MINUTES of MEETING of COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE held BY SKYPE on THURSDAY, 11 MARCH 2021

Present: Councillor Kieron Green (Chair)

Councillor Jim Anderson
Councillor Mary-Jean Devon
Councillor Lorna Douglas
Councillor Audrey Forrest
Councillor Graham Hardie
Councillor Julie McKenzie
Councillor Iain Paterson
Councillor Alastair Redman
Councillor Alan Reid
Councillor Elaine Robertson
Councillor Andrew Vennard
Margaret Anderson
Alison Palmer

Attending: Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education
Louise Connor, Head of Education: Learning and Teaching
Simon Easton, Acting Head of Education: Lifelong Learning and Support
Stuart McLean, Committee Manager
Roslyn Redpath, Principal Educational Psychologist
Craig Campbell, Piping Tutor, Dunoon and Cowal
Chief Superintendent John Paterson, Police Scotland
Superintendent Donald Leitch, Police Scotland
Joe McKay, Area Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Joanne MacDonald, Chief Officer, Argyll and Bute HSCP
Stephen Whiston, Head of Strategic Planning and Performance, Argyll and Bute HSCP

The Chair paid tribute to Craig Campbell who was retiring after more than 30 years as piping tutor in the Dunoon and Cowal area. Craig was a very valued member of Dunoon Grammar School staff and was very supportive and dependable and would be immensely missed by Argyll and Bute instrumental service.

Craig thanked the Chair and the Council for their support and wished everyone success for the future.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Yvonne McNeilly.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTE

The Minutes of the Community Services Committee held on 8 December 2020 were approved as a correct record.

4. ARGYLL & BUTE LOCAL POLICING PLAN (2020 - 2023) QUARTERLY REPORT (QTR 3 - 2020/21)

Chief Superintendent Paterson presented the Quarter 3 – 2020/21 update in relation to the Argyll and Bute Local Policing Plan 2021-2020. He drew out some key points in relation to road safety and road crime, advising that in conjunction with Cairndow Community Council, there would be, in April, the introduction of signage at Cairndow to influence positive driver behaviour in the area; violence and anti-social behaviour; serious assaults and robberies; public protection - partnership working to raise awareness with parents and carers about the use of digital devices by children due to the continuing concern about indecent images involving children between the ages of 10 and 15 years; domestic abuse incidents with an appeal to anyone experiencing this to come forward; fraud, particularly online crime; partnership working to tackle substance misuse; the addition of five Police Officers based within the primary custody hub in Oban; progress with the Oban Police Office feasibility study; a dedicated Police Officer to support the work of the Community Safety Partnership, including suicide prevention; and travel restrictions – multi agency group convened to look at inward travel expected over the summer into Argyll and Bute and the challenges this may bring.

Chief Superintendent Paterson advised that on International Women's Day he had represented the Division at the Scottish Women's Development Forum Awards where two Police Officers from the Campbeltown area had been recognised - PC Karen Cairns was the winner of the Community Service Award and DC Lindsay Wallace, who works in the Family Protection Unit in Campbeltown, was awarded Police Officer of the Year. DC Wallace was also highly commended in two other categories – Leadership and Excellence in Performance. He also advised of a number of changes to the Division's Senior Management Team and introduced Superintendent Donald Leitch who was taking over from Brian Gibson and who was in attendance at the meeting today.

He then responded to a number of questions raised by the Committee.

Decision

The Committee reviewed and noted the content of the report.

(Reference: Report for Qtr3 2020/21 by Divisional Commander for Argyll and West Dunbartonshire Division, Police Scotland, submitted)

5. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - ARGYLL & BUTE PERFORMANCE REPORT Q3 - 1 OCTOBER 2020 - 31 DECEMBER 2020

The Area Commander, Joe McKay, for Scottish Fire and Rescue presented a report highlighting Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's review of local performance within Argyll and Bute for Q3 2020-2021. Key successes included a reduction in special services, false alarms, overall incidents and fire and non-fire casualties. He reported that sadly during the period there had been one fatal fire and that an investigation into that was ongoing. He advised that 7 local fire stations were carrying out COVID-19 testing in the area and he referred to some major investment with a brand new fire appliance for Oban, solar panels at Oban and Tighnabruaich stations, the installation of electric charging points at Oban and Dunoon stations, and a new fire appliance in the next 6 months for Helensburgh.

Decision

The Committee:

1. reviewed and noted the content of the report; and

2. noted that the Committee Manager would investigate the possibility of similar reports being made available to Members from the Scottish Ambulance Service on localised activities.

(Reference: Q3 2020/21 Report by Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, submitted)

The Chair ruled, and the Committee agreed, to vary the order of business and take Agenda item 14 (The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Local Fire and Rescue for Argyll and Bute – Consultation) at this point.

6. THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN FOR ARGYLL AND BUTE - CONSULTATION

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's (SFRS) consultation on their Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Argyll and Bute which has been developed to support the delivery of agreed local outcomes for Argyll and Bute's communities in conjunction with the national priorities contained with the SFRS Strategic Plan 2019-2022, was before the Committee for consideration.

Decision

The Committee noted that a copy of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan had been circulated to all Members of the Council and to members of the Community Planning Partnership and that comments on the Plan were invited by 26 March 2021.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support dated 5 March 2021 and The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Argyll and Bute, submitted)

7. ARGYLL & BUTE HSCP - PERFORMANCE REPORT FEBRUARY 2021

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on the impact of service performance with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic and the progress made with regard to remobilising health and social care services in Argyll and Bute.

Decision

The Committee reviewed and noted the IJB Health and Social Care Partnership report as at February 2021.

(Reference: Report by Head of Strategic Planning and Performance, submitted)

8. EDUCATION SERVICE FQ3 2020/21 PERFORMANCE REPORT

A paper presenting the Community Services Committee with the FQ3 2020/21 performance report for the Education service was considered.

Decision

The Committee reviewed and scrutinised the FQ3 2020/21 performance report as presented.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education dated 10 February 2021, submitted)

9. ARGYLL AND BUTE COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2021 - 2024) - UPDATE

Local authorities have a statutory requirement placed on them by the Community Learning & Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 to publish a Community Learning & Development (CLD) plan every three years describing how they will co-ordinate and secure “adequate and efficient” CLD provision with other sector partners.

Consideration was given to a report updating the Committee on developments regarding the production of a new Argyll and Bute Community Learning CLD Plan for 2021-2024.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:

1. endorse changes to structure and governance of the CLD Partnership and the CLD Team, and development of the CLD Plan;

2. review initial feedback from CLD partners on the current 2018-2021 plan, which ends in August 2021; and

3. note the production of updated Scottish Government Guidance to assist with the creation and ongoing development of CLD plans with the expectation that CLD plans would be informed by this guidance.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education dated 11 March 2021, submitted)

10. COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS

The Scottish Government’s 10 year Mental Health Strategy (2017-2027), recognises the need for targeted and specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), but also promotes effective prevention and early intervention through support services at a local level, delivered as close to the young people as possible.

Consideration was given to a report which provided background and update on the progress of the establishment of a new service to provide counselling in schools across Argyll and Bute for children and young people age 10 years and upwards.

Decision

The Committee agreed to endorse the significant progress made against the commitment to recruit and deliver a counselling service across the Council's schools.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education dated 21 January 2021, submitted)

11. SCHOOL LEAVING DATE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Consideration was given to a report highlighting the COVID-19 related disruption to post school transition planning for the most vulnerable young people with complex needs or disability, with resulting parental concern leading to requests for an additional year at secondary school.

Decision

The Committee agreed:

1. to note the impact that two national lockdowns have had on supports and services for the most vulnerable young people with complex needs and/or disabilities;

2. that the consequences of the pandemic constitute exceptional circumstances, and as such, that a further year at secondary school may be permitted for those young people, subject to careful consideration of individual circumstances;

3. to note this variation would apply for those young people with a complex need or disability who were in 6th year in academic session 2020-21 only; and

4. to note that any budget pressure arising from implementing these recommendations would in the first instance be met from existing ASN budgets, subject to any additional funding made available from either the Council or Scottish Government.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education dated 11 February 2021, submitted)

12. ARGYLL AND BUTE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS REPORT 2020 - 2023

Consideration was given to a report which examined how children's rights were currently respected and ensured within Argyll and Bute, and identified some of the key actions taking place over the next three years to further children's rights across the authority.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:

1. note the measures taken by the authority both to respect and ensure children's rights during the COVID-19 pandemic;

2. note the current practice within Argyll and Bute underpinning and ensuring children's rights;

3. note the authority's key actions going forward to respect and ensure children's rights; and

4. endorse the Argyll and Bute Children's Rights Report 2020-2023.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education dated 11 March 2021, submitted)

13. EDUCATION - ADDITIONAL RESOURCES 2021/22

The Council set its revenue budget for 2021/22 at the Council meeting held on 25 February 2021. Specific provision was made for improving opportunities for people and communities, including £600K for "investing in the wellbeing of our young people – mental health and wellbeing resources and support for vulnerable children and families".

Consideration was given to a report advising that the Education Service were currently preparing options for the utilisation of these additional funds and would present a further report to the Committee Services Committee on 10 June 2021.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:

1. note that the Education Service were currently working on the development of suitable options to utilise the additional £600k agreed at the budget meeting; and

2. a further report, setting out proposals for implementation, being tabled at the Community Services Committee scheduled for 10 June 2021.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education dated 2 March 2021, submitted)

14. COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2021 - 2022

The Committee Services Committee work plan for 2021-2022 was before the Committee for information.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Committee Services Committee Work Plan 2021-2022, submitted)