

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTE of MEETING of the EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber,
Council Headquarters, Newtown St. Boswells
on Tuesday, 15 September 2015 at 10.00 a.m.

Present:- Councillors D. Parker (Chairman), S. Aitchison (Chairman - Education Business),
J. Brown, M. J. Cook, V. Davidson (from para 3), J. Mitchell, D. Moffat, D.
Paterson, F. Renton, R. Smith.,
Also Present:- Councillors I. Gillespie, J. Greenwell, G. Logan, S. Mountford.
Apologies:- Councillors S. Bell, C. Bhatia, G. Edgar.
In Attendance:- Depute Chief Executive – People, Service Director Children and Young People,
Chief Officer - Education, Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic
Services Officer (F. Henderson).

EDUCATION BUSINESS

Present:- Mr G. Donald, Mr. J. Walsh, Mr. G. Jarvie, Mrs J. Aitchison, Ms A. Ferhai.

CHAIRMAN

1. Councillor Aitchison chaired the meeting for that part which considered education business.

SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

2. The Minutes of the Education Performance (HMle) Sub-Committee held on 12 March 2015 and 4 June 2015 had been circulated.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

ATTAINMENT RESULTS

3. The Service Director Children and Young People introduced the new Chief Officer – Education, who would provide the presentation on attainment results, and she invited all elected members to in-depth presentations in respect of the schools within their Ward and urged them to get involved at a local level. The Chief Officer – Education explained that attainment had improved over a number of years and the results in National 5 English compared well with the National picture, National 5 Maths was better than the National Average and Chemistry was similar to the National average. It was highlighted that it was not just exam performance that was measured but attainment across everything i.e. Sport Leadership, Duke of Edinburgh etc. Individual schools were able to drill down into their own results and there would be a forensic analysis of the data for each School, Subjects within the school and for specific categories i.e. gender, LAC, SIMD, ASN and EAL and these results would be fed into the Action Plan for the School enabling targeted support to be put in place, sharing of good practice and learning from partners. Questions were answered in relation to areas of deprivation, the continuing increase of tutors being used outwith Schools and how GLOW2 could be used.

DECISION

NOTED:-

- (a) the presentation; and
- (b) that all Members would be informed of local meeting and invited to attend.

SENIOR PHASE STRATEGY

4. There had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director for Children and Young People which described the work taking place in Scottish Borders Secondary Schools to progress the ambitions set out within Curriculum for Excellence in relation to the Senior Phase learning experience for all pupils in their 4th, 5th and 6th year at school. The report explained that the Senior Phase which spanned years 4th to 6th and was one of the most important, and potentially one of the most challenging. Schools were tasked with creating a curriculum that not only provided a meaningful learning experience which supported pupils in obtaining qualifications, but also enabled them to develop emotionally, physically and socially as young adults. Borders Schools have been working together to develop the curriculum, providing a much more diverse and ambitious Senior Phase experience for all 4th to 6th pupils across the Scottish Borders. The expansion of the curriculum presented challenges and opportunities. The "Senior Phase Strategy, April 2015", contained in appendix 1 to the report, built upon good practice in Borders schools and set out key recommendations of actions to be taken to ensure children obtained the highest level of qualifications and the highest quality skills for learning, life and work; resulting in a positive and sustained destination for all young people. It was evident in the development of the strategy for the Senior Phase that schools must build and develop partnerships with a range of further education providers and businesses, both within and beyond Scottish Borders. The ambitious agenda set out in the Senior Phase Strategy recommendations clearly demanded high quality partnerships moving forward. The question of future funding and the need to provide not only equality of opportunity but equality of access was raised and it was explained that there was guaranteed central funding for the next 2 years and access problems were appreciated with arrangements including the use of Taxis being put in place. Schools could also provide financial help in some cases. In response to a question on how parents were made aware of this help it was agreed that both school and council websites would be checked to ensure this information was available. Ms Ferahi expressed concern that the bar was not being set high enough and that parents were not mentioned in the Strategy although she considered them to be key partners. The Service Director School and Young People advised that the Senior Phase Strategy had been informed by a number of different documents which would cover the working of the whole school and that there would be a separate document detailing work with Parents and she offered to arrange visits for the parent representatives to schools so they could hear directly what was happening. Mr Donald highlighted the work of Church of Scotland chaplains within the Schools which he considered were an under used resource.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED the draft Senior Phase Strategy, April 2015 for Secondary Schools.**
- (b) **AGREED that the final document be brought back to Committee for approval in due course.**

