

The Highland Council
Education, Children and Adult Services Committee
17 March 2016

Agenda Item	12.
Report No	ECAS 25/16

Management of Schools Update

Report by Director of Care and Learning

Summary

This report updates members on progress on the management of schools programme, and seeks approval for specific developments to support early learning and childcare and the development of a business plan for changes to the delivery of catering, cleaning and janitorial services.

1. Background

- 1.1 The October meeting of the Committee considered proposals to enhance support for Head Teachers and to sustain management in schools across the authority. This accords with the 'Highland First' commitment to 'work collaboratively with Headteachers to provide them with the best opportunity to maintain standards, reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and to drive further improvement.'
- 1.2 The Care and Learning Service has established a programme to take this work forward, with six inter-related workstreams. Progress on these workstreams will be reported regularly to Committee.

2. Management of Schools Programme

- 2.1 Members agreed that a new approach to school management was required because of the:
 - Sustained requirement for Head Teachers to maintain quality and lead school improvement.
 - New corporate management systems, placing new demands on school management.
 - Pressures on time to manage, especially for Primary Head Teachers who are also class committed
 - Challenges filling Head Teacher and other management posts.
 - Continued challenges presented by the Highland geography.
- 2.2 Headteachers need sufficient time to manage the school and lead learning and teaching. They indicate that they feel increasingly isolated, and that management support should be enhanced to enable them to properly fulfil their remit.
- 2.3 The range of ideas that were agreed for further consideration included the development of best practice management structures, to reflect new school clusters around new delivery models and natural communities. This builds on existing thinking about the organisation of the curriculum, and particularly the senior phase, greater collaboration across schools and colleges, and the enhancement of distance learning.
- 2.5 Accordingly, six inter-related workstreams have been established, and they will run

as projects with action plans, reporting back to the main programme group, which is chaired by the Director of Care and Learning and includes Head Teacher and Parent Forum representation.

3. Workstream 1 – Curriculum Delivery (led by Head of Education)

3.1. This workstream will focus on the approach and develop new innovative ways of curriculum delivery, to suit the Highland context. The following projects will be explored and developed:

- Best practice structures for the shape of the school week in secondary and/or primary
- Best practice timetabling formats across key school groupings
- To develop a core curriculum for highland schools
- To set up and development a virtual school in Highland
- To increase the use of external online course in Highland schools
- To increase the level of partnership work between schools, college and employers
- To maximise the impact of ICT on the delivery of learning and teaching.

3.2 Shape of the school week and timetabling formats

3.2.1 The key objective here will be to ensure that schools maximise the opportunities provided by the introduction of the 33 period week over 4.5 days.

3.2.2 The following work has been carried out:

- A review of schools that have moved to a 33 period week has begun.
- A small number of schools will move to a 4.5 day week for session 2016-17.
- An engagement process will begin from May to look at the benefits of implementing the 4.5 day week in primary schools.
- A strategic timetabling group will be set to explore potential benefits of this approach. A college representative will be invited to join this group.

3.3 Development of the core curriculum

3.3.1 The objective here is to provide a revised staffing allowance for all secondary schools.

3.3.2 The following work has been carried out:

- Head Teachers were interviewed regarding the barriers to curricular provision in their schools.
- A report has been produced which proposes an allocation model for minimum staffing levels in schools.
- A review of the existing Devolved Management staffing formula has begun.

3.4 Increasing the number of external online course and the development of the virtual school

3.4.1 The objective here is to maximise the opportunities provided by increasing the number of external online courses and the development of the Highland virtual school.

3.4.2 The following work has been carried out:

- The use of Scholar in schools has been reviewed.
- New technology has been put in place to improve the delivery of existing online

courses.

- The success level of existing online courses provided by colleges has been reviewed.
- Benchmark targets are being established to measure the future development of external online courses.
- The concept of the Highland Virtual School has been drafted.
- Partnership arrangements are being explored with other authorities around the development of the virtual school.
- Plans for putting in place new virtual courses for session 16-17 are now being finalised.
- Initial discussions with a partner authority, to develop collaborative programmes around this activity.

3.5 Partnership work between schools, colleges and employers

3.5.1 The objective here is to capitalise on the opportunities provided by the Developing Young Workforce (DYW) initiative to provide greater provision in the Senior school.

