

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the City of Vancouver's coat of arms. The crest is a shield divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a city skyline with a diagonal beam of light. The top-right quadrant depicts a stag's head with antlers. The bottom-left quadrant shows a three-masted sailing ship on wavy water. The bottom-right quadrant features a grizzly bear standing on its hind legs. Above the shield is a crown with four maple leaves. A banner at the bottom contains the motto "A NE FOR A".

Agenda Item 3

Minute

Draft

FALKIRK COUNCIL

**Minute of meeting of the EDUCATION, CHILDREN and YOUNG PEOPLE
EXECUTIVE held remotely on Tuesday 26 January 2021 at 10.00 a.m.**

Councillors: David Alexander
Robert Bissett
Fiona Collie
Joan Coombes
Nigel Harris
James Kerr
Adanna McCue
Cecil Meiklejohn (Convener)
Lynn Munro
Laura Murtagh
Alan Nimmo
Pat Reid

**Representatives
of Religious
Bodies:** Maureen Harkins
Rev Michael Rollo

Co-Optees: John Chalmers, Teacher Representative
Fiona Craig, Teacher Representative
Callum Mack, Pupil Representative
Merle Stevenson, Parent Representative

Officers: Jack Frawley, Team Leader – Committee Services
Gary Greenhorn, Head of Planning and Resources
Sara Lacey, Head of Social Work Children's Services
Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive
David Mackay, Head of Education
Colin Moodie, Chief Governance Officer
Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services

ECYE21. Apologies

There were apologies from Evelyn Crosbie; Holly Anderson, Pupil Representative; and Karen Procek, Parent Representative.

ECYE22. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

ECYE23. Minute

Decision

The minute of the meeting of the Education, Children and Young People Executive held on 8 December 2020 was approved.

ECYE24. Rolling Action Log

A rolling action log detailing decisions not yet implemented following the previous meeting on 8 December 2020 was provided. Items 500 – National Improvement Framework Education Plan, and 540 – Early Learning & Childcare 1140 Expansion Plan Update were the subject of reports on the agenda and accordingly fell from the rolling action log.

Decision

The Education, Children & Young People Executive noted the rolling action log.

Councillor Reid joined the meeting during consideration of the previous item. Councillor Munro joined the meeting during consideration of the following item.

ECYE25. Early Learning & Childcare (ELC) – 1140 Expansion Plan Update

The Education, Children and Young People Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on progress with the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Expansion Plans; information on the new date for the implementation of 1140 hours; Deferred Places, and proposals to expand early intervention support.

The Scottish Government had revised the statutory requirement on local authorities to deliver 1140 hours to August 2021. Following this officers had been liaising with the main contractors to update and finalise timelines for the remaining work projects.

Work was on track to complete the expansion works at a further 4 projects:-

- St Francis PS – planned opening Jan 21 (capacity 64)
- Laurieston PS – planned opening Jan 21 (capacity 64)
- St Margaret's ELCC – planned completion Feb 21
- Nethermain PS – planned completion Feb 21

There were 21 projects outstanding 15 were larger work projects and 6 were minor work projects.

The Scottish Government had confirmed that Falkirk had been selected to be one of 5 pilot local authorities who would assess the roll out of the planned changes to the legislation from August 2021. Additional funding for the pilot would be provided once it had been ratified by COSLA's Settlement and Distribution Group. Approval was sought for a new Support Officer post which would allow the existing team to realign and for support to be provided for the families of eligible 2 year olds.

Consultation had been undertaken with parents and Local Members on the preferred options for the new names for the following ELCCs:-

- Moray PS / Oxfangs – proposed name Abbotsgrange ELCC.
- Maddiston PS – proposed name Glendevon ELCC
- St Margaret's PS – proposed name Parkhill ELCC

Falkirk's ELC expansion strategy had created both new and additional support level posts, namely ELC Assistants and Support for Learning Assistants. This had supported the delivery of a refreshed workforce to deliver the expanded hours in a way that supported children's needs and parental choice.

Approval was sought to increase the current core DSM weekly hours of 530 by 370 additional weekly hours. This would create additional hours for some staff and some additional posts which would be recruited to in February 2021.

Decision

The Education, Children and Young People Executive:-

- (1) noted the updates on the remaining projects detailed in appendix 1 to the report;**
- (2) noted that Falkirk had been selected as a pilot authority to progress the Scottish Government's planned changes to the Deferred Place legislation;**
- (3) agreed the names of the new ELC Centres as set out in section 4.3 of the report;**
- (4) agreed the changes to the Support for Learning Assistant DSM allocations set out in section 4.4 of the report, and**
- (5) agreed an additional Support Officer post set out in section 4.5 of the report.**

ECYE26. Proposed Consultation on the Permanent Closure of Limerigg and Bothkennar Primary Schools

The Education, Children and Young People Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which sought agreement to progress to a formal statutory consultation on a proposal to permanently close both Limerigg and Bothkennar Primary Schools.

On 26 March 2019, the Education Executive agreed that both Bothkennar and Limerigg Primary Schools would be mothballed from August 2019, subject to an annual review of demand for places. There was also a commitment that if either or both of the schools remained mothballed for a period of 2 years that a further report would be brought setting out future options. Both schools remained closed with no plans to re-open them beyond August 2021 due to continued low catchment area demand for places.

In the 5 years running up to the decision to mothball Bothkennar Primary School demand for places had declined considerably, year on year. Data showed that the number of primary age children in the Bothkennar catchment area had reduced by 18% over the previous 3 years. Preschool population numbers showed the decline in the primary age population would continue over the next 5 years.

