

**MINUTES of MEETING of COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE held in the COUNCIL
CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on THURSDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2016**

Present: Councillor Robin Currie (Chair)

Councillor Gordon Blair	Councillor Elaine Robertson
Councillor Rory Colville	Councillor Isobel Strong
Councillor Mary-Jean Devon	Margaret Anderson
Councillor George Freeman	William Hamilton
Councillor Kieron Green	Alison Palmer
Councillor Neil MacIntyre	William Stewart Shaw

Attending: Ann Marie Knowles, Acting Executive Director – Community Services
Anne Paterson, Acting Head of Education
Donald MacVicar, Head of Community and Culture
Louise Connor, Education Manager
Aileen Goodall, 16+ Lead Officer
John MacPherson, Education Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were intimated from Councillors Anne Horn, Roderick McCuish, Julie McKenzie and Aileen Morton.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

- a) The Minute of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 8 September 2016 was approved as a correct record.
- b) The Minute of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 21 November 2016 was approved as a correct record.

4. PERFORMANCE REPORT FQ2 - 2016/17

Consideration was given to a report on the Community Services FQ2 Performance Scorecard.

Decision

The Committee noted the performance for the quarter.

(Reference: Report Acting Executive Director – Community Services dated 16 November 2016, submitted)

5. SCHOOL HOLIDAY DATES FOR 2017/2018

The major school holiday programme arrangements for Argyll and Bute for session 2017/18 require to be set by the Council. Members are asked to agree a framework for the main school holiday periods in Argyll and Bute that will enable Education Services to align the in-service days for teachers and the holiday dates for pupils. Consideration was given to a report updating the Committee on the further consultation that took place with Parent Councils, Head Teachers and the teaching staff with regard to the School Holiday dates 2017-2018 which were now before the Committee and recommended for approval.

Motion

To agree recommendations 1.4a – 1.4e as detailed in the report.

Moved by Councillor Robin Currie, seconded by Councillor Mary-Jean Devon

Amendment

That Members of the Community Services Committee note the contents of the report relating to the proposed school holidays for 2017-18; and

- a. Agree that the proposed dates are a major departure from the current arrangements and are likely to cause major concerns for many parents/carers/staff/Parent Council members/employers across Argyll and Bute.
- b. Agree to support the views of Parent Councils in the Bute and Cowal Area, the Helensburgh and Lomond Area and the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay area who reject the proposed dates for school holidays contained within the report.
- c. Request that Officers review the proposed dates contained within the report and bring forward new proposals that are in line with the current arrangements that allow flexibility across the four decentralised areas.

Moved by Councillor George Freeman, seconded by Councillor Isobel Strong

The Motion was carried by 6 votes to 3 and the Committee resolved accordingly.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:-

1. note the update to the proposed arrangement for school holidays in session 2017/18 following the first round of consultation with Parent Councils, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report;
2. note the outcome of the second round of consultation that has taken place via a web based survey with Parent Councils, Head Teachers and teaching staff, as outlined in Appendix 2 of this report;
3. note that consultation with appropriate Unions on the proposal for school holiday arrangements in Session 2017/18 has been undertaken at both JSC and LNCT meetings where the updated proposal was noted.

4. note the advantage to the service of being able to deliver focused continuing professional development to teaching and support staff with the increase in common in-service dates; and
5. approve the proposed school holiday dates for Session 2017/18 and 2018/19 as outlined in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 of this report.

(Reference: Report by Acting Executive Director – Community Services dated 18 October 2016, submitted)

6. SCHEME OF DEVOLVED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT (DSM)

Consideration was given to a report which provided an overview of the current Scheme of Devolved School Management (DSM) and outlined the findings and recommendations of a working group established in February 2016 to review the scheme to increase the flexibility and use of budgets for Head Teachers whilst adhering to the national DSM guidelines.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note:

1. the review of the current Scheme of Devolved School Management (DSM) guidelines; and
2. the updated guidelines as outlined in Appendix 1 of this report.

