

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**Minute of meeting held on Thursday 21 September 1995 at 1000 hrs
in the Council Chambers, Lugar**

- PRESENT:** Councillors T Farrell (Chair), J Carmichael, G Cree, D Fulton, E Jackson, J Knapp, D Macrae, G McCredie, A McIntyre, I Reeves, G Smith, R Taylor and G Turnbull; W McConnell and J McHugh (Church representatives).
- ATTENDING:** F Lees (for the Chief Executive); G Fraser and A Fairbairn, J Mulgrew, director of education; M Burnell, senior depute director; S Angus, depute director; J Wallace; and D Campbell, Head of Public Relations and Marketing.
- APOLOGIES** Councillors R Brailsford, D Coffey, K Nicoll, D Reid, E Ross, D Sneller and R Taylor.

1. MINUTE OF FIRST EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 10 AUGUST 1995

The minute of the above committee meeting held on Thursday 10 August 1995 was noted.

2. DIRECTORATE APPOINTMENTS

There was submitted a report from the Director of Education of September 1995 indicating the outcome of the interviews held on 14 September 1995 to appoint the education directorate for East Ayrshire. Three Depute Directors of Education, one of whom will hold the post of Senior Depute Director of Education on a personal basis, were appointed.

Thereon, the recently appointed members of the education directorate and their individual remits were introduced as follows:

Margaret Burnell, senior depute Director of education	Support to schools
Susan Angus, depute director of education	Community Support
Jennifer Wallace, depute director of education	Planning and Resources

Councillor Farrell, in welcoming the members of the directorate, wished them every success in their work in East Ayrshire. Councillor Jackson offered congratulations on the individual appointments.

It was agreed to note the terms of the report.

3. THE FUTURE OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND

There was submitted a report (issued) by the director of education to advise members that the Scottish Office Education Department (SOED) had recently issued a formal consultation document on the future of Scottish Pre-School Education. The director's report outlined the main points raised in the consultation paper, offered comment on the SOED proposals and invited the committee to agree the terms of a

formal response to the document, a copy of the consultation document being appended to the report.

The Director of Education then:

- (a) made reference to key issues in the consultation paper, including the two options outlined for funding arrangements;
- (b) offered further comment on the consultation document; and
- (c) detailed the conclusion to the report which highlighted:
 - (i) the consultation period for the Scottish Office Education Department document as having been impossibly tight;
 - (ii) the principle of the voucher system and how best to administer it to keep bureaucracy and cost to a minimum, a feasibility which was seriously questioned;
 - (iii) a fundamental gap in the paper due to the lack of recognition of the needs of those who are vulnerable, suffer the effects of social deprivation in urban and rural settings and equally important, the needs of the very young who have special educational needs; and
- (d) suggested that opportunities for the expansion of the service for four year olds would be reduced given the fact that the net cost of each new place would be reduced by the value of the voucher.

Following members' questions, it was agreed to:

- (i) note the content of the recent SOED consultation document on the provision of pre-school education in Scotland;
- (ii) endorse the comments on the consultation document in this report and agree that they form the Council's response to the document, urging the SOED to give further time and consideration to their strategy on pre-school provision and in partnership with new authorities, develop a coherent scheme which:
 - (A) gives priority to those who experience the effects of social deprivation;
 - (B) carefully considers the development of pre-school provision for those with special educational needs;
 - (C) offers continuity and coherence with primary education;
 - (D) recognises the high quality of provision in the public sector;
 - (E) places emphasis on partnership rather than competition;
 - (F) does not introduce an additional tier of unwanted bureaucracy through the voucher system;
 - (G) ensures a fair distribution of additional resources;
 - (H) is based on a clearly defined national plan for pre-school education rather than a piecemeal approach; and
 - (I) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

4. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TECHNICIANS' SERVICE

There was submitted a report (issued) by the director of education outlining future arrangements for the Technicians' Service presently based in London Road, Kilmarnock and which provides a range of skills to educational establishments in the Ayr Division of Strathclyde Regional Council. Over recent years, the service had developed to take account of emerging trends and technological changes in education and had required to adapt to the increased use of technology in all sectors.

