



CYP Board Item 02

Draft Minute of the COSLA Children and Young People Board Meeting

Friday 5th April 2024, 10:30am

Verity House, Edinburgh, and via MS Teams

Present:

COSLA Children and Young People Spokesperson	Councillor Tony Buchanan
Aberdeenshire Council	Cllr David Keating
Angus Council	Cllr Lynne Devine
City of Edinburgh Council	Cllr Euan Davidson
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Cllr Paul Finnegan
East Ayrshire Council	Cllr Elaine Cowan
East Lothian Council	Cllr Fiona Dugdale
East Renfrewshire Council	Cllr Andrew Anderson
Falkirk Council	Cllr Iain Sinclair
Fife Council	Cllr Cara Hilton
Glasgow City Council	Cllr Christina Cannon
Highland Council	Cllr John Finlayson
Midlothian Council	Cllr Ellen Scott
Moray Council	Cllr Bridget Mustard
Perth and Kinross Council	Cllr John Rebbeck
Scottish Borders Council	Cllr Leagh Douglas
Shetland Islands Council	Cllr Davie Sandison
South Ayrshire Council	Cllr Stephen Ferry
South Lanarkshire Council	Cllr Lynsey Hamilton
Social Work Scotland	Ben Farrugia
ADES	Michael Wood

Guests:

Scottish Youth Parliament	Ellie Craig MYSP
Scottish Youth Parliament	Matt McDonald

Apologies:

Aberdeen City Council	Cllr Martin Greig
Argyll and Bute Council	Cllr Yvonne McNeilly
Clackmannanshire Council	Cllr Graham Lindsay
Dumfries and Galloway Council	Cllr Richard Brodie
Dundee City Council	Cllr Roisin Smith

East Dunbartonshire Council
Inverclyde Council
North Ayrshire Council
North Lanarkshire Council
Orkney Islands Council
Renfrewshire Council
Stirling Council
West Dunbartonshire Council
West Lothian Council
Directors of Public Health
Public Health Scotland
Public Health Scotland
East Renfrewshire Council Chief Executive (SOLACE)
Midlothian Council Chief Social Work Officer (SWS)

Cllr Lynda Williamson
Cllr Francesca Brennan
Cllr Shaun Macaulay
Cllr Angela Campbell
Cllr Gwenda Shearer
Cllr Emma Rodden
Cllr Margaret Brisley
Cllr Clare Steel
Cllr Andrew McGuire
Dona Milne
Lynne McNiven
Debbie Wason
Steven Quinn
Joan Tranent

Public Session

1. Welcome and Apologies

Councillor Buchanan opened the meeting and welcomed members.
Apologies were noted separately for the Minute.

2. Presentation – Scottish Youth Parliament

Members welcomed a presentation from Ellie Craig MYSP for Glasgow Cathcart, and Vice-Chair and Matt McDonald Head of Policy and Affairs about the work of SYP and key topical issues such as participation of children and young people in decision-making, and the UNCRC.

Members shared experiences from their Local Authorities, including how MSYP's and young people are working together to promote a local strategy, and how young people's interest and input into areas of policy are valuable.

Members highlighted the need for feedback to be given to young people on the impact of their work, and the changes it results in.

3. Minute of Previous Meeting of 2nd February 2024

The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record.

4. Children and Young People Board Workplan

COSLA Officers provided with an update on the Children and Young People Board Workplan.

COSLA Officers advised that the school empowerment guidance, and relevant governance was removed from the workplan, however, will remain as part of the policy application.

Members asked whether links had been made between behaviour in schools and consumption of high energy drinks. It was noted this had not featured in the findings of the Behaviour in Schools research, but COSLA Officers would explore this with colleagues in Public Health Scotland and Scottish Government.

Members also queried some of the RAG ratings in the workplan and were provided with further information. A question was raised over whether the section of the workplan on Regional Improvement Collaboratives would still be necessary considering the taper to RIC funding. Officers noted that with the Board's agreement the RICs section of the workplan could be removed.

5. The Promise Annual Report

This report sought the Board's support to develop an annual report for 2024, showcasing the work and highlighting the progress local authorities are making to Keep the Promise.

Members welcomed and noted the update.

The Board:

- i. Agreed that COSLA officers and the Improvement Service, work collaboratively to develop a Local Government Promise Annual Report for 2024.

Private Session

6. Education workforce

Following a request at the last meeting of the Children and Young People Board, this report provided an update on the range of work ongoing across COSLA relating to the education workforce.

Members welcomed the update and noted some concerns over communication being received from Scottish Government over teacher numbers and the difficult situations local authorities are finding themselves in. It was also noted Scottish Government are not acknowledging the diverse nature of local authorities across Scotland, and the need greater policy coherence across portfolios.

COSLA Officers assured Members COSLA had been firm and will continue to highlight concerns over teacher numbers to the Scottish Government.

The Board:

- i. Agreed the position set out at paragraph 20

7. School uniform and clothing in Scotland

This report invited the Children and Young People Board to consider and endorse guidance on school uniforms. Board members are also invited to re-affirm that the guidance should be non-statutory.

Officers updated the Board that since the paper had been drafted, the Scottish Government had confirmed that their intention was for the guidance to remain on a non-statutory basis.

Members welcomed the update and agreed with the COSLA position it should be non-statutory, however, noted concerns over the independent schools not being included. Members also highlighted concerns over time frame and sought the guidance to be made clearer on clothing associated with school trips and events if the schools would be responsible for providing clothes for trips.

COSLA Officers highlighted that the Scottish Council Independent Schools had indicated their support for this guidance, and confirmed they engage with the Scottish Government on the issues flagged by before the guidance is signed off by Cllr Buchanan.

