



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

EDUCATION, SPORT AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held in the Council Chamber,
Council Offices, Stornoway on Tuesday, 23
November 2023 at 10.30am.

PRESENT

Mr Paul Finnegan (Chair)	Mr Kenneth J Maclean
Mr Mustapha Hocine (Vice-Chair)	Mr Paul F Steele
Mr Iain M Macleod	Mr Grant Fulton
Ms Susan Thomson	Mr Ranald Fraser
Mr Robert Mackenzie	Mr Kenneth Macleod
Mr Norman Misty Macdonald	Mr Calum Maclean
Mr Donald Macsween	Mr Rae Mackenzie
Mr Malcolm K Macdonald	Dr Frances Murray
Mr Angus McCormack	Mr Norman Macdonald
Mr Finlay M Stewart	Rev Hugh Stewart
Fr Michael Macdonald	

APOLOGIES

Mr George Murray	Rev Iain Macritchie
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MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Iain A MacNeil	Mr Gordon Murray
Mr Uisdean Robertson	Mr Duncan MacInnes MBE
Mr Angus Morrison	

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Malcolm Burr	Ms Anne Macleod
Mr Donald A Macleod	Mr Neil Macleod
Ms Mary Clare Ferguson	Mr Sandy Gomez
Mr Jack Libby	Ms Patricia Macleod
Mr Iain GG Campbell	Mr Steven Ferguson
Mr Derek Mackay	

Prayer

The Meeting was preceded in prayer by Father Michael Macdonald

MINUTES

Minute of Meeting of 19 September 2023	1	The Minute of the Meeting of 19 September 2023 was approved .
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Declaration of Interest	of 2	There were no declarations of interest.
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PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Outcome Delivery Report	3	With reference to item 5 of the Minute of the Meeting of 13 June 2023, the Chief Officer for Education and Children's Services submitted a Report presenting the half-year progress of the 2023/24 Departmental Strategic Priorities for the Education, Skills and Children's Services Department detailing an update on the key areas of strategic risk, progress on the strategic outcomes and the resources identified to implement the Business Plan. The Report further detailed financial performance and progress on Departmental workforce planning.
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The Report stated that the Business Plan was aligned to all four strategic priorities, and three services areas within the Department contribute to the achievement of nine strategic outcomes. The Report indicated that the Education, Skills and Children's Services department budgets are within tolerances.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle notes the half-year progress of the 2023/24 Education, Skills and Children's Services Departmental Outcome Delivery Plans.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

It was agreed that the public, including the press, be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of item 6 on the grounds that exempt information as defined in Paragraph 5 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 namely information relating to the adoption, care, fostering or education of any particular child or relating to the supervision or residence of any particular child in accordance with a supervision requirement made in respect of that child under the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.

Residential
Placements for
Children and Young
People

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With reference to item 3 of the Minute of the Meeting of 19 September 2023, the Head of Children's Services submitted a Report advising of the position with regard to Specialist Residential Placements for children and young people and of the budgetary implications arising from these placements.

It was agreed to recommend, insofar as the interests of the Committee were concerned, that the Comhairle note the financial position for specialist residential provision for 2023/24.

Integrated
Children's Services
Plan 2023-26
Progress Report

5

The Head of Children's Services/ Chief Social Work Officer submitted a Report in relation to the Integrated Children's Services Plan (ICSP) 2023 - 26. The Report stated that the Comhairle was an integral element of the Outer Hebrides Children and Young People's Planning Partnership which is in turn part of the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership. The Children and Young People's Planning Partnership (CYPPP) are legally required to have an Integrated Children's Services Plan (ICSP). The Integrated Children's Services Plan is based on the legal requirements set out in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the subsequent Statutory Guidance on Part 3: Children's Services Planning – Second Edition 2020.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle note the progress made in terms of meeting the strategic goals contained within the Integrated Children's Services Plan 2023-2026.

Care Inspectorate
Report for Action
for Children –
Hillcrest Care Home
Service

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The Head of Children's Services/ Chief Social Work Officer submitted a Report in relation to the Care Inspectorate Report for Action for Children – Hillcrest Care Home Service. The Report indicated that the service was inspected between 7-9 August 2023 and received an evaluation scoring of 3 (Adequate). The Inspection Report reflected concerns with regards to some aspects of child protection guidelines not being consistently followed. Regulators had some concerns about safeguarding the care of vulnerable young people and highlighted two areas for improvement for the service requiring implementation of a robust, evidence-based assessment and matching process.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle note the outcome of the inspection and the scrutiny and support the commissioner of the services (the Comhairle) is providing and Action for Children's own Improvement Plan deriving from the inspection outcome.

EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

Report by HM 7
Inspectors of
Education: Sgoil
Ùige & Sgoil Àraich
Ùige - June 2023

The Chief Officer for Education and Children's Services submitted a Report which detailed the outcome of the inspection of Sgoil Ùige and Sgoil Àraich Ùige by His Majesty's Inspectors from Education Scotland. The Report indicated that Sgoil Ùige and Sgoil Àraich Ùige were inspected by a team of HM Inspectors in June 2023 in a short model inspection; Sgoil Ùige was evaluated against quality indicators taken from How Good is Our School? 4th Edition (HGIOS4) and Sgoil Àraich Ùige was evaluated against How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare (HGIOELC).

