

The Highland Council

Education, Children and Adult Services Committee – 21 May
2014

Agenda Item	13.
Report No	ECA/10/14

Additional Support Needs Review

Report by the Director of Care and Learning

Summary

A review of Additional Support Needs in Highland has been undertaken over the past year. This review began with a period of consultation between April and August 2013, with a large number of children, parents, organisations and individual professionals being asked to contribute their views and experiences.

Given the timing of the review, it has been able to take cognisance of the wider structural changes within Highland Council as well as providing a framework in which to sit previously agreed systemic changes that were on-going.

This paper provides a summary of the work of the review and recommendations regarding proposed changes in structures and strategic developments that will improve outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs.

The full report of the ASN Review can be found at
<http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/supportforlearners/>

1. Background

- 1.1 The Additional Support Needs (ASN) Improvement Group takes a strategic lead in monitoring and evaluating service delivery and service improvements, across children's services in Highland, on the basis of the known outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs. It reports to the For Highland's Children Leadership Group. As part of the work of this group, a detailed review of the provisions and structures around the support for children and young people with ASN in Highland schools was initiated in April 2013, with the aim being: *"to identify the range of needs and then identify principles and structures that make the most effective and efficient use of resources to meet these needs and in doing so, achieve the best outcome for children and young people"*.
- 1.2 During the period of consultation from April to August last year, many individuals and groups were invited to contribute their views and experiences. Many chose to do so and the subsequent work that was undertaken was based on the views received from professional groups, parents, children and young people and staff in schools at all levels.
- 1.3 A content analysis was undertaken on the information received during the consultation phase. The views and comments were found to fall into 8 main themes, which were subsequently allocated to 6 subgroups within the review team, which took responsibility for leading on the various workstreams in the review, involving others as appropriate. These were:

1. Providing clear statistical information.
2. Meeting parental expectations and addressing need while there are competing priorities for the ASN budget.
3. Implications for and pressure on families and other Highland Council services and budgets when pupil needs are not/cannot be met in school.
4. Increasing inclusion – raising awareness; changing ethos; enhancing skills.
5. Provision and management of on-site and off-site provision, additional to mainstream schools.
6. Transitions.
7. The role of the ASN Officer (ASNO) in the local management of ASN and their links to the Central ASN Team.
8. Greater consistency in the implementation of policy and good practice, including the Highland Practice Model.

2. Workstream 1 - Providing clear statistical information

2.1 Level and Type of Need

2.1.1 The number and complexity of children and young people identified with ASN across Scotland has been reported to be increasing over the years and this pattern has been noted in Highland also. Some of this increase can be explained by different and better recording methods, rather than changes in incidence. However some groups of children and some types of need have been rising. A detailed literature review of national and local prevalence and incidence figures was undertaken as part of the ASN Review, with a comparison made to the reported levels of ASN across Highland. A summary of this detailed information was provided in a previous report to committee in February 2014.

2.2 Changing Need

2.2.1 The change in complexity of need for some pupils and also a change in the types of need that would have been familiar to see within mainstream schools in the past, makes it more important to consider different training strategies, interventions and a different pedagogy for staff.

2.3 Moderating Need

2.3.1 The process of moderating the assessed level of need to ensure consistency across Highland has continued this session. During session 2013-14, training has been provided to school staff on the identification and assessment of need. Results from the moderation exercise show a greater consistency than last session and would suggest significant progress in this area of work. Further training will be offered during session 2014-15 and the moderation exercise run again in December/January, as in previous years. The 2014 moderation shows almost 70% agreement across Highland, with some schools achieving 100% agreement with the moderators. However the aim is to achieve 90% agreement between the level of need assessed by school staff and that of the specialist staff engaged in the moderation exercise.

2.3.2 The initial discussions with Head Teachers and support staff have taken place across all 4 Areas, to discuss the predicted need and consequent ASN resource allocation for each Area for session 2014-15. This has again shown a rise in need identified at school level. However the identified need is in line with that predicted

through the prevalence study noted above (2.1).

