



MINUTES

A&B - Public

Education and Families Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Monday 23 April 2018 at 10:00am

Present:

Councillors:

P Campbell	J Fraser
C Hughson	E Macdonald
R McGregor	G Smith
T Smith	B Wishart

Religious Representatives:

H Rankine	M Tregonning
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Apologies:

T Macintyre	D Sandison
R Thomson	

In Attendance:

H Budge, Director – Children's Services
A Edwards, Executive Manager – Quality Improvement
C Anderson, Senior Communications Officer
P Haviland, Quality Improvement Officer
M Thomson, Management Accountant
L Geddes, Committee Officer

Also:

S Thomason, Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament

Chairperson

Mr G Smith, Chair of the Committee, presided.

Circular

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

The Chair advised that the Executive Manager – Quality Improvement would also provide an update on the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare. Following resubmission of financial estimates by local authorities, the Scottish Government had increased the funding available, while the amount requested by local authorities had reduced. So he was now more hopeful that the funding to be provided by the Scottish Government would be nearer to what was required by local authorities. Agreement on the funding levels would be sought when the matter was being considered at the COSLA Leaders meeting the following week. COSLA had

been instrumental in brokering negotiations between local government and the Scottish Government, and the Scottish Government had kept its part of the bargain.

He went on to say that there had been a lot of work involved in completing the Council's submission, and he thanked the various staff involved.

Declarations of Interest

None

Minutes

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2018 on the motion of Mr Campbell, seconded by Mr Fraser.

12/18 **External Audit Report – Care Inspectorate Reports on: Aith Junior High School Nursery, Bells Brae Primary School Nursery, Foula Primary School Nursery, Sound Primary School Nursery and Brae High School Nursery**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Children's Services (CS-14-18-F) outlining the content of the Care Inspectorate Reports on the above school nurseries.

The Executive Manager – Quality Improvement summarised the main terms of the report, advising that there had been no requirements or recommendations in respect of four of the five nurseries. There had been three recommendations in respect of the Brae High School Nursery, and these were being dealt with through an action plan. The issue regarding the outside door into the play area related to the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare, as refurbishment works had been carried out at Brae High School to accommodate the expansion.

The Committee noted the content of the Care Inspectorate reports, and requested that their thanks and congratulations be conveyed to the staff involved.

Decision:

The Education and Families Committee noted the content of the Care Inspectorate Reports on Aith Junior High School Nursery, Bells Brae Primary School Nursery, Foula Primary School Nursery, Sound Primary School Nursery, and Brae High School Nursery.

The Executive Manager - Quality Improvement then went on to speak about the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare, and outlined the work that was taking place locally. She advised that during 2017-18, hours had been expanded in a number of settings locally, and this expansion would continue in 2018-19. Urafirth School nursery had participated in a trial project which had been part of a separate funding stream. This funding would come to an end, but it was planned to continue this expansion in 2018-19 as part of the overall expansion to be funded by the Scottish Government. The evaluation report for the Urafirth trial was currently being prepared following a visit by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate, which had resulted in very positive feedback.

Staff training and development and infrastructure were the main focus of the 2018-19 service delivery plan. The Scottish Government had a workforce delivery plan in place, and it was estimated that the expansion would require 11,000 workers in the sector by 2020. Locally discussions had taken place with Shetland College to start planning for access to qualifications, and this was something that would need to be stepped up. There was a two-

year programme in respect of Modern Apprentices. There were five Modern Apprentices in settings locally, and aspirations to get more started in the first year of the programme. The Scottish Government had announced that there would be 435 additional graduates in early years settings nationally. As the criteria had focused on nurseries in more deprived areas, this would have meant that Shetland would not have been entitled to a graduate. However it had been successfully argued that a graduate should be allocated to each of the island areas, so there would be an additional member of staff from August who would be used in different settings.

She went on to say that the consultation currently taking place in relation to service models would continue to 29 June, and that there were a number of proposals contained within this. One significant concept was that funding should follow the child, and it would be interesting to see how this would work locally over a number of settings. It was also proposed that there should be a national standard for the provision of early learning and childcare via partner providers, and a common approach to commissioning partner provider services. If partner providers met the standard requested by the local authority, the local authority would then be responsible for providing ongoing support and training. The proposal that partner provider staff should be paid the living wage was unlikely to be an issue locally, but the proposal to extend free school meal provision to partner providers was something that was currently being considered. It was further proposed that childminders should be qualified to a particular level equivalent to SVQ3, and that the responsibility for training childminders would lie with the local authority. There were some concerns regarding how local authorities would be able to make that provision. It was also proposed that there would be an inclusion fund to enable pupils with additional support needs to access their full entitlement, and that this fund would be used for equipment and staff training.

The Chair thanked the Executive Manager – Quality Improvement for her update, and commented on the challenges in delivering the expanded hours across the number of small and disparate settings locally. However the funding situation was looking more positive, and it was important that local authorities responded to the consultation that was taking place and to highlight aspects of the service model that would have an impact locally.

The meeting concluded at 10.20am.

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Chair