3.5.2 The following work has been carried out:

- A strategic implementation plan has been produced for the implementation of DYW.
- The 16+ team has been restructured to ensure the effective implementation of the DYW plan.
- Schools have begun to put in place strategies for developing stronger relationships with colleges and employers.

3.6 ICT in Learning and teaching

3.6.1 The objective here is to ensure the provision of one to one devices in schools will be supported by appropriate staff development opportunities which will maximise benefits for pupils.

3.6.2 The following work has been carried out:

- Initial training has been provided by ICT strategy officer to a number of schools.
- A blog has been set up for staff to share their use of Chromebooks.
- Discussion has been taken place at the strategic leadership group to provide training opportunities for staff in schools on the use of Chromebooks.

3.6.3 A full staff training programme will be produced for implementation in session 2016-17.

3.6.4 Two secondments will be advertised, to take forward distance learning, and transformational work with teachers.

4. Workstream 2 - Management structures and school groupings (led by Head of Education)

4.1 This workstream will focus on the concept of what defines a school – e.g. cluster, 3-18 models etc. It will set out an approach to grouping schools which will involve them being managed differently, and provide the means to sustain a greater number of schools in their communities. The following projects will be explored and developed:

- To establish school groupings which will allow Highland to provide a sustainable education model for Highland.

- To review the cluster management model.
- To set out frameworks for a variety of school management structures age ranges – 3-15, 3-18, 15-18, 12-18 & 3-11. These frameworks will include making best use of a revised administrative support, and the new model of janitorial services.
- To set out new staffing parameters for primary staffing and establish the concept of Early Level teaching.
- To look at staffing models for the special schools.

4.2 **Establishing Revised School Groups**

4.2.1 The objective here is to establish school groupings which will allow the authority to deliver sustainable educational provision across Highland. The approach will maximise the number of schools that are educational viable. However this approach will require a revised management approach will be provided by approximately 31 fewer Head Teachers.

4.2.2 The following work has been carried out:

- A draft school grouping list has been produced. The list has been discussed at the education management meeting and by staff at area level.
- An extended consultation engagement should now commence with communities.

4.3 **Reviewing Cluster Management Model**

4.3.1 The objective here is to ensure that future Cluster Management arrangements in Highland schools build on the best practice that currently exists in school and delivers effective management across the cluster schools.

4.3.2 The following work has been carried out:

- A review of existing arrangements has been carried out. An initial report has been produced for the Head of Education.
- Cluster Management procedures from other authorities has been investigated.
- Leadership development has been identified as a key priority and this will now be taken forward by the strategic leadership group.
- Revised consultation procedures have been produced. A significant aspect of the new arrangements will be that while there will be a requirement for officers to consult key stakeholders regarding possible arrangements, strategic decisions will be required to confirm the final model.

4.4 **School Management Structures**

4.4.1 The key objective here is to produce school management structures which suits schools across Highland.

4.4.2 The following work has been carried out:

- School management models from other authorities have been investigated.
- Existing Highland structures are been reviewed.
- A draft management template has been produced.
- The Head of Education has worked through the template for two exemplar ASGs.

4.4.3 The Tain and Plockton ASGs will scope the possible management options that could be pursued in their local context, before considering how this might roll out across the authority.

4.5 **Review of Primary staffing parameters**

4.5.1 The key objective here will be to produce revised primary staffing parameters which will acknowledge the current context of Highland primary schools and takes into consideration the development of early level classes.

4.5.2 The following work has been carried out:

- Discussions with Head Teachers and Area Officers have been carried out
- The current staffing model has been updated and is now in use.
- A revised model has been produced and will now go through consultation with the LNCT and the Head Teacher representative group.

4.6 **Staffing models for special schools**

4.6.1 At the moment there is no agreed formula for staffing the special schools. Staffing levels are provided on a historical and demand driven basis. This arrangement makes the setting and management of budget levels for the special schools difficult, and it can lead to inconsistencies across the schools. The objective here will be to agree an approach to staffing in the special schools which is transparent and meets the needs of the young people.

4.6.2 The work carried out so far is as follows:

- Staffing models used in other authorities has been investigated
- Initial scoping work has been carried out by the Head of ASN to trial possible models for Highland schools.
- Initial discussions have taken place with Area ASN Managers and Head Teachers.

5. **Workstream 3 - Support to schools** (led by Head of Resources)

5.1 This has consisted of two main strands of activity: school janitorial services; and school office and administrative support. This has now been extended to include a possible new model of delivery for cleaning and catering services, as well as janitorial services (except in PPP schools), as described below.

