



Glasgow City Council

Education, Skills and Early Years City Policy Committee

**Report by: Divisional Director Roads and Transportation,
Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability**

Contact: Harjinder Gharyal

**EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EARLY YEARS CITY POLICY COMMITTEE –
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF COMMITTEE
EFFECTIVENESS**

Purpose of Report

To advise members of the main findings from the recent independent assessment of the Education, Skills and Early Years City Policy Committee, undertaken as required by the Council's Standing Orders.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- 1) Note the content of the report;
- 2) Agree to the implementation of the action plan, to be led by the Executive Director of Education Services in conjunction with the Chair and Vice Chair; and
- 3) Refer the report for inclusion in the consolidated report to Operational Performance and Delivery Scrutiny Committee.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ☐

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐

consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Standing Order 31 requires that an annual assessment of the work of each Scrutiny Committee shall be carried out to assess the effectiveness of the working of the Committee and to assess any training needs of members and officers. The assessment will be carried out by the relevant Chair in years 1 and 2 and an independent assessment will be carried out in year 3 and every third year thereafter.
- 1.2 This report provides a summary of the year 3 independent assessment of the Education, Skills and Early Years (ESEY) City Policy Committee which was undertaken by the Divisional Director Roads and Transportation, Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability.
- 1.3 The ESEY City Policy Committee has representation from all parties on the Council and the Chair is a member of the SNP and Vice Chair is a member of the Scottish Greens. In addition, there are three co-opted members, two parent/carer representatives and one from the third sector network interface.
- 1.4 The Committee meets every six weeks (outwith recess). The current Chair was appointed by the Council in May 2022 and has been in post for all meetings within this assessment period.
- 1.5 The Terms of Reference for the Committee were approved in May 2022 and are available [here](#). In summary, the remit of the Committee is:

To fulfil the functions of policy development (including consideration of equalities issues) as they relate to Council policies and services for education, skills and early years, but specifically excluding policy decisions relating to children and family social care functions, which are delegated to the Glasgow City Integration Joint Board. These functions include:

- *nursery, primary and secondary school provision and provision for children with additional support needs;*
 - *educational attainment and achievement of children and young people;*
 - *school catchment area reviews;*
 - *schools estate;*
 - *development of school curricula and in-service training;*
 - *provision of educational psychological services for children and young people;*
 - *vocational training and skills for young people;*
 - *education policy affecting the Children's Services' Plan; and*
 - *parent, young people and partnership engagement.*
- 1.6 As part of this review, the Chair, Cllr Campbell, and Vice Chair, Cllr Anderson, were interviewed as were the Lead Officers from Education Services for the Committee: Jean Miller, Sharon McGeever and Carolyn Davren. A number of Committee meetings were also viewed either in person or through viewing the recording.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Generally, the Committee is operating effectively with no major areas of concern identified. Workplans and agendas are agreed in advance and agendas are well managed by Education Services officers.
- 2.2 The Chair and Vice Chair are clear on their role and demonstrate a strong understanding of the papers that are presented at Committee and manage the questions from other Members effectively ensuring that everyone gets a chance to ask questions.
- 2.3 The Committee reflects the political make-up of the Council and is chaired by a Member who is part of the administration. Committee attendance is very high with all Members regularly attending or having a substitute attend in their place.
- 2.4 Reports that are presented on the Committees workplan are broad and wide ranging relevant to its remit. Work related to equalities has been effectively embedded as part of the workplan with a dedicated focus on equality items every second Committee meeting.
- 2.5 The workplan is regularly reviewed and the Committee is provided with an update on the workplan annually. The majority of the papers that have come to the Committee have been policy updates and city-wide performance items rather than policy development.
- 2.6 There is a well established pre-agenda process for the Committee. Agendas are agreed in advance and follow the workplan.
- 2.7 Officer support and attendance at Committee is strong. Attendance by teachers and/or pupils to present on particular items works well encouraging direct feedback and engagement to support discussion on agenda items.
- 2.8 No significant issues were identified with the quality of papers being brought to the Committee, and where questions are unable to be answered by officers at Committee, these are addressed outwith the meeting.
- 2.9 Section 6 identifies a number of areas for improvement to bring consistency to other Committee arrangements or suggest good practice.

