

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of SPECIAL MEETING of the **CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE** hosted at Angus House, Orchardbank Business Park, Forfar and held remotely on Thursday 4 March 2021 at 11.00 am.

Present: Councillors DEREK WANN, LOIS SPEED, JULIE BELL, KENNY BRAES, COLIN BROWN BEM, MARK McDONALD, BILL DUFF, ALEX KING, BEN LAWRIE, ANGUS MACMILLAN DOUGLAS OBE, BOB MYLES, MARK SALMOND, DAVID FAIRWEATHER, RON STURROCK and BETH WHITESIDE.

Church

Representative: Miss LESLEY HOOD.

Teacher

Representative: Mr MIKE CALLAGHAN and Mrs ANNA CHEYNE

Councillor WANN, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Lynne Devine, Ronnie Proctor MBE and Tommy Stewart, with Councillors Mark McDonald, Mark Salmond and David Fairweather substituting respectively. An apology for absence was also intimated on behalf of Mrs Elizabeth Howson, Church Representative.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING STAFFING BUDGET EFFICIENCIES

There was submitted Report No 79/21 by the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning summarising the progress of the implementation of efficiencies to the school staffing budget and detailing an amendment to savings as currently detailed in the change programme.

The Report provided an overview of the current position both in relation to primary and secondary teachers and indicated that session 2021/2022 would continue to be a period of educational recovery due to the Covid-19 pandemic. A further reduction in primary staff at this time would be counter to the national and local policy context detailed in Section 5 of the Report, in that the reduction would further reduce any 'additionality' designed to support those most in need.

To date, £1,851,000 had been removed from the teacher staffing budget since April 2018 and it was proposed to postpone any further savings in 2021/2022 and to spread the remaining £548,000 of savings required more evenly over 2022/2023, 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 as detailed within Table 3 of the Report. The realignment of the savings would result in the same overall budget efficiency being made.

Following questions from Councillors Whiteside and Bell, and having heard from the Director of Education & Lifelong Learning in response, and thereafter from Mr Callaghan and the Convener who sought support to ensure that local authorities were given fair funding for education, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that the increasing secondary school roll had created a budget pressure for the 2021/22 budget setting process and the financial impact was estimated at £255,000 based on expected pupil numbers;
- (ii) to note the budget efficiencies realised from the school staffing budget since April 2018 as outlined in Section 3.3 of the Report;
- (iii) to note an amendment to the previously agreed budget efficiencies necessitating the continued gradual reduction of additional primary teachers as outlined in Section 6.2 of the Report;

- (iv) to note the revised annual teacher savings as detailed in Section 6.2 of the Report would be subject to annual monitoring as to impact on service delivery and pupil-teacher ratio; and
- (v) to note that any future proposed alterations to the savings outlined in Table 3 of the Report, as the result of annual monitoring, would be presented to a future meeting of this Committee.