

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 a log. 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 on Tuesday 31 January 2023 at 10.00 a.m.**

**Councillors:**

Gary Bouse  
James Bundy  
Fiona Collie  
Paul Garner  
Anne Hannah  
James Kerr  
Cecil Meiklejohn (Convener)  
Laura Murtagh  
Alan Nimmo  
Siobhan Paterson  
Robert Spears  
Euan Stainbank

**Representatives  
of Religious  
Bodies:**

Maureen Harkins  
Rev Michael Rollo

**Co-Optees:**

John Chalmers, Teacher Representative  
Fiona Craig, Teacher Representative  
Declan McGavin, Pupil Representative  
Caitlyn Mossman, Care Experienced Young Person

**Officers:**

Arlene Fraser, Committee Services Officer  
Jack Frawley, Team Leader – Committee Services  
Gary Greenhorn, Head of Planning and Resources  
Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive  
Alison Lindsay, Accountancy Services Manager  
David Mackay, Head of Education  
Colin Moodie, Chief Governance Officer  
Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services  
Richard Teed, Senior Forward Planning Officer

**ECYE32. Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**ECYE33. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **ECYE34. Minute**

##### **Decision**

**The minute of the meeting of the Education, Children and Young People Executive held on 8 November 2022 was approved.**

#### **ECYE35. Rolling Action Log**

A rolling action log detailing decisions not yet implemented following the previous meeting on 8 November 2022 was provided. Items 609 – Consultation on Proposed Mothballing of Blackness Primary School and 613 – Review of Transport (Zero Based Budgeting Project) were the subject of reports on the agenda and accordingly fell from the action log.

##### **Decision**

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

#### **ECYE36. Education, Children and Young People Executive - Membership**

The Education, Children and Young People Executive considered a report by the Director of Transformation, Communities and Corporate Services inviting the appointment of two teacher representatives and a care experienced young person representative to the Education, Children and Young People Executive. Information was also provided on the outstanding vacancies of two parent representatives which required to be filled.

##### **Decision**

**The Education, Children and Young People Executive:-**

- (1) agreed to appoint John Chalmers and Fiona Craig as the teacher representatives;**
- (2) agreed to appoint Caitlyn Mossman as the care experienced young person;**
- (3) agreed to make the appointments with immediate effect until the next local government elections, and**
- (4) noted the two parent representative vacancies.**

### **ECYE37. Consultation on the Proposed Mothballing of Blackness Primary School**

With reference to Standing Order 33.5, the Convener referred to a deputation request received from Dr Juliet Graham and Jann Fairley, on behalf of Blackness Parent Council to be heard in relation to this item.

The Executive agreed to hear the deputation.

The Education, Children and Young People Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided details of the feedback from the consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the proposal to mothball Blackness Primary School from August 2023.

The Education, Children and Young People Executive had agreed on 8 November 2022 (ref ECYE28) to proceed with an informal consultation exercise on the potential mothballing of the school. Thereafter, a 4-week consultation period ran from 14 November to 12 December 2022.

The report summarised the comments and opinions expressed from those invited to contribute to the consultation, together with information relating to other respondents out-with the identified consultation group.

A selection of survey responses from those in favour and those opposed to the mothballing proposals were set out in Appendices 1A and 1B to the report. Children's Services had also prepared responses, where appropriate to some of the comments received, which were set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

Information from responses received indicated the possibility that, from August 2024 onwards, the number of catchment children enrolling at the school could be 11, which exceeded the current threshold for school mothballing consideration. In view of this, it was the opinion of Children's Services that the school remain open for the 2023/24 session, but that the position be reviewed again in March 2024, when the total number of catchment pupil enrolments for the 2024/25 session would be known.