The Board:

- ii. Considered and commented on the draft School uniform and clothing in Scotland guidance, attached as appendix A.
- iii. Delegated final sign-off to the COSLA Children and Young People Spokesperson.
- iv. Agreed that, in line with the points outlined at paragraphs 8-13, COSLA should engage with the Scottish Government to seek that this guidance remained on a non-statutory basis.

8. Neurodevelopmental Supports and Services

The Neurodevelopmental Service Specification: Principles and Standards of Care was published in September 2021. Work to understand how the specification was implemented and was undertaken by five Test of Change areas, whilst its implementation has also been considered across the system more broadly. This paper updated on the learning from, and current status of the Tests of Change and sought the Board's views on the wider implementation of the specification.

Members highlighted concerns about resources available to implement the specification, concerns that Test of Change funding had not continued at the previous rate and highlighted good practice.

COSLA Officers noted they continue to emphasise the challenges local authorities are facing in relation to implementation, particularly resourcing. Board Members offered to provide information on learning from local delivery of the specification to date directly to officers.

The Board:

- i. Noted the current status of the test of change, providing any relevant comment.
- ii. Provided any insight into the wider delivery of the Neurodevelopment Service Specification with a focus on successes and challenges.

9. Joint Strategic Board for Children and Family Mental Health Update

The first formal meeting of the new Joint Strategic Board for Children and Family Mental Health (JSB) took place in February 2024. Following a request from the COSLA Children and Young People's Board this paper provided early insight into the approach to outcomes being taken by the JSB and how work on identified priorities would be likely to progress.

Members welcomed the paper but queried why suicide prevention had not been included and if there would be support available for other family members. COSLA Officers noted links to suicide prevention policy were being built across the design of Board structures and that community supports and services also aimed to offer support to families in many cases.

The Board:

- i. Provided their views on the approach taken by the JSB to date.

10. Student Mental Health Action Plan

Following the recent publication of a suite of mental health strategies, including our joint [Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) and its associated [Delivery](#) and [Workforce](#) plans, Scottish Government are now consulting on a Student Mental Health Action Plan.

Members welcomed the paper and in addition to what the paper outlined noted that:

- Moving between university and home impacts continuity of services for children and young people. It is not clear how the plan supports this issue.
- Emphasis should be placed on pathways within further education institutions ensuring mental health support is embedded rather than an 'add on'.
- Concern was reflected about action 5 and ensuring that the revisions explained by David below are sufficient (that the action does not create additional burden for Local Authorities).

These points will be included in COSLA's response to the consultation.

The Board:

- i. Agreed the positions outlined a paragraphs 7- 8 for inclusion in a response to Scottish Government on the Student Mental Health Action Plan.
- ii. Provided any further views for inclusion in the response.

11. Guidance on the use of Mobile Technology in Schools

This paper shared updated guidance which had been developed by SAGRABIS following the findings in the recently published Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research. Board members noted that mobile devices can be used in schools to support learning and that it was important that this should not be limited by efforts to control the misuse of devices.

Board Members:

- i. Agreed the guidance be published.

12. UNCRC statutory guidance consultation

Following the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act receiving Royal Assent in January 2024, the Scottish Government are undertaking a public consultation on draft statutory guidance on Parts 2 and 3 (section 18) of the Act. This paper sought Board Members' views to inform COSLA's draft response attached at Appendix 1.

Board Members provided a number of comments, including an ask that the introductory section is made more concise, and that language surrounding the need for the guidance to provide greater clarity on the scope of the compatibility duty should be strengthened given the strength of councils' concerns. Officers confirmed that these changes would be incorporated.

The Board:

- i. Provided comment to inform the draft response attached at Appendix 1
- ii. Delegated sign-off of the final response to the Children and Young People Spokesperson

13. National Social Work Agency

Social Work services and the profession are under significant pressure in relation to high levels of demand, the increasing complexity of support people require, and challenges in relation to recruiting and retaining the workforce. The issues facing the profession are widely acknowledged and there is broad agreement on the need to ensure a competent, confident, and valued social work workforce. The National Social Work Agency provides an opportunity to take this forward.

This report provided an update on discussions in relation to the development of a National Social Work Agency and sought views from Board Members on the governance options being considered.

The Board:

- i. Noted the update in relation to the development of options for a future National Social Work Agency and COSLA's engagement in this to date.
- ii. Provided views on the options set out within the report, including risks and benefits.
- iii. Noted that COSLA Leaders will be asked to provide a mandate on these discussions and the preferred option at their April meeting.

14. Appointments to Outside Bodies – General Teaching Council Scotland

One of the COSLA-nominated seats on the General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) Council had become vacant. This paper sought the nomination of a replacement from amongst the COSLA Children and Young people Board membership to fill this seat. Further detail on the role is attached at Appendix 1.

The Board:

- i. Nominated a Children and Young People Board Member to sit on the General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) Council.

Following the meeting, Cllr Iain Sinclair confirmed his interest in representing COSLA on the GTCS and has been confirmed in the vacant seat.

15. Behaviour Action Plan

This paper shared a draft Behaviour Action Plan which has been developed by SAGRABIS following the findings in the Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research. The paper sought to delegate sign off to the Children and Young People Spokesperson, to ensure the Action Plan could be published quickly. However, Members raised a number of issues they thought needed clarified and did not agree to delegate signoff and asked for sight of a more fully developed Action Plan for them to consider at a future meeting.

The Board:

- i. Requested Officers bring a more fully developed Action Plan for their consideration in May 2024.

16. Children and Young People Board Update paper

The Update paper provided an update on areas of work within the board plan undertaken since the COSLA Children and Young People Board last met in February, which did not require a decision but where officers felt it may be useful for Members to note.

The Update Report was noted by Members.

17. Date and Time of Next Meeting

10.30 Friday 24th May 2024