REVIEW OF OUT OF SCHOOL CARE POLICY 2015

5. There had been circulated copies of a report by the Depute Chief Executive (People) which described the review undertaken to develop a revised Out of School Care Policy. The review had recommended enhanced governance arrangements for the Vulnerable Out of School Care Grants Scheme. The report explained that there were 37 Out of School Care providers operating across the Scottish Borders, which were provided by a range of voluntary and private sector organisations who operated from a mixture of Scottish Borders Council (SBC), community and privately-owned facilities. Out of School Care providers supplemented the core universal school activities provided in communities whilst providing a valuable service for families. The majority operated as voluntary organisations with opening hours to meet the requirements of local families whilst aligning with the constraints of the business and provided care before and after school, with some also providing wraparound and holiday/in service care. SBC provided financial support to Out of School Care providers

through subsidised rent arrangements for some Out of School Care providers who operated from SBC premises and the Vulnerable Out of School Care Grant Scheme was in place to assist Out of School Care providers who met specific criteria. A number of organisations who were based within SBC premises provided Early Learning and Childcare as well as Out of School Care. The Early Years Team within SBC provided support to the Out of School Care providers with the aim of improving the quality of care across the Scottish Borders. This might be in the form of practical support ranging from establishing new Out of School Care provision, setting up a management committee through to provision of training and practice development. The existing Out of School Care in the Scottish Borders Policy had been approved in November 2010 and outlined SBC's commitment to work with all Out of School Care providers to develop their services and achieve financial sustainability. The policy established principles which were applied consistently when working with all Out of School Care providers in the Scottish Borders. To further assure consistency of application, a review of the 2010 Policy had been undertaken. The report detailed the main conclusions and highlighted that further clarity on rental arrangements for providers and access to the Vulnerable Grants Scheme was required. Questions were raised in relation to how many of the 37 provides used facilities outwith Council ownership as it was considered that they were at a greater disadvantage. The somewhat onerous requirements of the Care Commission in relation to provision, particularly for early years, were also raised. With regard to the Grant Scheme, the inclusion of the requirement not to have any outstanding debt to the Council was raised. It was suggested that this may unfairly discriminate against those providers who might only have a small debt but that debt was to the Council against those providers who had a large debt but not to the Council. It was agreed that the panel would need an element of flexibility in such cases. It was noted that the transfer of facilities to the Culture Trust might have implications for some providers, including private providers and it was agreed that this would be brought to Committee for future discussion if required.

DECISION

APPROVED:-

- (a) **the revised SBC Out of School Care Policy (2015), subject to the amendments detailed above; and**
- (b) **the implementation of a decision making panel to assess applications to the Vulnerable Out of School Care Grants Scheme.**

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

MINUTE

1. The private section of the Minute of 4 June 2015 was approved.

The Education Business concluded at 12 noon and there followed a short adjournment.

OTHER BUSINESS

CHAIRMAN

On the resumption of the meeting, Councillor Parker took the Chair for the remaining business.

MINUTE

6. The Minute of meeting of the Executive Committee of 1 September 2015 had been circulated.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

SUB- COMMITTEE MINUTE

7. The Minute of the Trading Operations Meeting held on 17 August 2015 had been circulated.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTE

2. The private section of the Minute of 24 July 2015 was approved.

The meeting concluded at 12.10 p.m.