) that it be agreed that the new rate will be implemented for all eligible children aged two to five years who are accessing ELC within a funded provider setting.</p> | 267 |
| 268 | <p>Education Scotland – National Thematic Inspection: Local Authority Approaches to Supporting School Improvement</p> <p>There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on the publication of the Education Scotland National Thematic Report on Local Authority approaches to supporting school improvement, which includes a report on the Education Service in Inverclyde.</p> <p>Decided:</p> <p>(1) the contents of both the National Thematic report and the report on the Education Service in Inverclyde be noted; and</p> <p>(2) that it be noted that a further report will be brought to a future meeting regarding the Improvement Framework for education establishments in Inverclyde.</p> | 268 |
| 269 | <p>Additional Support for Learning Policy</p> <p>There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development presenting the Education Service's refreshed Additional Support for Learning Policy for noting.</p> <p>Decided: that the Additional Support for Learning Policy be noted.</p> | 269 |
| 270 | <p>Education Service Anti-Bullying Policy</p> <p>There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development presenting Education Service's refreshed Anti-Bullying Policy for noting.</p> <p>Decided: that the Anti-Bullying Policy be noted.</p> <p>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 paragraphs 6 and 8 of Part I of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.</p> | 270 |
| 271 | <p>School Transport Contracts (Mainstream) – Results of Tenders for Contracts 2025/26, 2026/27 & 2027/28</p> | 271 |

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There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development seeking Committee approval to accept tenders for mainstream school transport contracts due for renewal from the start of the school session 2025/26.

Councillor Wilson was not present for consideration of this item of business, having declared an interest earlier in the meeting as a Board member of SPT he left the meeting after discussion on agenda item 12.

Decided: that approval be given to accept the tenders, as detailed at paragraph 4.5 of the report, for mainstream school transport contracts due for renewal from the start of the school session 2025/26.