In the 5 years running up to the decision to mothball Limerigg Primary School demand for places had also declined every year to very low numbers. Data showed that the number of primary age children in the Limerigg catchment area had remained the same over the previous 3 years. However Preschool population numbers showed that the primary age population was expected to decline over the next 5 years.

The only element of a statutory school closure consultation that was affected by current Covid-19 restrictions was the public meeting. The proposals therefore also included the option to hold a virtual public meeting to ensure that there was a public forum to allow discussion on the closure proposals to take place. Depending on the Covid situation at the time the consultation proposals also allowed for the consultation period to be extended to accommodate matters.

Decision

The Education, Children and Young People Executive agreed:-

- (1) to undertake a formal consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on a proposal to permanently close Limerigg and Bothkennar Primary Schools, and**

- (2) to request that a report from the consultation is presented to a future meeting of the Education, Children and Young People Executive for decision.

ECYE27. Succeed Today, Excel Tomorrow

The Education, Children and Young People Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided updates on the overarching 'Succeed Today, Excel Tomorrow (STET)' strategy, an overview of each of the sub-projects within phase one of STET, and the development of further transformational plans within phase two of STET.

STET was a transformational change project that would improve outcomes for young people and prepare them for the jobs of the future. There were 6 areas of transformational change within phase one:-

- Investing in People, Place and Partnership
- Connected Falkirk
- Investing in our ASN Schools
- Investing in our Primaries
- Falkirk Technical and Professional Academy
- Investing in our Workforce.

Connected Falkirk was an ambitious programme that would see personal devices provided for all P6-S6 pupils and shared devices at a ratio of 1:5 for P1-P5 pupils, as well as the supporting infrastructure across the estate.

Across Falkirk there were 48 primary schools all of which were different in size, age, location and proximity to one another. The ambition for the primary estate was to create vibrant learning environments that were efficient and adaptive to the changing needs of young people and their communities.

It was proposed to establish a Falkirk Technical and Professional Academy offering an alternative to high school model for up to 300 senior phase pupils. Falkirk Professional Academy would allow work in partnership with local industry, further education and higher education providers to create an alternative model of schooling, with a specific focus on the middle 60% of young people. It would provide a pathway for high quality, high level training in state-of-the-art facilities currently not available to learners.

It was proposed that an Education training centre was established to train the 3,300 employees within Children's Services, ensuring they were equipped with the broad range of skills that they would need to be able to provide the additional support for communities. The ambition was to establish an Education Training Centre, which would also be available for community use, industry use and use across other Council services.

The 3 areas of transformational change within phase two of STET were:-

- Generation Alpha
- Empowered Curriculum
- Learning Alliances.

Decision

The Education, Children and Young People Executive:-

- (1) formally endorsed the direction of the sub-projects within phases one and two of the 'Succeed Today, Excel Tomorrow (STET)' strategy;**
- (2) asked the Director of Children's Services to proceed with the scoping, options appraisals and consultations, as appropriate, for each of the sub-projects in phases one and two of STET; and**
- (3) asked the Director of Children's Services to provide the Education, Children & Young People's Executive with further reports on each of the sub-projects.**

ECYE28. National Improvement Framework (NIF) – Education Plan

The Education, Children and Young People Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's which provided information of the new arrangements regarding the National Improvement Framework (NIF) and which sought approval of the NIF Plan 2020-2021.

The Council was required to submit an annual plan to the Scottish Government by 31 August each year. The draft NIF plan for 2020 -2021 was submitted with a covering note informing Scottish Government that this would be updated following consideration by the Education, Children & Young People Executive.

Four high level areas for improvement were outlined and gave an indication of the priorities for development which would be undertaken to make the necessary improvements in the quality of provision. These were:-

- Leadership Support and Development;
- Raising Attainment and Achievement;
- Wellbeing, Inclusion and Equality, and
- Skills and Attributes Development.

Decision

The Education, Children and Young People Executive:-

- (1) approved the NIF Plan 2020 – 2021, and**
- (2) requested that the Director of Children's Services brings back a report evaluating its impact to the Education, Children & Young People Executive in November 2021.**

Rev Michael Rollo left the meeting during consideration of the following item.

ECYE29. Residential Child Care Provision

The Education, Children and Young People Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on the current Children's Residential Service provision in Falkirk and sought approval for proposed budget realignment and noted proposed registration variation of Wallace Crescent Children's house.

The Council operated two 5 bedded children's residential houses. Tremanna, situated in Slamannan; and Wallace Crescent, situated in the Braes. Since opening, each house had had a shortfall of 3 FTE staff to cover annual leave and to allow managers to work detached from the rota. The Care Inspectorate had made recommendations that managers should be freed from being part of the rota to enable them to fully undertake their management tasks.

The use of overtime and sessional employees to ensure required care and support within the residential houses had existed as an overspend, without an identified budget, for many years. The creation of a budget to be offset against annual spending on sessional staff was proposed to enable the appointment of 6 FTE staff.

The Independent Care Review, which began in February 2017, listened to the experiences of over 5,500 people, including Falkirk's care experienced young people and workforce. The work of the review resulted in "The Promise", setting out a view of what the new approach to care for Scotland's children should be. The Promise strongly emphasised the importance of love and lifelong relationships between children and carers and the need to reduce the number of placement moves for young people.

It was proposed to change the model of care from short to long term at Wallace Crescent, and to invest in sufficient permanent staff for both houses, to support these important elements of "The Promise".

Decision

The Education, Children and Young People Executive:-

- (1) agreed to realign overtime and sessional staff costs to establish an annual budget of £239,400 which supported the creation of 6 FTE residential posts, and**
- (2) noted the proposed variation of Care Inspectorate registration of Wallace Crescent Children's House to support local long-term care provision for young people.**