2.4 Allocation of funding

2.4.1 The Council has agreed an ASN allocation model that links funding to a range of criteria, to meet the assessed need in mainstream schools. This takes account of a number of variables, including population size, deprivation and the number of children with level 3 and level 4 plans. The application of this model, taking account of the level of predicted need, indicates a total funding requirement of £25.42m.

2.4.2 The current ASN budget, including an additional £1m agreed by the Council at its March meeting, is around £24.77m. This figure includes the staffing budgets for support for learning teachers, specialist teachers of sensory impairment, pupil support assistants, pupil support services and offsite provision.

2.4.3 This indicates a shortfall of £0.65m against the allocation model, which will be funded. This will involve some realignment of resources across Areas, and it is envisaged that this will enable local managers to be preventative and not reactive, thereby achieving some efficiencies.

2.5 Pupil Database

2.5.1 Although Phoenix e1 is the main pupil database, this is changing in the near future and schools will be using SEEMIS from August 2014. The level of accuracy in the information input by schools in relation to pupils with ASN has not been consistent enough for this database to be used independently as the sole source of information on ASN. Although training has been provided to school teaching and administrative staff, the level of accuracy falls below that which would be considered 'good enough' for statistical and planning purposes. As a result, all information on ASN reported to committee or used for planning purposes within Highland, comes from direct reports from Head Teachers and support staff. This is time consuming and could be avoided if the pupil database was better maintained.

3. Workstream 2 - Meeting parental expectations and addressing need with competing priorities on the ASN budget.

3.1 There is significant research evidence to show the consistent relationship between parental engagement and improved attendance, behaviour and achievement (Harris and Goodall 2007). Schools that are able to successfully engage parents in the planning and support for their children reinforce the feeling that they matter and develop a mutual trust, respect and commitment to working together to improve learning outcomes for their children. Conversely, the evidence shows that when parents are not able or allowed to be equal partners with schools, mistrust builds and the outcomes for children tend to be less positive.

3.2 The Consultation for the ASN Review showed that in Highland parents are being involved much more effectively in their children's education. The information and knowledge they have and the legislative framework we work in nationally has also encouraged parents to have greater expectations of services. This is seen as a positive effect of the openness and greater parental involvement at both national and local levels.

- 3.3 As part of the ASN Review, consultation took place with around 70 parents, in differing situations. While several areas of good practice were noted, not everyone consulted was positive about their experiences and there were many frustrated parents who talked of variation in practice and poor communication. Praise was high where support and transitions were managed well and where parents were involved. However, parents of children with lower level needs felt they were not being taken seriously when raising concerns about their children.
- 3.4 There were many examples given where early involvement, open communication and joint planning resulted in lower levels and more creative support packages that met need at an early stage. Conversely, examples were also given where intervention was not provided at an early stage, resulting in the level of need rising, where trust between parents and school had broken down, and the resultant package of support was both complex and costly, sometimes resulting in a residential placement.
- 3.5 There is therefore a need for further transparency and greater levels of communication with parents to co-construct support for their children/young people. Elected members, voluntary groups and advocacy services are effective in supporting these processes, but parental satisfaction is highest where they are involved with the named person from the very early stages in agreeing the support required for their child.
- 4. Workstream 3 - Implications for and pressure on families and other Highland Council services and budgets when pupil needs are not/cannot be met in school.**
- 4.1 Pupils not in Full-time Education**
- 4.1.1 When pupils are not able to be educated in school on a full time basis, pressure is often significant for families. Some parents reported disruption to their work practices, being regularly called to the school to remove their child on an ad hoc basis. Others reported that this situation resulted in them having to give up work altogether. In other families, pressure came from supporting a child who can be very challenging, without the respite provided by the routine of school attendance.
- 4.1.2 In such circumstances there is often a need to create support packages that meet the pupil's needs in other ways, which can create pressures on other Council budgets e.g. the residential placement budget, the respite care budget, the peripatetic pupil support service budget etc.
- 4.1.3 The review found however that when support was integrated from the earliest stages and coordinated through a child's plan, parents and children/young people experience a more holistic service and are more likely to be able to maintain school attendance.
- 4.1.4 A six monthly audit of pupils who are not able to be supported in full time education has been undertaken since June 2012. Initially this information was only gathered for pupils with disabilities. Since June 2013 however, this has included all pupils where the school is not able to support on a full time basis and more recently, from January 2014, this has included data on preschool children.