3. Role of the Committee

- 3.1 The Committee has a wide and varied remit, and the Chair, Vice Chair and senior officers are clear on the remit of the Committee.
- 3.2 Part of the terms of reference for the Committee identifies the role of the three co-opted members. Given the important perspective and voice that co-opted members can offer to support the role of Committee, the effectiveness of the co-opted members participation and the level of support they receive to progress any discussions or queries out with Committee should be regularly reviewed.

4. Committee papers including Work Plan

- 4.1 Committee papers were found to be of a high standard, although most are asking the Committee to note or consider the contents of the reports.
- 4.2 The Committee workplan is regularly reviewed and a plan for the coming 12 month period is presented at the January meeting. The process enables the Chair to ensure that requests for the additional items to the proposed workplan are received and considered for incorporation.
- 4.3 The annual business plan is reported to Committee which highlights Education actions under each of the council's strategic plan commitments. However, there is no overall workplan for the Committee, which details the areas to be covered by the Committee over the full Council term of five years and the link to the Council Plan and Grand Challenges.
- 4.4 No significant issues were identified with the quality of papers being brought to the Committee, and where questions are unable to be answered by officers at Committee, these are addressed out with the meeting. However good practice from other Committees would be to establish a Question and Answer paper included on the agenda for the next meeting to provide full transparency for all Committee members and would mean that all information was in the public domain.

5. Committee Meetings

- 5.1 The frequency of the meetings, at 6 weekly, worked for officers and the Committee. The Chair, Vice Chair and the senior officers are of the view the current frequency was working well and practical.
- 5.2 Even with a large remit of the Committee, the agendas are well managed across the year to ensure appropriate time is allocated to review a number of updates on complex and detailed areas and members work constructively on a cross-party basis.
- 5.3 Attendance by members has been good with all regularly attending or having a substitute attend of their behalf.
- 5.4 The Chair gave all Members the opportunity to ask questions both from within the Committee room and those attending online.
- 5.5 The Committee appears to be working effectively. Members demonstrate good conduct and continue to develop a strong understanding of issues affecting education in the city.

- 5.6 All Committees must take account of equality issues generally and incorporate equality considerations into their work. Work related to equalities has been effectively embedded as part of the workplan with a dedicated focus on equality items every second Committee meeting.
- 5.7 The hybrid model for meeting participation works well for both officers and the Committee. It was noted that officers tended to attend in person whilst the majority of members attended online. Furthermore, when young people attend Committee meetings to observe or participate in agenda items, consideration should be given to the limited number of members attending in person, as this may detract from the benefits of an in-person visit for the young people.

6 Action Plan

- 6.1 An action plan is included below, detailing areas where improvements could be made to the current arrangements for the ESEY City Policy Committee.

Action Plan

No.	Observation	Recommendation
1	Part of the terms of reference for the Committee, identifies the role of the three co-opted members, who can offer an important perspective and voice to support the role of Committee.	The effectiveness of the co-opted members participation and the level of support they receive to progress any discussions or queries outwith Committee should be reviewed on a regular basis.
2	The annual business plan is reported to Committee which highlights Education actions under each of the council's strategic plan commitments. There is no overall workplan for the Committee, which details the areas to be covered by the Committee over the full Council term of five years and the link to the Council Plan and Grand Challenges.	At the start of each new Council term, a five year workplan should be considered for the Committee which is linked to the Council Plan. This will help ensure that the Committee is kept on track in delivering its role. The five year workplan should be reviewed on a regular basis.
3	Where questions are not able to be answered by officers attending the Committee, the process to follow up on these and ensure they are answered could be improved.	Consideration should be given to adopting the process used by other Committees, by including a Question and Answer paper on the agenda for the next meeting, to provide answers to the questions to improve transparency.
4	The hybrid model for meeting participation works well for both officers and the Committee. It was noted that officers tended to attend in person whilst the majority of members attended online.	When young people attend Committee meetings to observe or participate in agenda items, consideration should be given to the limited number of members attending in person, as this may detract from the benefits of an in-person visit for the young people.

7. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	None arising from this report
<i>Legal:</i>	None arising from this report
<i>Personnel:</i>	None arising from this report
<i>Procurement:</i>	None arising from this report

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2025-29? Please specify.</i>	Not applicable
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<i>What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?</i>	Not applicable
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<i>Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.</i>	Not applicable
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Climate Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:</i>	Not applicable
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<i>What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?</i>	Not applicable
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<i>Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?</i>	Not applicable
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**Privacy and Data
Protection Impacts:**

None arising from this report

8. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- 1) Note the content of the report;
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