

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTE of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA on Tuesday, 21 January 2020 at 10.00 am

Present:- Councillors S. Haslam (Chairman), S. Aitchison, G. Edgar, E. Jardine, T. Miers, M. Rowley, G. Turnbull, T. Weatherston.
Apologies:- Councillor C. Hamilton.
Also present:- Councillors H. Anderson, J. Greenwell, S. Mountford, H Scott.
In Attendance:- Executive Director, Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory), Chief Officer Education, Clerk to the Council, Democratic Services Officer (F. Henderson)

EDUCATION BUSINESS

Present:- Mr T. Davidson (Parent Representative), Mr G Wilkinson, (Parent Representative).
Apologies:- Mr I. Topping, Miss C Thorburn.

CHAIRMAN

- 1.1 In the absence of Councillor C. Hamilton, Councillor Haslam chaired the whole of the Executive Committee meeting.

INCLUSION FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Interim Service Director, Children and Young People which proposed that the Inclusion Framework contained in Appendix 1 to the report and the Inclusion Policy contained at Appendix 2 to the report both reflected and aligned with National guidance and Legislation to provide a clear strategic direction on inclusive practice for all schools and Early Years settings in Scottish Borders Council. The Inclusion Framework replaced the previous policy and the Inclusion Policy was a revised and updated version of the draft presented to the Executive Committee in June 2018. In line with National Legislation and Guidance, recent documents had been published by Scottish Government (Education Scotland) to provide further guidance to Local Authorities and their policy making and outlined Scotland's vision and underlying principles of inclusion. Scottish Borders Council had a clear commitment to ensure children and young people were 'in sight, in our minds, in our actions and were being heard as part of the Council's vision to raise attainment and achievement for all learners whilst ensuring full participation and inclusion. The Inclusion Framework and Policy, along with other associated documents, had been designed to provide learning establishments within Scottish Borders Council a clear framework to build on the developing inclusive culture.
- 2.2 Caroline Didcock, Quality Improvement Officer, Education was present and explained that the Inclusion Framework sat within a suite of frameworks, all of which were informed by research and strategies known to be successful in pursuit of the overarching aim of raising attainment. They formed part of the Council's strategy to raise attainment for all 'Achieving Excellence in Learning #playyourpart'. The Inclusion Framework, and its associated documents, detailed the action required by all to ensure the ongoing development of inclusive practices in all learning establishments within Scottish Borders Council. Councillor

Greenwell, Equalities Champion, addressed the meeting, welcoming the Inclusion Framework which had taken a while to come forward due to the work involved. He made reference to the charity, Meeting of Minds, which he had co-founded and which was a parent-led support group for children with complex/additional needs, giving parents and care givers the opportunity to connect with key professionals. The Chief Education Officer, Ms Michelle Strong, acknowledged that the Framework had been a long time coming, which had been partly due to the national position, but it had been important to ensure the policy was robust and included a commitment to the training programme. Families were key in supporting young people and there was an ongoing piece of work to enhance parent involvement.

- 2.3 In terms of consultation with the 3rd sector, the Chairman sought clarification and was advised that there had not been direct contact with the 3rd sector although they had had the opportunity to comment through the Schools. It was envisaged that the document would be on display within schools in poster format, with explanations for parents specific to their school. Members welcomed the very clear, although complex report and associated documents which was a significant policy and the need to get it out to parents and pupils. A meeting would be held in February with the Chairs of Parent Councils. Members referred to attacks against staff which had doubled in recent years and sought information on how these were being managed. Ms Strong confirmed that attacks against staff were taken very seriously and that a new recording system had been introduced which allowed more accessibility to all staff rather than requiring manager input, tracked the incidents within the school and was monitored daily. This partly explained the rise in reported incidents. Each incident was individually scrutinised, triggers identified and provision adjusted. Mr Davidson, Parent Representative, requested that consideration be given to re-instating Special Needs Assistants. Ms Strong explained that nationally it had been recognised that education needs were changing and the Council was due to receive £310k from Scottish Government in additional funding to be spent working with schools with higher numbers of special needs pupils to develop strategies. It was not just about staff numbers but the environment and the young person's specific need. In terms of equality of opportunity for all within schools, Members questioned whether this applied to everything and where additional funding was to be found. It was explained that many schools recognised that families were struggling financially and there were a lot of innovative projects running i.e. clothing swap shops for uniforms; Cinderella Projects to allow pupils to borrow or hire evening dresses. Inspire Learning allowed a level playing field for all pupils and homework could be done when it suited the pupils i.e. in school at lunchtime or after school and there was pupil equity funding to help pupils engage and many schools held very successful fund raising events to enhance the school fund. In response to a question about punitive actions, it was explained that these did not work and that Team Teach Levels 1 and 2 were being rolled out. All teachers completed Level 1, which was about how to de-escalate situations, with Level 2 for more complex issues. Getting pupils to understand the consequences of actions worked better which was the approach being used. There followed discussion about circumstances for pupils being excluded, anti-bullying and the refresh of positive relationships document. Ms Strong confirmed that exclusion numbers across Scotland had fallen significantly in the last few years and work was ongoing to look at the needs of the young person and how the school could work to find a way to plan together to support that individual. The aim was to have an environment where all could learn and thrive.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the final drafts of the Inclusion Framework (Appendix1) and Inclusion Policy (Appendix 2) and confirm these would be circulated to all learning establishments in the Scottish Borders.