- 4.1.5 In June 2012, figures were collated from only two of the three former Council Areas. From this group of schools, 77 pupils with disabilities were reported to be accessing education on a part time basis. (Given that this did not include all schools it is likely to be an underestimate). In the December 2012 audit, data was able to be collated from all three former Areas and this number was 67.
- 4.1.6 In June 2013, 73 pupils with disabilities were reported to be in this group across Highland and in January 2014 this number had increased slightly to 84. However, given the pupil population in Highland, and because the more recent figures include preschool children, these variations are not significant.
- 4.1.7 All children have a right to an education and there is a legal responsibility on the Council that this be appropriate to the assessed needs of the pupils. The review group has recommended that staff ensure that planning and support for children with disabilities is coordinated and integrated, with the full involvement of parents and the children/young people themselves. The review group also recognised that schools with an inclusive ethos and creative, skilled staff are better able to provide curricular experiences that support school attendance.
- 4.1.8 Since June 2013, data has been collated on **all** pupils not in school full time. Data in June 2013 was not available for one large primary school, one large secondary school, a special school and a number of small primary schools, making the data incomplete. From the returns that were received, 217 pupils had some reduction in their timetable. In January 2014, this figure had risen to 252. Once again, given that the recent data includes preschool information and also data for all schools across Highland, this level of variation is not significant. The majority of pupils who did not have a disability are recorded as having social, emotional and behavioural needs (SEBN).
- 4.1.9 Given the experience of some pupils in Highland and the range of pupils who are not currently receiving their full entitlement to education, it remains important to continue with the audit of part time attendance on a six monthly basis. This allows the situation to be monitored and provides feedback to Area Managers, schools and support services, who are working together to support pupils with disabilities and SEBN. The review group has also created a guidance document to support Head Teachers and to provide information on their responsibilities in relation to part time attendance which is available at the weblink below.
<http://www.highland.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/DEDCB806-6036-4992-95FF-00943325D619/0/GuidanceonPupilsnotinFullTimeEducationJuly2013.pdf>

5. Workstream 4 - Increasing inclusion – raising awareness; changing ethos; enhancing skills.

5.1 Inclusive Practice

- 5.1.1 The review group considered that greater awareness and skill in ASN and inclusive practices will lead to more children/young people having their needs met within their local schools and fewer demands for placements out of authority.
- 5.1.2 There is a range of provision to support children with additional needs in Highland and discussions are on-going to consider what additional provision may be required, including the growth of nurture groups in school, the addition of specialist support bases in all new build schools, additional residential provision

and family support centres etc.

5.1.3 Some parents and staff have raised their concerns about the agenda on inclusion, feeling that children with no additional needs or lower levels of need are marginalised or adversely affected, when support is targeted at pupils with ASN. However, much research has shown that inclusion (when done properly), supports the social and emotional progress of children without disabilities and has been found to have a positive impact and facilitates the education of **all** children (Frederickson and Cline 2002, Cairns and McClatchy 2011).

5.1.4 In addressing the need for further training and support in SEBN, there remains a focus on the development of greater levels of emotional literacy in all schools, with an understanding of the importance of promoting positive relationships and emotional coaching. In depth multiagency training in this area has recently been refreshed, with a range of action learning projects evidencing the changes in practice and skills development of the staff who complete this course.

