

DELIVERING EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY IN SCOTTISH EDUCATION

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This purpose of this report is to advise Members of the recently published Delivery Plan for Scottish Education and the implications arising from the Delivery Plan for both the Council and Education Services.
- 1.2 **Education Scotland Act:** The Education (Scotland) Act 2016 was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 2nd February 2016 and introduced provisions in relation to school education covering new statutory duties to raise attainment and address educational inequalities of outcome for pupils. The Act also contains further provisions for Education as reported to Community Services Committee on 10th March 2016.
- 1.3 **The National Improvement Framework (NIF):** Following the publication of the first draft of the National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education in 1st September 2015 by The First Minister, the Scottish Government carried out an extensive national consultation involving a wide range of stakeholders (Argyll and Bute's response to the consultation was approved by the Council at its meeting in November 2015). Following the conclusion of the consultation the Scottish Government produced the revised National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education to be incorporated into Education Act

This paper provides the Committee with further information on the statutory intentions of the Scottish Government to deliver the new National Framework, and in particular outlines the expectations of Government for Councils, Education Services, school and their partners. It notes the publication of "Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education: a Delivery Plan for Scotland" (Appendix A - [Hyperlink](#)) in June 2016 and provides an outline for Committee of some of the actions that Education Services are required to take forward to address the new statutory duties.

1.4 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The report recommends that Community Services Committee:

- a) Note the publication of “Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education: a Delivery Plan for Scotland”;
- b) Note the implications for Education Services in meeting the requirements set out within the Delivery Plan, and
- c) Note that a progress report will be presented to a future Community Services Committee meeting.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Education Scotland Act: The Education (Scotland) Act 2016 was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 2nd February 2016 and introduced provisions in relation to school education covering new statutory duties to raise attainment and address educational inequalities of outcome for pupils. The Act also contains further provisions for Education as reported to Community Services Committee on 10th March 2016.

2.2 The National Improvement Framework (NIF): Following the publication of the first draft of the National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education in 1st September 2015 by The First Minister, the Scottish Government carried out an extensive national consultation involving a wide range of stakeholders (Argyll and Bute's response to the consultation was approved by the Council at its meeting in November 2015). Following the conclusion of the consultation the Scottish Government produced the revised National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education to be incorporated into Education Act

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3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The report recommends that Community Services Committee:

- a) Note the publication of "Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education: a Delivery Plan for Scotland" (Appendix A - [Hyperlink](#));
- b) Note the implications for Education Services in meeting the requirements set out within the Delivery Plan, and

- c) Note that a progress report will be presented to a future Community Services Committee meeting.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 On 27th June 2016, John Swinney, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills announced the publication of a Delivery Plan setting out the steps that the Scottish Government will take to achieve improvements across Scottish Education in order to raise the attainment gap and make demonstrable progress in closing the gap in attainment between our least and most disadvantaged young people.

The ambition articulated in the delivery plan notes a commitment to a publicly owned and run, comprehensive education system, not a market system, which supports every child to achieve. Further reflecting that the quality of teaching and school leadership are the most important in school factors in a child's outcomes Scottish Government commits to ensuring that they will do everything they can to support head teachers and teachers and to empower them. Focussing on providing them with the responsibilities and resources to make the best decisions for children and young people. At the same time ensuring that the overall funding for education is transparent and protected.

Engagement of parents in their child's learning and the life and work of the school is, similarly a key priority within the delivery plan, with a commitment that parents and teachers will become key decision makers.

- 4.2: The Plan outlines the steps the Scottish Government will take to achieve these improvements, building on the work contained within the National Improvement Framework (published January 2016), and addresses the recommendations of the OECD review.

The Delivery plan identifies four key areas under which priorities and actions are grouped:

- Closing the attainment gap;
- Further developing the curriculum;
- Empowering teachers, head teachers and communities, and
- Continued implementation of the National Improvement Framework.

Addressing these four areas, the plan sets out the actions required to substantially close the attainment gap over the next five years and deliver a world class education system in Scotland.