PROPOSED HOLIDAY DATES AND IN-SERVICE DAYS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEARS 2021/22 TO 2025/26

- 3.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Interim Service Director, Children and Young People, which provided feedback on the results of the consultation undertaken on holiday dates and in-service dates for academic years 2021/22 to 2025/26 and to consider possible alignment of all school holidays and in-service days with neighbouring Local Authorities. The Chief Officer Education, Ms Strong, explained that between 24 September and 20 October 2019 Scottish Borders Council consulted on 'Holiday and In-Service days for the academic years 2021/22 to 2025/26'. The consultation contained two options: Option A - the current pattern of holidays and In service days, or Option B - change to the pattern to link In-Service days with holidays and enable a full week off for pupils in February. Details of the options were contained in Appendix I to the report. A total of 2,069 responses had been returned to the consultation from a variety of stakeholders, with the majority of those returned favouring Option B as detailed below:-
- 2 In-Service days after the Summer break
 - 1 In-Service day after the October break
 - 1 In-Service day in February
 - Schools closed for 1 week in February for pupils and 4 days for staff;
 - 1 In-Service day in May – the Tuesday after the May bank holiday.
- 3.2 Discussions were about to commence to consider aligning in-service days and holidays in the Scottish Government agreed regional collaborative groups, consisting of Edinburgh; Midlothian; Fife; East Lothian and Scottish Borders. In light of the above, it was proposed that the school holidays and in-service dates for 2021/22 and 2022/23 (detailed in Appendix 2 to the report) be published on the Council's website. In the interim, the preferred holidays and in-service days for the academic years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/25 would be held pending the discussions with the other Local Authorities. The report detailed the implementation and communication proposals. The Committee was supportive of consideration being given to aligning with other Local Authorities as many parents worked or lived out-with the Scottish Borders area.

DECISION

AGREED:

- (a) **to the preferred option from the consultation on the school holiday dates and in-service days for the academic years 2021/22 to 2022/23 as presented in Appendix 1 to the report; and**
- (b) **that, should there be a delay in progressing the alignment of in-service days and holidays for the Local Authorities in Edinburgh, Midlothian, Fife and East Lothian, then the preferred school holiday dates and in-service days for 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 would be put in place for schools in the Scottish Borders.**

4.0 MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting of 19 November 2019.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

- 5.0 **JIM CLARK RALLY 2020 PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS** There had been circulated copies of a joint report by the Executive Director and Service Director Assets and Infrastructure. The aim of this report was to raise awareness with Members of the revised legislation for motor sport events on closed public roads and to agree the Council's consultation process for the proposal submitted by event organisers of the Jim Clark Rally to hold a rally on closed roads in the Scottish Borders on 30 and 31 May

2020. The report explained that revised legislation was introduced in 2019 to allow motor sports events to take place on closed public roads. The new regulations built upon previous experience through the Jim Clark Rally and other such events and were intended to introduce increased rigor to the procedure for organising and running such events. The 2019 Regulations introduced a two stage procedure where organisers must first successfully apply to an “authorised body” for a permit before applying to the local roads authority for a Motor Sports Order. In determining whether to make a Motor Sports Order, Scottish Borders Council, as local roads authority, had to consider a number of factors laid out in the Regulations. The report outlined those factors and provided an opportunity to examine the proposals submitted by the rally organisers in respect of the routes and timings for the rally on 30 and 31 May 2020.

- 5.1 The organisers of the Jim Clark Rally, having successfully applied for a permit from “the authorised body”, had lodged an application with Scottish Borders Council (within the specified 6 month period required to allow consideration) seeking a Motor Sports Order to undertake an event on Saturday 30 & Sunday 31 May 2020. It was noted that the event organisers had, prior to submitting the application, been in consultation with representatives of Scottish Borders Council and Police Scotland through the established Safety Advisory Group (SAG) system in place at the Council. The intention of the Jim Clark Rally organisers was for the event to be based in Duns and to run a total of 8 rally stages (over 4 different routes) on the Saturday and 6 rally stages (over 3 different routes) on the Sunday. The four routes on the Saturday were Westruther, Scott’s View, Eccles and Longformacus – Abbey St Bathans. This would see a single run, in an anti- clockwise direction of travel, over the first three routes followed by vehicle servicing and refuelling in Duns and then a repeat of that earlier sequence. Following a further re-group and service in Duns the day would then conclude with two runs over the Longformacus – Abbey St Bathans route. Sunday would see routes at Edrom, Ayton and Whitsome. The intention being to run a clockwise loop of these routes followed by servicing and refuelling in Duns before a repeat loop over the three routes and a podium finish in Duns.
- 5.2 As this was the first time that the Jim Clark Rally would be run out-with Berwickshire, it was felt appropriate that the Executive Committee should be provided with an opportunity to comment on the proposals. The Members welcomed the report and the Jim Clark Rally which was a major sporting event and brought significant economic benefit to the Scottish Borders. It attracted a high number of spectators, supporters, staff and competitors to the area, many of whom stayed a number of nights and by extending the route it would spread the benefits throughout the Borders. Elected Members acknowledged the significant Officer time spent getting the rally back to the Borders following the tragic events in 2014. In response to a request that the Community Councils affected be contacted individually, the Infrastructure Manager confirmed that the organisers had already committed to do so. Clarification was sought in terms of indirect costs to the Council.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED the introduction of the new legislation and the application by organisers of the Jim Clark Rally to run an event on 30 and 31 May 2020.**
- (b) **AGREED that:-**
- (i) **reports would be taken to the three Area Partnerships in whose areas the event was scheduled to take place;**
 - (ii) **as in 2019, a public consultation would be launched on the Council’s website; and**

- (iii) at this stage the Committee had no comments about the proposal to run an event and/or the proposed routes and timings for that event.

6. **PRIVATE BUSINESS**

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of part 1 of schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

7. **MINUTE**

The private Minute of 19 November 2019 was approved.

The meeting concluded at 11.15 am