5.2 It is recognised that property management, health and safety, finance, staffing and administration, represent critical areas where Head Teachers require support to fulfil their responsibilities. With an appropriate support structure in place, Head Teachers can delegate many activities to other members of staff, allowing their focus to be on the management of learning and teaching.

5.3 Both of these areas have been the subject of separate reviews over the past 12 months, with updates provided to Committee, and most recently in principle agreement reached around a new model for janitorial services provision.

5.4 It had been intended that there would be a report to this Committee on the Business Support arrangements, trialled at Ardnamurchan and Charleston ASGs, but that has not been possible due to staff sickness. The report will be provided at the next meeting of the Committee. The lessons learned in those trials continue to be considered as part of the management review.

5.5 With the strategic principles for a new janitorial services model already agreed by Committee, the focus of this area of activity has been to develop resource

allocation models which match available resources.

- 5.6 The February budget meeting agreed an additional £0.1m for janitorial services. As this is equivalent to around £0.15m less than current expenditure, there will need to be some service reduction, to be achieved through the acceptance of voluntary redundancy requests.
- 5.7 In planning for the 2016/17 budget, consideration has been given to the possibility of a new delivery model for janitorial services, involving High Life Highland (HLH), and also including catering and cleaning services.
- 5.8 In 2014, HLH had a staff presence in 13 of the 29 secondary schools, managing the community lets of each facility on behalf of the Council. Following a report to the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee on 28 August of that year, HLH was asked to review the processes for managing the community lets across the region and to consider adopting responsibility for this function in all 29 secondary schools.
- 5.9 To complete this review, HLH staff met with all Head Teachers in schools where there was no existing HLH staff presence. At the same time, the Council had created the role of Change Project Manager to undertake the review of janitorial and facilities management provision in all schools. Through liaison with this officer, Head Teachers and staff within Care and Learning, it became apparent that the two reviews were linked and that greater efficiencies could be achieved through a co-ordinated approach to both. As an outcome of the first phase of this review process, the community lets of a further 5 secondary schools will now be managed by HLH, giving a current presence in 18 out of 29 secondary schools.
- 5.10 As part of the budget planning for 2016/17, the Council's Budget Team asked for further work to take place, to consider the extension of these arrangements, and the viability of management of Catering, Cleaning and Facilities Management by HLH. Accordingly, the Chief Executive has asked the Board of HLH whether it would consider agreeing the transfer of the Catering, Cleaning, Facilities Management and Janitorial Services (except in PPP schools).
- 5.11 It is proposed that Members agree this approach in principle, to enable the development of a full business case, to be considered at the May 2016 meeting, with a view to the transfer of these services by October 2016.

6. Workstream 4 - Early Learning and Childcare (led by Senior Manager, Early Years)

6.1 Early Years developments regarding the expansion of flexibility and the improvements to management structures to support Head Teachers, were included in the November report to Committee, and resulted in the approval for the establishment of 19 Childcare Manager posts across the larger nursery settings in Highland.

6.2 Progress to date with expansion of flexibility of delivery of Early Learning and Childcare in all Local Authority settings from August 2016

6.2.1 As reported in the January update, following a review of the level of expected activity, 13 posts of Childcare Manager were released for advert. The recruitment process is ongoing.

- 6.2.2 Six Information Workshop sessions for all head teachers and nursery staff were held in January, prior to nursery enrolment week. These were well attended and generated a lot of interest amongst staff, generating further thinking about the possibilities for more flexible delivery of early learning and childcare in their own school settings. Once the enrolment information is collated and local discussions are held, then the pattern of delivery from August 2016 in each school will be determined.
- 6.2.3 In some rural schools, the numbers are such that taking an Early Level approach (i.e. of having 3 and 4 year olds and P1 in an early level class) is of more benefit educationally, socially and economically. In these classes, there would be a P1 teacher and at least one, if not two, Early Years Practitioners. With the tendency for numbers in rural schools to fluctuate at different stages from year to year, this provides an opportunity to stabilise the teacher staffing complement.
- 6.2.4 There is one pilot Early Level class operating this session in Lairg, and it is anticipated that this development will be ready to roll-out in session 2016/17. Work is currently underway to determine exactly where these classes could be established.

