

DRAFT MINUTE OF MEETING OF COSLA CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE BOARD

Friday 19 February 2020, 10.30am  
Via Microsoft Teams

**Present**

Aberdeenshire Council	Cllr Gillian Owen
Angus Council	Cllr Derek Wann
Argyll & Bute Council	Cllr Kieron Green (Substitute)
City of Edinburgh Council	Cllr Ian Perry
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Cllr Paul F. Steele
Dumfries & Galloway Council	Cllr Jeff Leaver
Dundee City Council	Cllr Roisin Smith
East Ayrshire Council	Cllr Fiona Campbell
East Dunbartonshire Council	Cllr Jim Goodall
East Lothian Council	Cllr Shamin Akhtar
East Renfrewshire Council	Cllr Paul O'Kane
Falkirk Council	Cllr Adanna McCue
Fife Council	Cllr Craig Walker
Glasgow City Council	Cllr Chris Cunningham
Highland Council	Cllr John Finlayson
Inverclyde Council	Cllr Natasha Murphy
Inverclyde Council	Cllr Stephen McCabe (COSLA Spokesperson)
Midlothian Council	Cllr Jim Muirhead
Moray Council	Cllr Sonya Warren
North Ayrshire Council	Cllr John Bell
North Lanarkshire Council	Cllr Frank McNally
Orkney Islands Council	Cllr Gwenda Shearer
Perth & Kinross Council	Cllr John Duff
Renfrewshire Council	Cllr Jim Paterson
Scottish Borders Council	Cllr Carol Hamilton
Shetland Islands Council	Cllr George Smith
South Ayrshire Council	Cllr William Grant
South Lanarkshire Council	Cllr Katy Loudon
Stirling Council	Cllr Susan McGill
West Dunbartonshire Council	Cllr Karen Conaghan
West Lothian Council	Cllr David Dodds
ADES	Professor Michael Wood
Public Health Scotland	Kerry McKenzie
Social Work Scotland	Ben Farrugia
SOLACE	Dr Grace Vickers

**Apologies**

Aberdeen City Council	Cllr John Wheeler
Argyll & Bute Council	Cllr Yvonne McNeilly*
Clackmannanshire Council	Cllr Graham Lindsay
ADES	Peter McNaughton

CIPFA – Directors of Finance  
Directors of Public Health  
SOLACE  
Social Work Scotland  
Argyll & Bute Head of Service

Alan Puckrin  
Dona Milne  
Kristine Jonson  
Sharon McAlees  
Louise Connor

*\* denotes substitute provided*

## **Public Session**

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

Cllr McCabe welcomed Board Members to the meeting and apologies were noted.

### **2. Children and Young People Board Plan**

Members were presented with the updated Board Plan. Further information was provided on The Promise and it was noted that a Policy Manager will be recruited within the team to work on this; in addition, a two-year Public Health Scotland secondment will be set up to work on child poverty and health inequalities.

Councillor McGill pointed out that in relation to Children's Hearings and endorsement of the Recovery Plan the understanding was that it needed to go to SG for further discussions on how a new offer could be made to CH's service. It was not the understanding that the Board had endorsed the plan.

John U said the Group were revising the Plan again following Lockdown on 4<sup>th</sup> January and it will come back to the board at next meeting with more details on that. Ben Farrugia pointed out that SG has accepted that CHS Recovery Plan couldn't be implemented due to lockdown.

Members received a further update in relation to the Scottish advisory group on bullying in schools, and the work that they have carried out since the previous meeting.

Members otherwise agreed the Board Plan.

### **3. Minute of Previous Meeting of 20 November 2020**

The minute of the previous meeting of 20 November 2020 was accepted as an accurate record.

### **4. Teach the Future Scotland**

Board Members were provided with a presentation from Teach the Future Scotland, which discussed the work that the campaign have done since the school climate strikes, and their proposals for improving climate-related education in schools.

Board Members noted the presentation and discussed similar work in their own local authorities, such as climate change conferences and other committees discussing climate change. An offer was made from SOLACE for Teach the Future to present at their next meeting in April.

It was agreed that COSLA officers should continue dialogue with the group to explore how their continuing work can be supported.

### **5. Update on the Promise – Fiona Duncan, Chair**

Fiona Duncan, Chair of The Promise, provided a presentation with an update on work done by the Promise Team since their last attendance at the Board. Discussion followed, and it was noted that it would be helpful for a member of the Promise team to provide regular updates to the Board, as well as a formal annual report across Local Government outlining how they are meeting goals.

Members agreed that this formal annual report on progress within the Promise would be helpful and thanked Fiona for the presentation.

## **6. Junior ISA's and Child Trust Funds for looked after children**

This paper provided Members with information in respect of the Junior ISA and Trust Fund Scheme for Looked After Children, which is designed to support the financial education of young people and provide a 'nest egg' as they move towards independence. Scottish Government have invested some money for looked after children and a trust fund scheme for looked after children. Anthony Walker from the Share Foundation joined the meeting to provide some background information regarding what the scheme does and how it has functioned in other parts of the UK.

It was noted that local authorities must engage with the Share Foundation to ensure that the scheme runs effectively and officers within councils are responsible for providing the Foundation with the relevant data on eligible young people. Young people can access the account from the age of 16, and have access to the funds from the age of 18.

Board Members agreed that local authorities should have an active role in the Fund Scheme to secure maximum benefit for care experienced young people; and agreed that local authorities should engage fully with the Share Foundation to provide data on eligible young people.