5.2 **Pupil Support Assistants**

5.2.1 A consistent approach to training for pupil support assistants has been taken, with Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs) now having a handbook that details a core CPD requirement, with timescales given for required updates and refresh training in particular areas e.g. Child Protection, De-escalation etc. There is a requirement that all PSAs maintain a CPD log and engage in a Professional Review and Development annually, to support their skills development. The detail of roles, responsibilities and training requirements for PSAs can be found in the PSA handbook:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/234E2C4D-706E-4C6A-9C27-E5D5A5001E9E/0/PSAHandbookreviewedAug13finaldraft.pdf>

6. **Workstream 5 - Provision and management of on-site and off-site provision, additional to mainstream schools.**

6.1 **Good Practice**

6.1.1 Within school settings there is recognition that troubled and troublesome children exhibit both low level and challenging behaviour which impacts both upon attainment and ethos within a school (Scottish Government 2001). Evidence from resilience research suggests that schools need to consider how to provide an environment of security and support for children encountering challenging life circumstances (Doll and Lyon 1998), and a number of reports acknowledge the capacity of schools to enhance protective factors for mental health through providing a supportive environment. (PHI 2003; Meltzer et al 2000).

6.1.2 Behaviour is learned and therefore can be shaped by the social context. The task in Highland is to enable all schools to implement the whole-school approaches of the most successful schools. Priority should be given to prevention and early intervention and so a focus on ethos, positive relationships and developing emotional literacy would be seen as key aspects of the universal support for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs (SEBN).

6.2 **Pupil Support Assistants**

- 6.2.1 The provision of additional support in school for those pupils with **SEBN** who require this, will initially be provided from a PSA or specialist teacher, with an understanding of emotional coaching and behaviour support. Pupil Support Assistants are often the key link between class teachers and pupils who may have an educational package that includes both classroom experiences and other elaborated activities.
- 6.2.2 Although the number of support staff employed in Highland has risen significantly over the past 10 years, classroom teachers have received little training in managing classroom 'teams' and '...poor use of teaching assistants could lead to increased dependency on the part of the learner.' (DfES 2001)

6.3 **Nurture Groups**

- 6.3.1 Currently, a small number of schools in Highland have adopted a nurture group approach. This has been supported by a paper completed during the ASN Review process and placed on the Support for Learning website, to provide guidance to schools on how to establish nurture groups within their schools or Associated School Groups if this would be appropriate to meet local need. These developments are being supported by the Educational Psychology Service, with detailed training in emotional literacy offered to all staff working in nurture provision.
- 6.3.2 There are currently a range of provisions in all Areas, with Intensive Support and Vocational Centres in the North, South and West and varying levels of pupil support and tuition services in all Areas. However, these are currently not integrated within a single support system and practice varies across Highland. Further discussions are required to inform decisions about an appropriate structure and provisions to support pupils with social, emotional and behavioural needs. However the review group is keen to see equity of support and provision across all 4 Areas in Highland.

7. **Workstream 6 - Transitions.**

7.1 **School to post-school transitions**

- 7.1.1 The consultation phase of the ASN Review showed that when transitions were managed well, parents built greater trust in services and better outcomes were achieved for pupils. In some cases these are managed well and it is important to understand what is working and to embed this practice more widely. However, it is clear that transitions at all levels need to be improved, to support better outcomes for children and young people.
- 7.1.2 In Highland, there is a Transitions Group chaired at Chief Executive level, which is reported on in a separate item at this meeting of the Committee. This continues to coordinate the work on Transitions across the Council and NHS Highland and includes a wide range of service managers and strategic leads. This group has recommended training in Transitions Planning at ASG level, targeted at multi-disciplinary groups from both children's and adults' services, to raise the profile of the importance of transitions and to re-engage practitioners in joint work across services in relation to this important area of work.
- 7.1.3 Work is continuing on ensuring better transitions at all stages and in particular the transition from school to post school destinations. An audit has been undertaken

on what services and interventions are available to support pupils in transition and this work is being taken forward, led by the Transitions Coordinator.

7.2 Pre-school to school transitions

7.2.1 The Early Years Collaborative has supported the implementation of the 4 year old Nursery Developmental Overviews as a way of profiling the needs of children as they transfer from nursery to school, supporting early intervention and the transition of information from nursery to P1. It is hoped that this will support better transitions from preschool to school, leading to more effective planning and support in the early stages.