The report:

- (a) highlighted the way ahead for the technicians' service and proposed options for the delivery of the service after 31 March 1995 which included;
 - (i) disaggregation to the three Ayrshire authorities which would certainly result in a greatly reduced range of skills being offered to educational establishments in any one authority and the running costs of the service would therefore increase;
 - (ii) keeping together an all-Ayrshire service, which would result in educational establishments continuing to have access to the technicians' centre and the wide range of skills on offer, ensuring that the costs of the service would not escalate;
- (b) highlighted that in the Education Department capital programme in Strathclyde Region, finance had been identified in the current financial year to transfer the technicians' centre from its present base to St Joseph's Academy, Kilmarnock campus, these capital monies only to be released if an all-Ayrshire technicians' service will be in operation after Local Government reorganisation; and
- (c) concluded that:
 - (i) to continue to deliver the wide range of services within the technicians' service to education establishments in Ayrshire;
 - (ii) to ensure that the cost of the service and charges to educational establishments are kept to a minimum; and
 - (iii) to establish a quality base for the technicians' service and the release of the capital monies identified in the education capital programme within Strathclyde Region,

it would therefore be necessary that the technicians' service operate as an all-Ayrshire service after reorganisation, the detailed management arrangements being delegated to the three directors of education to determine.

Having heard the Director of Education in explanation and in answer to members' questions, it was agreed:

- (i) that arrangements should be made between East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Councils to maintain the technicians' service as a coherent unit after reorganisation, operating on an all-Ayrshire basis;
- (ii) that the director of education be asked to relay the decision of the committee to the directors of education in North Ayrshire Council and South Ayrshire Council and seek their support for the proposal and expedite an agreement timeously;

- (iii) that any decision reached be permitted to proceed without having sought the approval of a future meeting of the education committee; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

5. SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS 1995

There was submitted a report (issued) by the Director of Education indicating that the responsibility for school board elections during 1995 rests with Strathclyde Regional Council, and advising members of the education committee of the arrangements being made by the Regional Council for the forthcoming election process.

The report highlighted the:

- (a) background to school boards in respect of the biennial elections;
- (b) timetable for the 1995 elections; and
- (c) composition of school boards.

Having heard the Director of Education in response to members' questions, it was agreed:

- (i) that members of the education committee be invited to note the arrangements in place for 1995 elections to school boards; and
- (ii) that the outcome of the elections in East Ayrshire be reported to a future meeting of the education committee.

6. CHURCH - DENOMINATIONAL REPRESENTATION ON THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Reference was made to the meeting of the education committee held on 10 August 1995 when the director of education had advised the committee that the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994 had detailed that three persons, who shall be Church/denominational representatives serve on the education committee and that these three representatives should not be members of the education authority appointing such representatives. It had been agreed that a parent representative be elected to serve on the committee with full voting rights, following which that intention had been relayed to the Scottish Office

Thereon, there was submitted a report which highlighted:

- (a) the need to nominate a third representative to the education committee; and
- (b) the scheme relating to the selection of the third representative by advertisement in newspapers circulating in East Ayrshire.

Following members' questions it was agreed:

- (i) to note that responses are still awaited from the Scottish Office regarding questions raised by the Council about voting rights for members of communities who are not members of the education authority;
- (ii) to approve the arrangements outlined for selection of the third church/denominational representative on the education committee; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

7. BRIEFING SEMINARS FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

Reference was made to the education committee and its meeting of 10 August 1995 when the Chair and director of education had been invited to consider the content of seminars for elected members on relevant educational issues.

A meeting to pursue that matter had subsequently been held and it was recommended that a small number of briefing seminars be held over the next few months on the training topics:

- (a) local grants provision;
- (b) the educational capital programme and rationalisation of provisions;
- (c) the community education service; and
- (d) pre-5 provision.

The Director of Education indicated that details of the arrangements for the seminars would be made known to members as soon as they had been made and it was then agreed to:

- (i) note the topics to be discussed at briefing sessions for elected members on educational items; and
- (ii) otherwise, note the contents of the report.

8. KILMARNOCK COLLEGE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

There was submitted a report (issued) by the director of education to advise members that an invitation had been received from the Secretary to the Board of Management of Kilmarnock College to nominate a representative from East Ayrshire Council to join the Board. The underlying purpose of the invitation was to involve representatives of the local community in the policy making process within the college.

Having heard the Director of Education it was agreed:

- (a) that Councillor David Fulton be nominated to represent East Ayrshire Council on the Board of Management of Kilmarnock College; and
- (b) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.