

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 10 November 2015 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors SHEENA WELSH, LYNNE DEVINE, COLIN BROWN, DAVID FAIRWEATHER, MARTYN GEDDES, SHEILA HANDS, JIM HOUSTON, DAVID MAY, GLENNIS MIDDLETON, DONALD MORRISON, RONNIE PROCTOR MBE, MARK SALMOND, EWAN SMITH, MARGARET THOMSON and MAIRI EVANS.

Church

Representatives: Mr DAVID ADAMS, Mrs GEORGINA MALLIE and Mr BILL SIMPSON.

Teacher

Representatives: Ms KATRINA JOHNSTON and Mr JOHN PRATTI.

Councillor WELSH, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Paul Valentine with Councillor Mairi Evans substituting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. REQUEST FOR A DEPUTATION

The Convener indicated that a request for a deputation had been received from Mr Geoff Hobson in relation to the consultation on the secondary school week.

The Committee agreed to receive the deputation.

Mr Hobson raised concerns regarding the proposed change and in particular the loss of form time should a 33 period structure be introduced. He indicated that it was recognised that there were some benefits to a 33 period week however he felt that the proposal should be deferred until further more detailed proposals were brought forward.

Following the deputation, Mr Hobson withdrew to the public benches.

4. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 22 September 2015 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

5. INFORMATION REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 12 SEPTEMBER TO 26 OCTOBER 2015

There was submitted and noted Report No 431/15 by the Strategic Director – People providing key information to members with regard to services delivered to the People Directorate for the period 12 September to 26 October 2015.

6. PEOPLE DIRECTORATE MID TERM PERFORMANCE REPORT

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 11 August 2015, there was submitted Report No 432/15 by the Strategic Director – People presenting the Mid Term Performance Report for the People Directorate covering the first six months of the 2015/2016 financial year.

The Report indicated that as an integral part of the Council's performance management arrangements, each Directorate had to prepare a mid term performance report. These reports were designed to give members, employees and the public (who had access to the report via the Council's website) an update of performance within Directorates during the first six months of the financial year.

Having heard Councillor May congratulate all staff in relation to the positive work being carried out by the Directorate, the Committee agreed to note the terms of the People Directorate Mid Term Performance Report for 2015/2016.

7. CONSULTATION ON AMENDMENTS TO OCTOBER HOLIDAY PERIOD 2017/2018

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 19 May 2015, there was submitted Report No 433/15 by the Strategic Director – People providing an overview of the outcomes of a consultation exercise with parents and carers on proposed changes to the October school holiday period in session 2017/2018 and seeking full approval for school holiday dates for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019.

The Report indicated that a further consultation exercise had been undertaken in August/September 2015 when parents and carers had been asked if they agreed with changing the school holiday period in October from the first two weeks in October to the second and third weeks with effect from session 2017/2018. Of the responses received, 36.3% agreed with the change and 63.7% disagreed with the proposed change and wished the present arrangements to continue.

Having heard from a number of members, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the continuing adoption of the first two weeks in October as the Angus school holiday period; and
- (ii) to approve the school holiday dates for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019, as detailed in the Appendices to the Report.

*** 8. CONSULTATION ON THE SECONDARY SCHOOL WEEK**

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 February 2015, there was submitted Report No 434/15 by the Strategic Director – People seeking approval to implement changes to the secondary school week from August 2017.

The Report indicated that there was a requirement to ensure that the secondary school curriculum structures and secondary school week arrangements were as effective as possible to support the continuing work on Curriculum for Excellence and the introduction of the Developing the Young Workforce initiative. A consultation with stakeholders regarding the secondary school week structure had therefore been undertaken.

