
Report to Council

Date of Meeting: 15th December 2011

Subject: Shared Services: Education Progress Update

Report by: Joint Head of Education

1.0 Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update Council on the progress made on the delivery of the joint education service. It sets out a brief overview of progress to date, and identifies the key steps needed in furthering the development of the shared service.
- 1.2. A joint management structure has been established which provides greater resources than either council previously had at their disposal, but at reduced cost. The management team are clear in their focus on high achievement, attainment, ambition and inclusion, promoting excellence for all.

2.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Council:

- 2.1. Note progress to date in establishing a shared management structure for education services and consequential savings.
- 2.2. Agree the proposed arrangements for reporting performance under the governance policy.

3.0 Considerations

Background

- 3.1. In December 2010, both councils approved recommendations to manage education services jointly within the terms of the Local Government Scotland Act (1973) and to appoint a Head of Joint Education Services. As the Lead Authority for Education, Stirling Council has issued contracts for posts in a new management structure (Appendix 1). For all other purposes both councils have equal rights and responsibilities and both retain the independent governance of schools and nurseries in their local authority area.
- 3.2. The Head of Joint Education Services is accountable to both councils through the Chief Executives and in accordance with existing governance

arrangements and the Scheme of Delegation approved in June 2011. The service has a statutory responsibility for educational quality and outcomes and is accountable to locally elected members and citizens in their area. Arrangements for reporting performance will ensure that elected members are able to fulfil their statutory duties with respect to service provision, Best Value and financial accountability and continuous improvement within the shared service agreement.

Vision and principles

- 3.3. Our vision is one of **high achievement, attainment, ambition and inclusion, promoting excellence for all**. We believe that this vision can and will be realised through our commitment to the principles that underpin the *National Priorities in Education, Curriculum for Excellence, Getting It Right For Every Child* and the *Early Years Framework*.
- 3.4. The rationale of the joint delivery of education services is to improve the performance of the education service in order to deliver better outcomes for all children and young people in Stirling and Clackmannanshire. The service aims to reduce the variation in learning outcomes within and between classrooms and schools by sharing effective practice, strengthening the use of self-evaluation and through robust quality assurance.
- 3.5. There are two key principles that underpin the shared service:
- The two councils will deliver services more effectively and more efficiently by working together;
 - The two councils will deliver a joint education service whilst maintaining governance of their own schools and establishments.
- 3.6. The objective of joint working is to secure service delivery improvements by making use of the combined capacity of each council whilst retaining the current level of accountability through each of the two councils. Essentially, this is a practical management issue. Its success will depend on the skills and creativity of the new joint team and 're-engineering' the way that the service is delivered.

From principles to practice; the journey so far

- 3.7. The most visible change is the establishment of a joint management team. The management structure is part of a new model of delivery: one central team serving two councils. The new team capitalises on the strengths from both Councils. By working together both Councils will benefit from sharing good practice and take advantage of a larger team with a greater breadth of experience. While the team available is now larger than that at either council's disposal, a saving of five posts has been achieved (overall management structure saving £202, 158). As a whole, the team are clear in the need to build strong leadership in a climate of mutual trust, and will use the 'new three-Rs' framework (roles, responsibilities and relationships) to do so.
- 3.8. The joint management team's approach will be to focus on enabling, not providing, doing nothing at the centre which schools and nurseries

(individually or collectively) can do better themselves. In doing so, the team are clear that they will explore opportunities within the joint education service and beyond to form productive networks.

- 3.9. The financial benefits of joint working lie in the service's ability to improve the quality of service delivered against a backdrop of declining financial resources. The quality and efficiency of the service will be improved by streamlining the management team and drawing on the capacity of both organisations to free up resources. This will be supported by alignment of accountability and responsibility within the tradition of self-evaluation. It should be recognised that this work represents the start of fuller integration of the service. However the pace of change is reflective of a desire to avoid compulsory redundancy, and the need to maintain delivery of service during a time of change.
- 3.10. The key roles of the Education Service are to:
- provide strategic direction, including planning school provision and raising expectations in line with local and national priorities.
 - support and challenge schools and nurseries within the improvement agenda including taking action to deal with under-performance, through robust quality assurance
 - ensure equity, fairness and inclusion for all children.