The Report further noted that upon conclusion of the inspection, the Executive Headteacher for Rural Primary Schools has commenced work with the staff of the school to develop and implement an Action Plan to address the agreed areas for improvement and the Head of School for Laxdale School will provide additional leadership support on a temporary interim basis.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle:

- (1) note the findings of the Inspection Report, including key strengths and areas for development; and**
- (2) supports Sgoil Ùige and Sgoil Àraich Ùige to develop and implement an effective Action Plan which will address the areas for improvement within the HMI report.**

Scottish 8
Attainment
Challenge Stretch
Aims for 2023-2024

The Chief Officer for Education and Children's Services submitted a Report which detailed the Scottish Attainment Challenge Stretch Aims Report for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar for 2023-24, encompassing stretch aims set to 2026. The Report noted that the publication of the updated Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) Framework for Recovery and Acceleration in March 2023 required that education authorities set annual Stretch Aims in respect of achievement of key measures within the attainment challenge.

The Report further noted that the Stretch Aims Report requires the Comhairle to provide performance data and future targets for five CORE stretch aims that are common to all thirty-two local authorities. In addition, each authority can set any number of CORE+ stretch aims that are unique to them. All of the stretch aims must be based on setting and measuring targets to address the poverty-related attainment gap and, as such, can only be shaped around areas where such data is available. The five CORE stretch aims common to all local authorities are:

- Curriculum for Excellence achievement levels – P1, 4, 7 literacy combined and numeracy combined;
- The proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more passes at SCQF level 5;
- The proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more passes at SCQF level 6;
- The proportion of 16-19 years olds participating in education, employment or training based on Annual Participation Measure produced by Skills Development Scotland; and
- Health and wellbeing measure: Attendance (locally defined).

For 2023-26, and in consideration of data available to the Comhairle that can be used to demonstrate a poverty-related attainment gap, two local CORE+ stretch aims were set.

- The attainment in Gaelic and English writing of learners registered for free school meals at P1, P4 and P7.
- The proportion of school leavers attaining SCQF level 5 in both Literacy and Numeracy.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle approve the actions and targets set out in the Scottish Attainment Challenge Stretch Aims Report for 2023-24.

Three Island 9
Collaborative and
Improvement
Review

With reference to item 5 of the Minute of the Meeting of 20 September 2022, the Chief Officer for Education and Children's Services submitted a Report which detailed the process and outcome of the second Three-Island Collaborative Improvement Review that took place in May 2023 as a partnership between Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Orkney Islands Council, Shetland Islands Council, the Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES) and Education Scotland.

The Report noted that working closely with ADES and Education Scotland, it was identified that the three island authorities would be able to form a strong partnership to undertake a review, recognising the similarities, cross-cutting themes and issues that delivery of education in island settings face. The collaborative review that took place in June 2023 was the second in a series of three.

Senior officers from the three authorities worked with ADES and Education Scotland staff to identify an agreed focus on the Broad General Education (BGE) in secondary schools, encompassing S1-3. The overarching review question was: In the context of our island communities, how well does the secondary BGE curriculum engage and meet the needs of all learners, equipping them for learning, life and work? Three themes were then identified to provide a framework to gather evidence and allow participants to evaluate responses to the review question. The themes were:

- (1) The curriculum offer in S1-3
- (2) Curricular transitions and articulation between stages (P7-S1 and S3-S4)
- (3) Assessment, moderation and achievement in the BGE.

Focus groups were established for each of the three themes and membership was drawn from the review team and a broad range of stakeholders. Each authority also provided access to documentation including curricular programmes and attainment and performance information. Following conclusion of the review activities, the lead senior officers from the three authorities have continued to meet to evaluate the findings and plan approaches to take forward the feedback.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle recognised the findings of the Review and support the improvement priorities it identifies.

SPORT AND HEALTH

Support for Local 10
Sports Councils

With reference to item 13 of the minute of the meeting of 29 November 2022, the Chief Officer for Education and Children's Services submitted a Report which sought approval for the continued financial support for the two Local Sports Councils. The Report noted that the Local Sports Councils are continuing to operate grant aid programmes that provide valuable assistance for local clubs and organisations. ClubSport Lewis & Harris (CSLH) and the Uist & Barra Sports Council (UBSC) have submitted grant applications to enable the organisations to provide a range of grant options for affiliated clubs and associations. The Lewis and Harris Sports council approved the change of name to ClubSport Lewis and Harris at its recent AGM in line with a change to the National body – Scottish ClubSport. Uist & Barra Sports Council will look to change name over the next year.

ClubSport Lewis and Harris has requested an award of £13k and Uist & Barra Sports Council wishes to access £8.5k to address the demand for assistance in the year 2023/24. This devolved decision-making process continues to work well for sport at a grass roots level and enables volunteers involved in local sport to set priorities within their local communities throughout the Western Isles. 74 clubs and 5 associations are currently supported.

The Report further noted that a separate fund to specifically assist young people was initially set up with legacy monies donated by Transocean in 2016 and administered by the Western Isles Development Trust (WIDT) over a 3-year period. High demand for this fund led to it being consistently oversubscribed in each of the 3 years. In December 2019 the Comhairle agreed that £22.5K of Crown Estate revenues (£15K for Lewis and Harris; £7.5K for Uist and Barra) would be top sliced from this and future rounds of Crown Estate funding.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle approve continued support for the Local Sport Councils through devolving £13k to ClubSport Lewis and Harris and £8.5k to the Uist and Barra Sports Council from the 2023/24 Sports and Games budget.

RELATED MATTERS

Chief Social Work
Officer Annual
Report 2022/23

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With reference to item 6 of the Minute of the Meeting of 29 November 2022, the Head of Children's Services/ Chief Social Work Officer submitted a Report in relation to the Chief Social Work Officer Report 2022/23. Chief Social Work Officers are required to submit an Annual Report to the Scottish Government covering the range of statutory responsibilities that sit with the Chief Social Work Officer. The Chief Social Work Officer Report was appended to the Report.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle note the Chief Social Work Officer Report 2022/23.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Reports
Outstanding

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The Chief Executive submitted a Report detailing the Reports Outstanding arising from decisions of the Committee.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle note the Report.

The Chair wished all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