The plan confirms that Scottish Government will:

- Focus on closing the attainment gap by extending the reach, scope and investment of the Scottish Attainment Challenge over the next five years;

- Launch a governance and funding review to examine the system changes required to empower schools, devolving funding and more decision-making to schools and communities;
- Simplify Curriculum for Excellence and significantly streamline the current range of curriculum guidance for teachers, and introduce a simpler set of key resources for the profession by January 2017;
- Invest in teachers and their skills to ensure we have highly qualified and empowered staff;
- Move from a “culture of judgement” to a “system of judgement” to provide robust information on the education system to support improvement.

The plan illustrates numerous actions to be delivered by Scottish Government, Local Authorities and Schools: Head Teachers and Teacher, Practitioners, Parents, Communities and Children and Young People in some circumstances with extremely tight timescales.

These include:

- Publication of the financial review of ELCC: September 2016;
- Use of the NIF data to develop a National Improvement Plan on Parental and Family Engagement.
- Development of proposals for a fair and transparent national funding formula: March 2017.
- Building on the Scottish Attainment Challenge, where £100 million will go direct to Head Teachers from April 2017.
- New training and induction programme for Childminders: September 2016
- Governance review alongside Programme for Government, including encouragement of school clusters and creation of new educational regions: launch in September 2016
- Support the development and expansion of school clusters and increased regional working throughout 2017-18.
- Support the continuing growth of Gaelic Medium Education in schools, implementing new rights for parents and providing more resources for teachers and learners: February 2017.
- Introduce a new Education Bill in the second year of the Parliament to address the imbalance of legal responsibilities for delivering education and raising standards which sit largely with authorities, not with schools and teachers. Consultation on the Bill will be held early in 2017.

4.3: Significant attention is being given to the NIF, the recently published Delivery Plan, and the resulting implications for Education Services in the immediate future. Action being taken by Education Services to address these includes:

- Presentation of revised documentation/guidance and supporting information during planned Head teachers meetings;

- Continuing engagement with the Attainment Challenge and Innovation programmes, including the development of joint working with our Attainment Advisor
- Revision of improvement planning materials for use by schools to ensure adherence with Education Scotland guidance;
- Participation in the initial submission of Literacy and Numeracy statistical data to Scottish Government;
- Preparation for the introduction of standardised assessments;
- Facilitating visits from Education Scotland to support the focused review of the demands placed in schools in relation to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), and
- Further developing approaches to engagement with Parent Councils. This includes the revision of the Authorities Parental Engagement Strategy.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This paper provides Community Services Committee with further information on the statutory intentions of the Scottish Government to deliver the new National Framework, and in particular the expectations of Government for Councils, Education Services, school and their partners. It notes the publication of “Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education: a Delivery Plan for Scotland” (Appendix A - [Hyperlink](#)) in June 2016 outlining the actions that Education Services will be required to take forward to address the new statutory duties as outlined in The Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy – The development of the National Framework for Scottish Education supports the central purpose of the Scottish Government and the delivery on the national outcomes. The framework would support delivery of SOA Outcomes 1 and 3.
- 6.2 Financial – Potential resource implications arising from the introduction of the Delivery Plan. Specifically around the planned revision of funding methodologies for schools from Scottish Government. This cannot be quantified until the exact detail of the statutory guidance is known.
- 6.3 Legal – It is anticipated that the core components of the delivery plan will be put on a statutory basis through the Education (Scotland) Act 2016. This will apply further, new statutory duties on local authorities.
- 6.4 HR – Potential HR implications arising from this report. However, until further details are provided by Scottish Government these cannot be quantified.
- 6.5 Equalities – One of the two main tenets of the Scottish Government’s vision for Education is to address educational inequalities.

- 6.6 Risk – No implications arising directly from this report
- 6.7 Customer Service – The Delivery Plan is clear around the expectations for parental involvement and engagement which should provide positive benefits in supporting their role in their children’s education.

Ann Marie Knowles
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Appendix A: Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education: A Delivery Plan for Scotland <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00502222.pdf>

References:

National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education (January 2016)
<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00491758.pdf>

National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education – Interim Framework Report (January 2016)
<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00491743.pdf>