## **Private Session**

### **7. Secure Care**

This paper addressed concerns raised by Members at the Children and Young People Board Meeting in November 2020 about the current approaches to secure care, which were outlined in the presentation from the Centre for Youth and Community Justice. At that meeting, Members had asked officers to consider this and bring a paper to the next Board Meeting. This paper set out initial proposals which have been discussed with Scottish Government officials and Members were asked to consider these.

Board Members:

- i. Noted the proposals from the Scottish Government on a potential alternative delivery model for secure care services in Scotland; and
- ii. Agreed the proposed COSLA position that officers should work with Local Government officers to explore the proposals and their implications further.

### **8. Covid-19 Children and Families Collective Leadership Group Action Plan**

This paper provided Members with the Collective Leadership Group's Action Plan, which sets out the Group's key priorities. The group was initially created to bring together national and local government to take action in response to the pandemic, but is now an established ongoing group.

Members noted that a paper will be brought back to the Board in the future with feedback from children, young people and families.

It was agreed that COSLA officers should continue to work with Local Government partners to implement the Action Plan, with regular reporting back to the Board as appropriate.

## **9. Family Support and Commissioning**

This paper updated Members on developments made on improving the provision of holistic family support, following a paper produced by the COVID-19 Children and Families Collective Leadership Group. Board Members' views were sought on the recommendations in the paper, which the Deputy First Minister has signed off already.

Members noted that locally commissioned holistic family support services could potentially reduce demand upon more specialist and higher tariff services, through early intervention and prevention. A brief discussion was held on local funding and how this will be calculated.

Members noted the recommendations of the Improving Holistic Family Support Paper and agreed that COSLA officers should explore with partners how procurement and commissioning arrangements in relation to the provision of family support can be improved.

## **10. UNCRC Incorporation**

This paper provided the Board with an update on the UNCRC Incorporation Bill, presently at Stage 2, including the amendment agreed by the Equality and Human Rights Committee. The Bill will place a duty on local authorities and those carrying out public actions not to act in a way incompatible with the Convention. Members were asked to provide their comment on the local implications of this Bill, which will inform further discussions with Scottish Government.

Members noted that the six-month commencement period could pose difficulties for some local authorities, and a significant amount of work will be required within councils as capacity may be an issue. Guidance which highlights good practice and demonstrates what compliance looks like would be of assistance.

Members noted the progress of the Bill and provided further comment, highlighting in particular the need to consider capacity and the commencement date in future discussions.

## **11. Foster and Kinship Care Allowances**

This paper summarised Leaders' position and highlighted the work undertaken by COSLA since 2019 to understand the level of care allowance. The current proposal from Scottish Government suggests a common set of principles, included within the report. Views were sought from members on how best to approach future discussions with Scottish Government, particularly in the context of The Promise and incorporation of the UNCRC into domestic law.

It was noted that every local authority has different allowances which may complicate any national offer; local authorities have to allow for different things, for example, rural authorities must consider transport. A 'one size fits all' model may not be appropriate.

The quantification of non-monetary support was also considered and it was felt generally that payment of allowances should be a matter of local discretion. It was agreed that officers should have discussions with Scottish Government, putting forward the views of the Board and highlighting the need for local discretion, to find a suitable resolution.

## **12. Supporting Children and Young People's Mental Health - Resources**

This paper sought agreement for the use of COSLA branding for online mental health resources which have been drafted for schools and teachers. Views from the Board on the

principles of the whole-school approach were also invited, as well as comment on how the impact of these resources could be maximised.

Members noted that a link between the principles and the 'How good is OUR school?' self-evaluation evaluation would be helpful. Feedback from practitioners on implementing the materials for supplementary or emerging areas of need would also be valuable. It was further noted that resources to ensure that staff are well supported, particularly in the context of the pandemic, can ensure that the resources for young people are effectively implemented.

Members agreed to support both the professional learning resource and whole school approach; endorsed the online professional learning resource and the inclusion of COSLA branding; and provided further comment on effective implementation of the resource.

### **13. Education Recovery Update**

This paper updated Board Members on the return to in-person learning. The First Minister confirmed recently that primary classes 1-3 would be returning to school on Monday 1 March, with a small number of the senior phase returning to school to complete practical work and additional flexibility to bring back children with additional support needs. The paper provided an opportunity to discuss next steps.

An update on the funding that has been announced was also provided, and it was noted that the Education Resources Recovery Group will continue to meet in the meantime to discuss the practical implications of the return to school, ensuring that additional costs are captured consistently.

Members raised concerns about the need to maintain social distancing when return, and the possibility that infection rates could start to rise once again. It was also noted that schools and teachers received limited notice of the return to in-person learning and may not have had sufficient time to prepare for this.

Members otherwise noted the update, and noted that contact can be made with Cllr McCabe or the COSLA team to discuss any emerging issues.

### **14. ELC Expansion and Partnership Working**

This report updates Members on the decision taken by Leaders in December that the 1140 Hours duty should return from August 2021. Members were invited to share their views on joint delivery and agree the revised principles on partnership working.

Members noted the increased pressures on capital that this can bring, and the specific pressures on growing authorities. The additional costs should be reflected in any ongoing work.

Members otherwise noted the progress towards delivery of 1140 hours expansion; and agreed the revised principles.

### **15. CYP Update**

This paper provided an update on areas that the COSLA CYP team have been working on since the previous Board Meeting. This included the Disabled Children and Young People (Transitions to Adulthood) (Scotland) Bill, instrumental music tuition, the Independent Review of Adult Social Care and youth work.

Members were content to note the update.

## **16. Any Other Competent Business**

No additional competent points of business were noted.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 1 April 2021

In closing the meeting, Cllr McCabe thanked Members for their contributions and attendance.