Moving Forward

- 3.11. The Joint Education Service provides an opportunity to look afresh at the most appropriate model of service delivery, adopting best practice from each of the two organisations and developing new effective and efficient approaches. The Service is taking the recommendations from the Christie Commission and the four pillars from Scottish Government into account.

The Christie report recommends:

- Outcomes focus
- Localisation
- Integration
- Co-production
- Accountability
- Transparency

The Scottish Government recommends:

- Integration
- Engagement
- Communication
- Preventative spend

- 3.12. The Joint Education Service is working with head teachers to develop new working practices and principles. It is recognised that we require:
- Extended collegiality: in order to provide more leadership but less management, and facilitate increased contribution from headteachers to the education service's agenda.
 - Scrutiny: of everything we do that is not statutory and challenge of how we deliver our statutory functions. This scrutiny embeds a focus on the impact of our activities on learners
 - An Education team that is: highly efficient and effective; an enabler not a provider; developing professionals who challenge themselves.
- 3.13. This will need a continued strong focus on outcomes associated with, raising attainment and inclusion, alongside robust self-evaluation and quality assurance procedures. Not least, the team will require effective communication. We look forward to reporting the future successes of learners who have been supported by the service.

Future Steps/Focus

- 3.14. Clearly, there remains much to be done and we recognise that the full spectrum of opportunities offered by joint service delivery may not yet be visible to us. In particular, our focus of activity will be on:
- Establishing a confederacy of leadership stretching across and within Stirling and Clackmannanshire , focused on learning experiences and outcomes
 - Developing much better networking across schools and nurseries, both within and across Stirling and Clackmannanshire and beyond
 - Devolving more decision-making to schools and nurseries
 - A proportionate approach to quality assurance

Reporting Arrangements

- 3.15. The Head of Joint Education Services will report directly to the two Chief Executives. Monthly meetings have been established where the two Chief Executives jointly meet with the Head of Joint Education Service.
- 3.16. The Head of Joint Education Services attends meetings of the Corporate Management Team (CMT), council and committee meetings in each council and sits on the Shared Services Programme board. The Service will continue to present the council with papers requiring a decision on any changes to policy.
- 3.17. The Programme Board and Steering group are aware of the importance of communication during this period of change and have put in place a series of measures to ensure information is cascaded immediately after each meeting. The trades unions, from both local authorities, are represented at Programme

Board meetings. Work to improve communication of board decisions is described under separate cover.

- 3.18. The approach taken to deliver education jointly ensures that each council continues to set its own policy frameworks, standards and levels of service. It also enables each council to continue to reflect the priorities for its area and the different characteristics of the localities. Independent governance of schools and nurseries remain the responsibility of each council.
- 3.19. The Annual Standards and Quality Report and other papers as required will be presented by the Education Service to council.

4.0 Sustainability Implications

Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.1. The matters presented in this report were considered under the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment processes and were assessed as not relevant for the purposes of Equality Impact Assessment.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 4.2. The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

Single Outcome Agreement

- 4.3. Adopting the recommendations within this report supports the Single Outcome Agreement goal of making Stirling a place where life-long learning is valued and encouraged and the goal of making services better.

5.0 Financial Details

- 5.1. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes ☒
- 5.2. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes ☒
- 5.3. Detailed work on the costs of services provided by both Councils is underway and will be discussed with the Programme Board and Steering Group in the first instance.

6.0 Exempt Reports

- 6.1 Is this report exempt? Yes ☐ (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No ☒

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) Our Priorities 2008 - 2011 (Please double click on the check box ☒)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our communities are safer | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Vulnerable people and families are supported | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Substance misuse and its effects are reduced | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The environment is protected and enhanced for all | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence | <input type="checkbox"/> |

(2) Council Policies (Please detail)

8.0 Equalities Impact

- 8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?
Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable.

9.0 Legality

- 9.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes ☒

10.0 Appendices

- 10.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

Appendix 1 - Joint Social Services Senior Management Structure

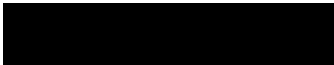
11.0 Background Papers

- 11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)
Yes ☐ (please list the documents below) No ☐

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Approved by

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