7.2.2 Information from the 4 year old Overviews will be collated centrally in June 2014, to provide information on the number of children entering P1 who have achieved their developmental milestones. Individual overviews will be passed to the appropriate receiving school to support their planning for P1.

8. Workstream 7 - The role of the Additional Support Needs Officer in the local management of ASN and their links to the Strategic ASN Team.

8.1 The management structures for ASN in Highland have been established over a number of years to meet need as it has arisen. There have been particular priority areas of work that have been undertaken by various members of staff, who have then incorporated these duties within their general responsibilities. The ASN Review provided an opportunity to evaluate these roles and to consider current need across Highland, proposing changes where required, to ensure the most effective and efficient ASN management structure and professional leadership.

8.2 The role of the Area Additional Support Needs Officer

8.2.1 Across Highland there are currently 5 Additional Support Needs Officers (ASNOs) and 1 Area Team Leader Support for Learning, who fulfils a similar role, but has a specific focus on primary schools. These jobs were created around 2006 with the intention of supporting the management of ASN at an area level and providing a strategic lead within Areas. They have been focused on support within schools, although the nature of the job requires links to be made with other specialist support services. All of the ASNOs are members of the ASN Improvement Group and contribute to the strategic development of ASN across Highland.

8.2.2 Previously, Area Additional Support Needs Officers were managed within the Area ECS structure. There is however a requirement to consider the needs of children and young people in a holistic way, in line with the Highland Practice Model and wider Care and Learning Service. Work has therefore been undertaken within the ASN Review to scope the current work of the ASNOs and to consider their possible future role within a Care and Learning Service.

8.3 ASN Restructuring in Highland

8.3.1 A workshop took place in December 2013 to consider how wider support services within Education, Culture & Sport and Health & Social Care could be integrated to provide a more holistic support structure for all children and young people. This workshop included members of the ASN Review group and the ASN Improvement Group. A follow-up consultation was undertaken with Secondary School Support

for Learning Principal Teachers in March 2014, with a further workshop arranged in March 2014 for all members of ASN services, including specialist services in health, social care and education.

8.3.2 Practitioners, team leads and managers at these workshops were asked to address several key issues within their discussions:

- How can ASN staff maintain high standards of professional competence, provide a consistent service across Highland and work to identified Areas and Associated School Groups?
- Some professional groups are too small to be spread across Area ASN Teams, but they still need to continue to work with them e.g. Dieticians, Autism Outreach, Interrupted Learners, Moving and Handling Coordinator etc.
- There is a need for all Area staff to be working to the same legal and policy frameworks, providing high quality professional services across Highland.
- There is a need to maintain Council Wide specialist staff with strategic responsibilities for specific ASN areas, supporting continuous professional development at Area and Highland wide levels.
- Support for children and young people with ASN must be consistent across all Areas in Highland, with equity of access to provision and specialist services to meet need (this may mean delivering a service in different ways to meet local need).
- Reduce “silo working”, with ASN services supporting children, families and family teams as appropriate within the Care and Learning Service.

8.3.3 Within the context of the ASN Review and the new Care and Learning Service, the Area ASN Teams would include Allied Health Professionals (occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and speech and language therapists), Educational Psychologists, Preschool Teachers for children with ASN, English as an Additional Language Teachers, and Primary Mental Health Workers. The Highland wide services include Dietetics, the Autism Outreach Education Service, the Sensory Services, the Assistive Technology Service and the Interrupted Learners Service. All services would however have named individuals who could be contacted by an Area ASN Manager as required.

8.3.4 The collated responses and consensus of views from these workshops provided two possible structures for ASN leadership and management across Highland, and further consideration within the Service Management Team, has led to proposals for a structure that involves ASN professional teams to have practice leads who are also managers. Direct line management to be through to Principal Officers and Development Officers, line managed by the Head of Additional Support Services. An Area ASN Manager to have a strong professional link with the Head of Additional Support Services to ensure understanding of strategic priorities, support for the roll out of training and agreed professional practices and to work with the members of the Area ASN Team and coordinate specialist services within a local plan.

