

**MINUTES of SPECIAL MEETING of COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE held in the
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on THURSDAY, 6 APRIL 2017**

Present:

Councillor Robin Currie (Chair)

Councillor Rory Colville	Councillor James McQueen
Councillor Mary-Jean Devon	Councillor Aileen Morton
Councillor Kieron Green	Councillor Isobel Strong
Councillor Anne Horn	Margaret Anderson
Councillor Neil MacIntyre	William Hamilton
Councillor Roderick McCuish	William Stewart Shaw

Also Present:

Councillor John Armour	Councillor Douglas Philand
Councillor Michael Breslin	Councillor Len Scoullar
Councillor David Kinniburgh	Councillor Sandy Taylor
Councillor Iain MacLean	Councillor Richard Trail
Councillor Donald MacMillan	Councillor Dick Walsh
Councillor Bruce Marshall	

Attending:

Cleland Sneddon, Chief Executive
Ann Marie Knowles, Acting Executive Director – Community Services
Douglas Hendry, Executive Director – Customer Services
Anne Paterson, Acting Head of Education
Patricia O'Neill, Central Governance Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gordon Blair, Maurice Corry, George Freeman, Julie MacKenzie and Elaine Robertson; and from Alison Palmer, Teacher Representative.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. STRATEGIC INSPECTION OF THE EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

(a) Inspection Chronology - report by Acting Executive Director - Community Services

The Committee considered a report which provided them with an overview of the recent INEA inspection. The report summarised the chronology of the inspection carried out by Education Scotland in September 2016. The report also noted the actions taken by the Council to respond to changes to the agreed inspection timescales and to mitigate against associated challenges and risks for the Council.

(Reference: Report by Acting Executive Director – Community Services dated 25 March 2017, submitted)

(b) Inspection Concerns - report by Acting Executive Director - Community Services

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided them with an update of Community Services concerns in relation to the recent INEA inspection. The report outlined a number of areas of concern associated with the inspection carried out by Education Scotland in September 2016.

(Reference: Report by Acting Executive Director – Community Services dated 25 March 2017, submitted)

(c) Report by Education Scotland

The Committee considered the report “Strategic Inspection of the Education Functions of Local Authorities – Argyll and Bute Council – 21 March 2017”.

(Reference: Strategic Inspection of the Education Functions of Local Authorities – Argyll and Bute Council – 21 March 2017, submitted)

(d) Response to the Inspection - report by Acting Executive Director - Community Services

The Committee gave consideration to a report advising them of the outcome of the planned inspection of the Education functions of the Council. The report provided an overview of the inspection process, the final inspection outcomes and the action being taken by the Authority to address the main recommendations contained within the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 25 March 2017, submitted)

Decision

The Community Services Committee –

- a) Noted the terms of the Education Scotland inspection report and the reports from the Acting Executive Director of Community Services;
- b) Noted the recommendations contained within the Education Scotland published report and further notes the progress made by the council’s Education Service to respond to the inspection report findings at this stage (see agenda report 3(d), Appendix 1, INEA Action Plan);
- c) Noted the positive aspects of education provision in Argyll and Bute identified within the Education Scotland report, including:
 - the attendance rates across primary, special and secondary schools are above the national averages;
 - the achievement of children and young people across Argyll and Bute Council reflects a broad range of national and award bearing wider achievement qualifications;

- that over 2000 young people enhanced their achievement portfolio last session and this has contributed well to securing positive, sustained destinations for young people when they leave school;
- that a large number of Skills for Work qualifications are available across the authority in key skills which have the potential to grow the local economy and enhance services, for example in early education and childcare, hospitality, engineering and rural skills;
- the 2014/2015 council Standards and Quality report documents clearly the range of wider achievement courses and awards gained by young people;
- that over 1500 young people last session achieved across a broad range of awards including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, John Muir, Saltire Awards and Youth Achievement Awards;
- that in almost all early learning and childcare (ELC) settings, most children achieve their expected developmental milestones;
- that at the secondary stages, young people's attainment in National Qualifications has recently improved in a few key measures;
- the number of young people securing a positive destination on leaving school has increased over the period 2011-2016 , and overall the proportion of young people moving on to a positive destination has been above comparable and national averages;
- the proportion of young people moving into employment on leaving school is well above comparable and national averages and has been consistently so for the last five years;
- that a significant amount of work has been carried out to support Looked After Children;
- that Argyll and Bute Council has the fifth highest rate for young people aged 16-24 to achieve a positive destination (employment; training; higher and further education) according to the Scottish Government's Participation Measure which relates to outcomes for learners, and

d) Referred the matter for consideration at the Special Meeting of Argyll and Bute Council on 7th April 2017.

(Reference: Notice of Motion by Councillor Rory Colville, seconded by Councillor Robin Currie, tabled)