

LEADERSHIP PANEL (SPECIAL).

Minutes of special meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 12th May 2011 at 10.00 a.m.

- Present: Councillors Bill McIntosh (Chair), Douglas Campbell, Peter Convery, Hywel Davies, Nan McFarlane, Robin Reid and Margaret Toner.
- Attending: D. Anderson, Chief Executive; H. Garland, Executive Director - Children and Community; E. Howat, Executive Director – Corporate Services; V. Andrews, Head of Legal and Administration; B. McInroy, Head of Service and School Management; D. Robertson, Public Communications Manager; and D. Knight, Committee Services Officer.
- Also Present: Rev. David Gemmell and Mairi Raeburn.
- Apologies: Miss Phil Davey and Pastor Alastair Simmons.
- Also Attending: Councillors John Allan, Hugh Hunter, John McDowall, Helen Moonie, Philip Saxton and Tom Slider.

Community Services - Lifelong Learning.

1. Item for Call-in (two) – Proposed Closure of St. Ann’s Primary School, Mossblown.

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Community Services Standing Scrutiny Panel of 27th April 2011 (Page 292, paragraph 2) when that Panel, having considered the terms of a call-in (two) from the Leadership Panel of 19th April 2011 (Page 240, paragraph 4) in relation to the proposed closure of St. Ann’s Primary School, Mossblown, had decided following review, to refer this matter back to the Leadership Panel recommending that as the educational case had not been proved sufficiently to warrant the closure of St. Ann’s Primary School the status quo should remain.

Councillor McIntosh advised the Panel that Miss Davey, the Roman Catholic Church representative on the Panel had submitted her apologies to this meeting and had requested that the following short statement from the Right Reverend John Cunningham, Bishop of Galloway be read to the Panel:-

“The Catholic Community in South Ayrshire is opposed to the closure of St. Ann’s, based on the evidence presented. We have not been convinced on educational grounds that the school should close.

The Church’s full response to the proposals for St. Ann’s future was submitted on Friday, 25th February 2011.”

The Head of Service and School Management outlined the statutory consultation process and details of the proposed closure of St. Ann's Primary School.

A full discussion then took place and a number of comments and questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to the educational performance of St. Ann's Primary School in comparison to other Primary Schools, the number of pupils currently attending the Primary School and how many pupils were now attending St. John's Primary School, the estimated number of pupils who would attend St. Ann's Primary School should it remain open following the summer recess, the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence in schools, the views of Educational Institute of Scotland and whether a shared campus option had been considered and the Head of Service and School Management responded accordingly.

Councillor John Allan, Chair of the Community Services Standing Scrutiny Panel was then invited to address the Panel who explained how that Panel had reached its decision to refer this matter back to the Leadership Panel recommending that as the educational case had not been proved sufficiently to warrant the closure of St. Ann's Primary School the status quo should remain.

Decided:

- (1) that the recommendation of the Community Services Standing Scrutiny Panel should not be accepted;
- (2) to confirm the decision taken at the meeting of the Leadership Panel on 19th April 2011 as follows:-
 - (a) to note the outcome of the statutory consultation process on the proposed closure of St. Ann's Primary School; and
 - (b) to approve
 - (i) the closure of St. Ann's Primary School at the end of school term in June 2011;
 - (ii) the transfer of all pupils currently registered and enrolled in St. Ann's Primary School to St. John's Primary School; and
 - (iii) the extension of the delineated catchment area for St. John's Primary School to incorporate the current delineated area for St. Ann's Primary School; and
- (3) therefore, that the matter be referred to the Council on 18th May 2011 for ultimate determination.

The meeting ended at 10.30 a.m.