COUNCILLOR WELSH, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR MIDDLETON, MOVED THAT THE COMMITTEE AGREES:-

- (I) TO NOTE THE FINDINGS OF THE CONSULTATION ON THE SECONDARY SCHOOL WEEK WITH SCHOOLS AND LEARNING SECONDARY STAFF AND PARENTS THROUGH PARENT COUNCILS;
- (II) THAT, IN PRINCIPLE, THAT THERE SHOULD BE A CHANGE TO THE STRUCTURE OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL WEEK FROM THE CURRENT 35 PERIOD STRUCTURE TO A 33 PERIOD STRUCTURE;
- (III) THAT THE PREFERRED MODEL FOR ANGUS WOULD BE ONE OF THREE LONGER DAYS AND TWO SHORTER DAYS BUT THAT THIS WOULD BE SUBJECT TO FURTHER DETAILED CONSULTATION;
- (IV) THAT THIS CHANGE SHOULD TAKE PLACE AFTER AN APPROPRIATE TRANSITION AND PREPARATION PHASE WITH AN IMPLEMENTATION DATE OF AUGUST 2017;
- (V) THAT FURTHER DETAILED CONSULTATION TAKE PLACE WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS AS DETAILED IN APPENDIX 1 TO THE REPORT; AND
- (VI) TO REQUEST A FURTHER REPORT IN MAY 2016 OUTLINING PROGRESS.

Councillor May, seconded by Councillor Proctor, moved, as an amendment, that the Committee agrees:-

- (i) to note the findings of the consultation on the secondary school week with Schools and Learning secondary staff and parents through Parent Councils; and
- (ii) that there should be no change to the structure of the secondary school week from the current 35 period structure to a 33 period structure until such time as a full consultation with all stakeholders had been undertaken together with fully costed proposals.

On a vote being taken, the members voted:-

For the motion:-

Councillors Welsh, Devine, Hands, Houston, Middleton, Morrison, Evans, Mr Adams, Mrs Mallie and Mr Simpson (10).

For the amendment:-

Councillors Brown, Fairweather, Geddes, May, Proctor, Salmond, Smith and Thomson (8).

No Vote:-

Ms Johnston and Mr Pratti (2).

The motion was declared carried and became the finding of the meeting.

9. STATEMENT OF AMBITION FOR THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OF ANGUS

There was submitted Report No 435/15 by the Strategic Director – People presenting a draft Statement of Ambition for the young people of Angus which would govern decision making and service planning within the relevant services of the People Directorate.

The Report indicated that since the inception of the People Directorate, work had been undertaken with staff to establish an agreed set of values, aims and ambitions to underpin and inform the work of the Directorate and to ensure that the activities aligned with the Council's overall vision. In recent months, the focus of this work had been on services to children and young people and, having worked through a variety of options and approaches, it had been recognised that a set of commitments had been developed. Combining these commitments had created an overall Statement of Ambition for the young people and services which would be widely available across the relevant sections of the People Directorate. Future service improvement plans would be prepared on the basis of the statement, holding each other accountable for decision making based on it, especially the commitment to young people.

The Committee agreed to approve the Statement of Ambition for Young People in Angus, as detailed in the Report.

10. PRESENTATION OF A SCHOOL INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR ANGUS

There was submitted Report No 436/15 by the Strategic Director – People proposing the development of a School Investment Strategy for Angus which would set out a long term framework for improving the school estate.

The Report indicated that in recent years Angus Council had invested significantly in the School Estate. Based on the September 2014 Census, the overall occupancy rate across Angus Schools was just under 74%. Closer examination however had shown that some of the schools were very under occupied whilst others were at or close to capacity. In keeping with the philosophy of transforming Angus, it was therefore appropriate at this time to develop a School Investment Strategy to provide a comprehensive strategic framework for the future of the school estate ensuring that the educational needs of all our children were met and to make best use of the resources available. The strategy would be developed to identify future demands on the school estate taking into account demographics, the impact of policy developments and planned housing development. It would also take account of the scarcity of

resources available and how best to use them to maximise attainment and achievement and the experience of children and young people in our schools.

The Committee agreed to approve the preparation of a long term School Investment Strategy, as detailed in the Report, with regular updates being provided to this Committee.