

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of HYBRID MEETING of the **FAMILY, EDUCATION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 26 March 2024 at 2.00 pm.

Present: Councillors LYNNE DEVINE, MARTIN SHEPHERD, BILL DUFF, JULIE BELL, KENNY BRAES, LINDA CLARK, IAIN GALL, ROSS GREIG, GEORGE MEECHAN, LLOYD MELVILLE, GAVIN NICOL, LOUISE NICOL, RONNIE PROCTOR MBE, LOIS SPEED, CRAIG FORTHERINGHAM and BRIAN BOYD.

Church

Representative: Mrs WILSON.

Councillor DEVINE, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Chris Beattie, Derek Wann and Beth Whiteside, with Councillors Bill Duff, Craig Fotheringham and Brian Boyd substituting respectively. An apology for absence was also intimated on behalf of Revered Christine Hay Church Representative.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY

There were no declarations of interest or statements of transparency made.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

(a) Previous Meeting

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 20 February 2024 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

(b) Special Meeting

The minute of Special meeting of this Committee of 29 February 2024 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

(c) Staffing Sub-Committee

The minute of meeting of the Staffing Sub-Committee of 20 February 2024, a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted (APPENDIX I)

4. ANGUS CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT AUGUST 2022-JULY 2023

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee, there was submitted Report No 76/24 by the by the Chief Executive, presenting the Angus Child Protection Committee Annual Report for August 2022 to July 2023 The Report also provided assurance to elected members on the multi-agency child protection work in Angus.

Alison Todd, the Independent Chair of the Child Protection Committee, advised that this was her last Report as Independent Chair. The Convener, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Ms Todd for all her work over the past five years which was very much appreciated.

Thereafter, Ms Todd highlighted the work undertaken across Angus by individual agencies and in partnership to deliver National, Tayside wide and local child protection outcomes to improve the lives of children at risk of harm.

Ms Todd highlighted ongoing work to improve child protection practice throughout Angus, along with key trends that demonstrated a continued increase in demand across frontline child protection services. Noting that although there had been an increase in demand of services, resources were able to keep up with demand and able to provide appropriate support for individuals and families.

Following questions and comments by members, the Committee having considered the Report, agreed:-

- (i) to note the content of the Angus Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2022 to 2023, as appended to the Report; and
- (ii) to note the Council's cross departmental responsibilities in relation to Child Protection.

5. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION – HAYSHEAD AND ST THOMAS NURSERY CLASSES

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of the Children and Learning Committee of 1 June 2023, there was submitted Report No 99/24 by the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning seeking approval to administratively close Hayshead and St Thomas Nursery Classes, following consultation undertaken in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

The Report indicated that in 2023 an opportunity had been identified to rationalise the management structures for the Hayshead and St Thomas Nursery Classes and a consultation process had been undertaken during the period Monday 30 October to Friday 15 December 2023, a total of 32 school days.

Consultees were provided with opportunities to express their views through written and oral representations and a formal Consultation Report, provided within Appendix 1 to the Report, detailed the process undertaken and summarised the representations made.

Following a number of questions, Councillor Greig indicated that he wished to move an amendment.

At this stage in the meeting (2.43pm), the Committee agreed to adjourn for 5 minutes to consider the terms of the amendment.

The meeting resumed at 2.37pm.

Thereafter, having heard from the Convener, the Committee agreed to adjourn for a further 10 minutes (2.47pm).

The meeting resumed at 2.47pm.

COUNCILLOR DEVINE, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR MELVILLE MOVED THAT THIS COMMITTEE AGREE THE RECOMMENDATIONS AS DETAILED WITHIN THE REPORT, NAMELY:-.

- (i) TO APPROVE THE ADMINISTRATIVE CLOSURE OF HAYSHEAD AND ST THOMAS NURSERY CLASSES; AND
- (ii) TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING TO REFER THE ABOVE DECISION TO THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010.

Councillor Greig, seconded by Councillor Louise Nicol, moved as an amendment, that, having considered the responses to the consultation, that the nurseries remain open.

On a vote being taken, the members voted:-

For the motion:-

Councillors Devine, Shepherd, Duff, Bell, Braes, Clark, Meechan, Melville, Speed, Boyd and Mrs Wilson (11).

For the amendment:-

Councillors Gall, Greig, Gavin Nicol, Louise Nicol, Proctor and Fotheringham (6).

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

6. AMENDMENTS TO EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE ENROLMENT ARRANGEMENTS

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of the Children and Learning Committee of 23 February 2016, there was submitted Report No 100/24 by the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning seeking approval to amend the current arrangements for application and enrolment to Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) provision.

In Angus, all eligible two year olds were admitted to settings as soon as their application was processed, with four intakes offered per year to all three and four year olds with dates of application up to the first date of each term. The Council also currently offered a non-statutory October intake in addition to the mandatory August, January and April intakes. This position no longer aligned with almost all other local authorities, including neighbouring local authorities, who facilitate only the three statutory admissions of early learning and childcare per year.

In light of the increased availability and flexibility of ELC provision in Angus through the introduction of 1140 hours of delivery, additional year provision within legislation and the Council's immediate access for eligible two year old provision, it was proposed that the Committee approve the removal of the additional non-statutory admission of children to ELC in October.

Following questions and comments, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the removal of the non-statutory additional admission of children to Early Learning and Childcare in October; and
- (ii) to approve the revised start dates for Early Learning and Childcare provision as set out within Section 6 of the Report.