

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**MINUTE of MEETING of the EDUCATION EXECUTIVE held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2015 at 9.30 AM.**

**COUNCILLORS:**

David Alexander  
Jim Blackwood  
Tom Coleman  
Dennis Goldie  
Gerry Goldie  
Linda Gow  
Adrian Mahoney  
Craig Martin (Convener)  
Dr Craig R Martin  
Malcolm Nicol  
Alan Nimmo  
Robert Spears

**REPRESENTATIVES  
OF RELIGIOUS  
BODIES:**

Hector Cairns  
Margaret Coutts  
Rev Michael Rollo

**CO-OPTES:**

Jonathan Barclay (Pupil Representative)  
Helena Barton (Pupil Representative)  
Mike Ablett (Parent Representative)  
Martin Craigen (Parent Representative)  
Fiona Craig (Teacher Representative)  
Margaret Smith (Teacher Representative)

**OFFICERS:**

Alex Black, Quality Improvement Manager  
Arlene Fraser, Committee Services Officer  
Colin Moodie, Depute Chief Governance Officer  
Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services  
Malcolm Wilson, ICT Curriculum Development Officer

**EE15. APOLOGIES**

No apologies were intimated.

**EE16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

**EE17. MINUTE**

**Decision**

The minute of meeting of the Education Executive held on 9 June 2015 was approved.

## **EE18. GLOW - INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

The Education Executive heard a presentation from Malcolm Wilson, ICT Curriculum Development Officer on GLOW. The presentation highlighted the main developments to the GLOW system which allows access to a host of online tools and resources for all pupils and staff within Scottish schools.

The Convener thanked Mr Wilson for his informative presentation.

## **EE19. PUPIL ATTENDANCE IN FALKIRK COUNCIL SCHOOLS**

The Education Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services providing detailed information on attendance rates and patterns in primary and secondary schools in Falkirk and providing a reference point for future attendance reporting.

The Education Executive agreed, on 28 April 2015 (ref EE5), to remove Attendance Panels from the attendance circular and staged process.

Information was provided on attendance rates and trends over the last 10 years across both primary and secondary sectors and how these compare with national averages, where available. During this period, attendance of pupils in Falkirk Council schools was marginally higher than the national average.

The report also set out details of attendance rates by year stage over the last school session, which highlighted that the majority of pupils with low attendance (70% or less) and those with very low attendance (50% or less) are from the secondary sector. Additional detailed analysis of pupil attendance rates and factors affecting non-attendance was detailed in the appendix to the report.

The actions identified by Children's Services, to monitor and improve the attendance rates of Falkirk Council pupils, were summarised in the report.

### **Decision**

#### **The Education Executive agreed:-**

- (1) to request the Director of Children's Services to report annually on attendance rates across the four bands detailed in paragraph 1.2 of the report and that the information contained within the report be used as a benchmark for future reports on attendance;**
- (2) that the actions identified in paragraph 2.10 of the report be implemented, and**
- (3) that a further report be presented to the Education Executive detailing the revised guidance issued to schools to improve attendance rates prior to the end of 2015.**

## **EE20. ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

The Education Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services detailing Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) attainment within Falkirk Council secondary schools in 2015. In order to provide a comparison, additional information was provided in relation to post Results Service performance in 2014.

The report set out information obtained from the Council's management information system on the attainment of pupils at S4, S5 and S6. Attainment figures will be updated by the Scottish Government later in the session via their Insight information system. This information will also include national and comparator authority figures for benchmarking purposes.

Attached as an appendix, was a report considered by the Scrutiny Committee on 20 August which provided further information.

The report also outlined the future actions and strategies which are being implemented to further improve attainment levels and performance.

### **Decision**

#### **The Education Executive agreed:-**

- (1) to note the SQA attainment of Falkirk Council secondary schools and the strategies outlined to further improve performance;**
- (2) to request the Director of Children's Services to provide a further report in 2016 on attainment and achievement in Falkirk secondary schools, based upon Insight data, and**
- (3) that the Director of Children's Services organise a briefing session for members on the Scottish Government's Insight Information System, which session is to take place before the end of 2015.**

Councillors G Goldie and Gow left the meeting during consideration of the previous item of business.

## **EE21. EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION REPORTS ON FALKIRK SCHOOLS AND NURSERIES 2014-15, AND FALKIRK COUNCIL PROGRESS REPORTS ON PREVIOUS INSPECTIONS**

The Education Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services summarising the findings on the quality and standards within eight Falkirk Council schools, and attaching as appendices, details of the individual school reports.

The report highlighted the findings from 3 inspection reports carried out by Education Scotland during session 2014/15, and 5 follow-through reports undertaken by Quality Improvement Officers. Information on how quality and standards are evaluated during the original inspections, and the follow-through reporting process.

The evaluations for the eight inspections ranged from excellent to weak, however, the 3 inspections carried out during 2014/15 range from good to weak. Information on how the main points for action identified within each of the 3 establishments will be carried out is contained within the appendices.

### **Decision**

**The Education Executive agreed:-**

- (1) to note the results of inspections and follow-through school reviews contained in the report;**
- (2) to request the Director of Children's Services to continue to report to them on an annual basis on inspection outcomes, and on progress made by previously inspected schools on their agreed points for action;**
- (3) that inspection outcomes be notified to elected members on an ongoing basis through the Information Bulletin and that the same information be notified to the non-councillor members of the committee, and**
- (4) that where an evaluation of weak or unsatisfactory has been given in an inspection, this will be considered by the Scrutiny Committee in the first instance.**

Councillor Gow re-joined the meeting during consideration of the previous item of business.

### **EE22. ASSETS SURPLUS TO OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS: LAND TO THE REAR OF SHOPS AT BLINKBONNY ROAD, FALKIRK**

The Education Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services seeking approval to declare the land at Blinkbonny Road, Falkirk, surplus to operational requirements.

The owner of the property at 12c Blinkbonny Road has expressed an interest in acquiring the area of ground at the rear of his property for parking purposes.

### **Decision**

**The Education Executive agreed:-**

- (1) to declare the land held on Education Services account, as shown on the plan attached to the report, surplus to operational requirements, and**
- (2) to authorise the Director of Development Services to organise negotiated disposal on the terms set out in the report.**

## **EE23. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** in terms of Section 50A (4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude from the meeting the press and public for the following item of business on the ground that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 8 of Part 1 to Schedule 7A of the said Act.

## **EE24. FORMER FOCUS SCHOOL BUILDING, LAURIESTON**

The Education Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services seeking approval to progress a bid to purchase the property and setting out an outline business case showing the merits associated with acquiring the former school.

The report provided background information together with legal and financial implications.

Councillor Nimmo, seconded by Councillor C Martin, moved that the Education Executive agree to continue the matter to a Special Meeting of the Education Executive to take place on Tuesday 29 September 2015, in order to allow further financial information to be made available.

As an amendment, Councillor Coleman, seconded by Councillor Alexander, moved in substitution for the motion, that the Education Executive:-

- (1) note the content of the report, and
- (2) agree that the Director of Children's Services progress with a bid for the Focus School, subject to the financial position as outlined in Section 7 of the report.

On a division, 5 members voted for the amendment and 7 voted for the motion.

### **Decision**

**The Education Executive agreed the motion.**