The annual budgeted cost per pupil attending the school, excluding transport costs was currently £31,697, which was significantly higher than Falkirk's average cost per primary school pupil. The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) latest published figures showed Falkirk's average for 2020/21 as being £5,606 per primary pupil. Additional financial information on Blackness Primary School was set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

### **Decision**

**The Education, Children and Young People Executive:-**

- (1) noted the feedback on the consultation exercise undertaken in respect of Blackness Primary School;**

- (2) **agreed not to proceed with the proposal to mothball the school from August 2023, based on the recommendations made by the Director of Children's Services as stated in Section 5.10 of the report, and**
- (3) **instructed the Director of Children's Services to monitor the position and to update the Education, Children and Young People Executive on the outcome in March 2024.**

Fiona Craig and Maureen Harkins joined the meeting during consideration of the previous item.

The Executive adjourned at 11.20am and reconvened at 11.30am with all members present as per the sederunt with the exception of Caitlyn Mossman.

#### **ECYE38. Request to Undertake a Formal Consultation on the Proposal to Change the Distance Criteria for Home to Schools Transport**

The Education, Children and Young People Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided details on a proposal to make changes to the Falkirk School Transport Policy with respect to distance entitlement limits for free home to school transport. Approval was also sought to undertake a formal statutory consultation exercise on this proposal in accordance with The Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010.

The Executive had agreed on 4 October 2022 (ref EX36) that, as part of the Council's Review of Transport (Zero Based Budgeting Project), a report considering a statutory consultation on a change to the school transport criteria be submitted to this Executive for determination.

Falkirk's school transport distance entitlement exceeded that of the recommended national distance entitlement, which resulted in considerable additional cost to the Council.

The current Transport Policy provided for free home to school transport for:-

- Primary pupils **up to 8 years old** who live more than 1 mile from school by the nearest available safe walking route, and
- All primary and secondary pupils **aged 8 years and over** who live more than 2 miles from school by the nearest available safe walking route

In comparison to other Scottish Local Authorities, 24 operate with higher distance entitlement levels than Falkirk, with the remaining 7 operating a lower or broadly similar distance entitlement. If the proposed changes were approved, Falkirk's distance entitlement levels would still be lower than 5 local authorities.

The following proposed changes to the current Transport Policy would take effect from August 2023, namely:-

- **Primary pupils** who live more than 2 miles from school by the nearest available safe walking route, and
- **Secondary pupils** who live more than 3 miles from school by the nearest available safe walking route

The proposals did not affect the current transport provision for children with additional support need, where transport was provided by virtue of their individually assessed support needs.

The report provided information on the significant financial challenges that the Council faced over the next four years and how, if the proposal were approved, would address the current c.£750k financial overspend that was currently projected for school transport for 2022/23.

Details on how the proposals would affect individual schools and localities was set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Any consultation on the proposed changes to the Children's Services Transport Policy would be carried out in accordance with the requirements of The Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010. It was proposed that the consultation would be undertaken between 1 February and 17 March 2023 which met the legislative minimum period of 30 term time days. The report advised that following the consultation a report would be submitted to the Education, Children & Young People Executive of 30 May 2023.

## **Decision**

### **The Education, Children and Young People Executive:-**

- (1) **agreed to proceed with the statutory consultation, as required by the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010, on the proposal as outlined in Section 5 of the report, and**
- (2) **requested that the Director of Children's Services report back to the Education, Children and Young People Executive on the feedback and results of the consultation along with any appropriate recommendations.**

## **ECYE39. Assets Surplus to Operational Requirements**

The Education, Children and Young People Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services seeking approval that 2 existing Children's Services properties were deemed to be surplus to requirements to meet day to day operational purposes from the dates stated in the report.

Once properties had been agreed as being surplus to Service requirements, the Council's Asset Management Team then considered the options around their disposal.

Maps showing the site location of the two individual assets were set out in Appendices 1A and 1B to the report.

### **Decision**

**The Education, Children and Young People Executive agreed that the following 2 properties be deemed surplus to Children's Services operational purposes for the reasons outlined in Section 5 of the report, namely:-**

- (1) Denny Football Centre, and**
- (2) the former Heathrigg Nursery School, Slamannan.**