8.3.5 This model would sit within the envisaged long term structure for the Care and Learning Area teams, with a Area Manager, who has within his/her team an ASN Manager, a Schools Manager and a manager for Children’s Services. The ASN Manager in this structure **is not** the current ASNO post, but a post with management responsibility for strategic development of ASN services across the Care and Learning Service, ie for Health and Education specialist services and

also linking closely with the Family Teams, LAC services, disability services the Youth Action Service, Young Carers etc. The ASN Manager would also be responsibly for managing an SEBN network within the Area, for managing the ASN budget devolved to the Area, for managing the Coordinated Support Plan process in the Area and for supporting the professional development of the support for learning teams based in schools.

8.4 Sensory Services

8.4.1 Within a similar timeframe of the ASN Review, a detailed review of the Highland Education Vision Support Service was also undertaken. Views of parents and children were considered as part of this and several recommendations were made in relation to the service itself. One of these recommendations was that a single sensory service be created, including both Highland Deaf Education Service and Highland Education Vision Support Service. This recommendation will be taken forward as part of the restructuring of ASN services.

8.5 The Strategic ASN Team

8.5.1 There are currently 4 strategic leads within the ASN Team, these include: the Development Officer Promoting Positive Relationships, the Development Officer Disability, the Development Officer ASN and the ASL Coordinator. These four post holders all report directly to the Head of Additional Support Services. While the responsibilities they hold for strategic development across Highland remain, there needs to be a rationalisation of these roles and a change in responsibilities so that these are more coherent; for example, at present two different Development Officers have responsibilities for different aspects of SEBN support and it would make more sense for this to be coordinated by one.

9. Workstream 8 - Greater consistency in the implementation of policy and good practice including the Highland Practice Model.

9.1 There is a need to ensure greater consistency of good practice across Highland and to monitor the effectiveness of practice in relation to better outcomes for children and young people. The consultation on the ASN Review found inconsistent practice in a number of different areas of practice and also significant variation in knowledge, understanding and skill in relation to policy, good practice and legal responsibilities.

9.2 There is an ASN Manual, providing many examples of good practice, that sits on the Support for Learners Website. <http://www.supportmanual.co.uk/wp-content/assets/manuals/ASN-Highland/index.html> However, an analysis of 'hits' on this site would indicate that this manual is not used as widely as it could be. With the establishment of the Care and Learning Service, the manual will require to be updated to take account of changes in structures and responsibilities. This will provide an opportunity to re-launch the manual with staff across the service, within the Council's updated website.

9.3 Meeting the needs of pupils with ASN must be embedded into the Highland Practice Model and where good practice has been identified, this should be more widely shared. There is a wider review of the Highland Practice Model being undertaken at present and the Highland Practice Model Improvement Group has lead responsibility for coordinating training and developments and for monitoring

continued improvement in practice across the Care and Learning Service. However, during the consultation phase of the ASN Review, concerns were raised by a number of practitioners and by some parents regarding the development and use of child's plans, the process of agreeing lead professional and the process of engaging professionals to support children and young people. In large part, these issues were arising due to a lack of knowledge of the practice model or inconsistent adherence to the model itself.