(Reference: Report by Acting Executive Director – Community Services dated 18 October 2016, submitted)

7. STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2015-16

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on the major achievements made within Education in Argyll and Bute across the session 2015/16 and included the SQA qualification results for pupils who sat examinations in May/June 2016.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note:-

1. the continuing progress made in relation to Education within Argyll and Bute;
2. the ongoing commitment of staff and the success and achievements of our children and young people; and
3. the commitment of the Education Service for further development of the service during 2017/18.

(Reference: Report by Acting Executive Director – Community Services dated 18 October 2016, submitted)

8. DEVELOPING SCOTLAND'S YOUNG WORKFORCE (DYW)

Consideration was given to a report which gave an overview of the progress to date in implementing the Scottish Government's Youth Employment Strategy – Developing the Young Workforce. The report also provided a breakdown of how the funding received by Argyll and Bute Council has so far been spent.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:-

1. note the Scottish Government Youth Employment Strategy and support the authority's approach to Developing Argyll and Bute's Young Workforce;
2. endorse and support the continued utilisation of the Youth Employment Opportunities Fund to support vulnerable young people to access and sustain positive destinations;
3. continue to support work placements within Argyll and Bute Council and the ABC Modern Apprenticeship programme; and
4. support the setting up of an Argyll and Bute Development Young Workforce Regional Group.

(Reference: Report by Acting Executive Director – Community Services dated 3 October 2016, submitted)

9. SQA SCHOOL EXAMINATION RESULTS 2016

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on the outcome of the 2016 examination diet, outlined the results for pupils entered for formal examinations and provided an overview of key performance data from an authority perspective.

A presentation was also given on the key outcomes of the four examinations, namely - National 4s, National 5s, Highers and Advanced Highers along with the steps being taken to secure improvements for young people and how the professional tool "Insight" is utilised by Education staff.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:

1. note the outcome of the examination results for pupils in academic year 2015/16;
2. note the strategic programme of performance review between schools and education development and improvement staff detailed at paragraph 4.7 of the report;
3. continue to support the work of the Education Service in supporting schools to secure continuous improvement in outcomes for Argyll and Bute Learners;

4. request that a further report be brought to the Community Services Committee considering the national position arising from information released by Insight in February 2017;
5. continue to be involved with current training events on understanding the use of Insight, recognising the increasing use of Insight data in School presentations to elected Members; and
6. note that a summary discussion note will be presented to the Policy Lead, as appropriate, ensuring that performance reporting reflects the requirements of the National Improvement Framework.

(Reference: Report by Acting Executive Director – Community Services dated 9 November 2016, submitted)

10. INSPECTION OF THE EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OF ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL (INEA) SELF EVALUATION SUMMARY

Consideration was given to a report which provided a further update to the Committee on the inspection of the Education functions of Argyll and Bute Council and communicated the self-evaluation summary presented to Education Scotland as part of the planned inspection programme.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:-

1. note the further update on the INEA inspection of the Education Service of Argyll and Bute Council;
2. note the key messages contained within the self-evaluation statement; and
3. request the Executive Director of Community Services to bring a report confirming the outcome of the inspection to a future meeting of the Community Services Committee.

(Reference: Report by Acting Executive Director – Community Services dated 18 November 2016, submitted)

*** 11. ARGYLL AND BUTE LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY (LHS) 2016/17 - 2020/21**

Consideration was given to a report advising of the arrangements for submission of the finalised Local Housing Strategy (LHS) for approval by Scottish Ministers, in accordance with the Council's statutory duties under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, subsequent legislation, and the latest revised guidance issued by the Scottish Government in 2014.

Decision

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council approval of the Local Housing Strategy for submission to the Scottish Ministers.

(Reference: Report by Acting Executive Director – Community Services dated 24 October 2016, submitted)

12. COMMUNITY SERVICES WORK PLAN 2016/17

Consideration was given to the work plan to facilitate forward planning of reports to the Community Services Committee.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note the content of the work plan.

(Reference: Community Services Committee Work Plan dated December 2016, submitted)