6.3 Curricula Support for all Early Years settings

- 6.3.1 Curricula support to local authority and partner centre settings has been co-ordinated by the Quality Improvement Officer (Early Years) and delivered by a team comprising 2 Early Years Education Support Officers and 21.5 FTE Principal Teachers (Pre-school) posts.
- 6.3.2 The Principal Teacher role is the most recent initiative to support quality and curricula development. However, these posts have not proved attractive (and accordingly the role has not proved effective) in part because the posts are not regarded as helpful with career progression, and they have been difficult to fill across the authority - there are currently only 16.3 FTE in post.
- 6.3.3 In Associated School Groups where there is no Principal Teacher, Schools are generally given 0.1FTE of management time to provide capacity within the school management team to support the curricular delivery of early learning and childcare. Where there is no Principal Teacher for partner providers, support is more ad hoc in nature, and is provided from the central team as resources allow.
- 6.3.4 Reviews of curricula support to early learning have been taking place across Scotland, in line with the enhanced number of hours of early learning and child care, and also as a consequence of the introduction of new child care qualifications up to degree level. It is critical that we continue to modernise early years services, and have systems that enable nurseries to be open for longer in order to meet the demands of working parents. This means greater flexibility, including in our workforce, and new staffing arrangements that support children's education and wellbeing to provide the necessary flexibility that parents want.
- 6.3.5 It is therefore proposed that the Quality Improvement Officer (Early Years) post and the 21.5 FTE Principal Teacher (Pre-school) posts be deleted, and that support to 134 local authority and 59 partner centre settings is delivered through a range of measures, as follows:
- Creation of a team of 10 Early Years Education Support Officers – 9 Area

based posts and 1 Highland wide Gaelic post. Line management of these posts would be through the Quality Improvement Team.

- Childcare Manager posts in 13 schools where the range of early learning and childcare services being delivered is greatest. Postholders will be part of the School Senior Management Team.
- 0.1fte management time to all other double session nurseries (46 in total). This has been in place since August 2014.
- 0.1fte management time to single session nurseries where the roll numbers are too great to consider an Early Level class approach (27 in total)
- Consideration of establishment of Early Level class options in other settings – thereby providing teacher input to these settings.

6.3.6 These measures would achieve the necessary saving of £0.2m, set out in the 2016/17 Council budget.

7. Workstream 5 - Workforce planning and recruitment (led by Workforce Planning & Staffing Manager)

7.1 This workstream is progressing the following activities:

- Generic Advertising of Primary posts in early 2016 to attract current probationer teachers. Internal advert took place interviews held and 112 teachers appointed, will be allocated to posts next term as part of primary staffing exercise.
- Advertising of Secondary posts early in 2016 to attract current probationer teachers. This is progressing and being monitored as part of current recruitment freeze.
- Increased use of Social Media as part of advertising strategy.
- Possible high profile media campaign to recruit the best teachers. Initial discussions have been held with TES and Trinity Mirror Group regarding a possible campaign next term.
- More creative advertising such as on buses, local radio etc.
- More targeted adverting, as one size does not fit all across Highland.
- Encouraging the participation of Parent Councils in highlighting vacancies in their schools (as per Scoraig and Strathconon).
- Possible expansion of the Distance Learning for Teachers course.
- Possible removal of restrictions around the Removal and Relocation Policy.
- Issues around accommodation in rural areas and how informal assistance provided by Head Teachers could be formalised.
- The possibility of central funding for PGCE courses to be held locally for Highland Council staff.

8. Workstream 6 - Workforce planning and staff development (led by Quality Improvement Officer)

8.1 This workstream is focussing on:

- Leadership strategy, from student to experienced Head Teacher
- Ensuring that leadership, support, induction and continuing professional development are linked to corporate programme
- Creating pathways for each group linked to continuing professional development
- Using mentoring and coaching to support all levels of development - coaching group rolling out continuing professional development for coaching within ASGs

4. Implications

- 4.1 Resource issues are set out in this report.
- 4.2 Any new legal, equalities, climate change/carbon clever, risk, Gaelic or rural implications will be identified and reported as part of regular updates to Committee.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 Members are invited to note this update on progress on the management of schools programme, and to agree:
 - I. the further establishment of early level classes where appropriate
 - II. the proposed restructuring of curricula support to early learning and childcare
 - III. the development of a full business case for the transfer of catering, cleaning and janitorial services to High Life Highland, to be considered at the May 2016 meeting.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 8 March 2016

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