10. Summary of Recommendations

10.1 On the basis of the work undertaken by the ASN Review Group, the following recommendations have been made:

- A Highland wide training strategy for ASN should be agreed as a rolling programme delivered on an annual basis. This should include training to support school staff to have a more consistent understanding of the use of the ASN Matrix in assessing the level of need; children's rights, inclusion and equality; the deployment and management of support staff; and the Highland Practice Model; as well as providing training for PSAs on the most effective ways of supporting children and young people with SEBN.
- The ASN allocation process should continue to be closely monitored and its application considered through an annual moderation exercise, sampling schools across Highland. Work will continue on matching assessed need with budget and maintaining equity in resource allocation across Highland.
- As part of the move to using SEEMIS as the pupil database in Highland, information on pupils with ASN should be maintained accurately, to facilitate ease of central reporting and strategic planning.
- Open communication and joint planning should be an essential component of all packages of support and care. Services should engage with children, young people and parents on a regular basis to work with them on service design and delivery. Where ideas and views are sought, feedback should be provided on the changes in practice and planning in response to the consultation undertaken.
- Further work is recommended on the support for children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural needs across all age groups, but particularly in secondary education. This should include increasing levels of emotional literacy in staff and pupils, developing a sense of belonging for pupils and promoting positive relationships in schools. Monitoring of the outcomes for children and young people with SEBN should be coordinated at a Council wide level by the Development Officer PPR and at a local level by the Area ASN Manager.
- All Areas should have an SEBN support base with an outreach service, managed by the Area ASN Manager, who will have a strong professional link to the Development Officer Promoting Positive Relationships. An offsite Intensive Support and Vocational Centre should be established for the Mid Area, where currently no such provision exists.
- It is important to ensure that Head Teachers are clear about their roles and

responsibilities and the Council's legal and moral duties in relation to educational provision and reasonable adjustments. The guidance document on pupils not in school full time should be used to provide the basic information required to support this process.

- Practitioners should directly engage with parents/carers, children/young people and other partners to a child's plan to work together to ensure better management of and planning for transitions of all kinds and at all key stages.
- Work on evaluating transitions should continue, including an annual analysis of the effectiveness in supporting looked after children in transition, an annual audit of information transferred from preschool to school for all children with ASN and a proposal to track the destinations and outcomes for young people with complex needs and disabilities for 3 years after they leave school.
- A restructuring of ASN services within the Care and Learning Service should include the coordination of Area ASN Teams by an ASN Manager in each Area, with professional leadership and management of the various specialist services having a direct line management link to the Head of Additional Support Services. This restructuring should include the creation of a single sensory service.
- All 4 proposed Area ASN Managers should meet regularly with the strategic ASN team, to ensure the understanding of strategic priorities and to support delivery at a local level.
- The roles and responsibilities of the strategic ASN team should be realigned to better group strategic responsibilities.
- The Area ASN Manager post will be open to anyone with a professional background in any area of additional support needs. This could be someone with a Health, Education or Social Care background. However, there is a significant level of management support needed to be provided to schools and support for learning teams that will require an understanding of curricular issues, differentiation and good classroom practice. It is therefore recommended that further work is undertaken to consider how budgets might be realigned to provide ASN Officer capacity in each Area, with the level of need in the South requiring more than the other three Areas.

11. Implications

11.1 Resources

11.1.1 The resource issues are set out in this report.

11.1.2 It is anticipated that service restructure can be completed from within the current establishment.

11.2 Legal and Equalities

11.2.1 The review was established to ensure that the Council's equalities duties are fully met and to consider any relevant changes in relation to meeting additional support needs that would further ensure that any pupil, family member or staff member

within a Highland school, who has a protected characteristic, would be treated equally and fairly.

11.2.2 The ASN Review Group has been fully sighted on the Council's legal responsibilities in relation to ASN, equalities and children's rights. These responsibilities have been taken into account within the recommendations made.

11.2.3 In terms of the ASN Review itself, parents and pupils were considered as equal partners in the process of consultation and were given clear opportunities to influence the proposed changes.

11.3 **Climate Change/Carbon Clever**

11.3.1 There are no implications for climate change/carbon clever.

11.4 **Risk**

11.4.1 There is always a risk that service re-structure and re-organisation may not lead to the positive outcomes expected. However, there is a commitment from the ASN Improvement Group to monitor the outcomes for children and young people as a result of the recommendations of this review and to engage in further self-evaluation on an ongoing basis to reduce these risks or to make further recommendations for service improvements as required.

11.5 **Gaelic**

11.5.1 There are no implications.

12. **Recommendation**

12.1 Members are asked to:

- Note the detailed work undertaken within the ASN Review.
- Consider and agree the recommendations from the ASN Review.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 9 May 2014

Author: Bernadette Cairns, Head of Additional Support Services

Background Papers: The full report on the ASN Review can be found at <http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/supportforlearners/>