

EDUCATION VISION AND STRATEGY

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of the paper is to present the revised Education Vision and Strategy for Council consideration and approval. *Our Children, Their Future* has been prepared by Education Services to allow the Service to effectively respond to the changing national and local policy contexts and, in doing so, ensure the future delivery of an Education Service which supports our children, young people and communities to achieve the best possible outcomes.

The strategy sets out:

- The policy context;
- The key ambitions for our children, young people and communities;
- The Education vision;
- An overview of the Education Services Strategy;
- Cross cutting themes;
- Our 6 Key objectives;
- How services will action the strategy;
- How we will report on outcomes, and
- The proposed approach to monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the Education Strategy.

Prior to wider consultation, the initial document was presented to Community Services Committee in June 2016 with a further updated version presented for consideration on 8th September 2016. Community Services Committee noted the Vision and Strategy and requested that the Vision and Strategy be issued to all Elected Members to provide a further opportunity for further comments to be provided.

Consultation has now taken place with Educational Establishments, ELCC settings, Parent Council members, 3rd sector and voluntary organisations. This information has been considered and collated to inform the final version of *Our Children, Their Future* presented with this paper.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Council:

- (1) Note the preparation of the revised Education Vision and Strategy;
- (2) Note the consultation processes undertaken by Education Services as an integral part of the preparation procedures of the Education Vision and Strategy, and
- (3) Approve the Education Vision and Strategy.

EDUCATION VISION AND STRATEGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The purpose of the paper is to present the revised Education Vision and Strategy for Council consideration and approval. *Our Children, Their Future* has been prepared by Education Services to allow the Service to effectively respond to the changing national and local policy contexts and, in doing so, ensure the future delivery of an Education Service which supports our children, young people and communities to achieve the best possible outcomes.

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- Our 6 Key objectives;
- How we will report on outcomes, and
- The proposed approach to monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the Education Strategy.

Prior to wider consultation, the initial document presented to Community Services Committee in June 2016 had been prepared by members of Education Services supported by feedback from an initial reference group. Community Services Committee noted the Vision and Strategy and requested that it be issued to all Elected Members to provide a further opportunity for further comments to be provided.

A consultation process was undertaken with a wide range of education stakeholders including: Educational Establishments, ELCC settings, Parent Council members, 3rd sector and voluntary organisations and elected members. This information was fully considered and collated to inform the final version of *Our Children, Their Future* presented with this paper.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Council:

- (1) Note the preparation of the revised education Vision and Strategy;
- (2) Note the consultation processes undertaken by education Services as an integral part of the preparation procedures of the Education Vision and Strategy, and
- (3) Approve the Education Vision and Strategy.

5.0 DETAIL

5.1 Consultation Process

An initial reference group considered *Our Children, Their Future*, utilising a number of key questions to ascertain their views of the strategy, as well as presenting suggested changes or alteration, with a full consultation taking place from May to July 2016. Following presentation to Community Services Committee on 8th September the revised version of the Vision and Strategy was issued to all elected members for their further review and comment.

28 collated responses to the consultation have been received. These responses were in addition to the extensive comments from the Central Education Team which were used to inform the shaping of the draft document which was then circulated for consultation.

Consultation responses received included:

- Focus group comprising a Secondary Head Teacher, a Primary Head Teacher, a Community Learning and Development worker and an Education Officer;
- Secondary Head Teacher Focus Group;
- Local Area Head Teacher meetings;
- Argyll and Bute 3rd Sector Interface;
- Early Learning and Child Care settings;
- Primary Schools;
- Parent Councils;
- Youth Enquiry Services;
- Argyll and Bute Adult Learning and Literacy Services;
- Educational Psychology Service, and
- One individual response.

5.2 High Level Messages

The key high level messages arising from the consultation responses were follows:

- Overall, the responses to the strategy are positive with this clear statement of direction for Education Services being greatly welcomed;
- 60% of the collated responses reflect the title of the document as being appropriate. Alternative suggested titles for the document included:

- *Planning the Future in the Present*
 - *Learning for Success*
 - *Learning for the Future*
 - *Better Education, Better Lives*
 - *Our Children, Everyone's Future*
 - *Your Children Their Future*
- Many respondents noted that the language contained within the Vision and Strategy should to be simplified in places and sentences shortened;
 - Many highlighted the need for a shorter, clearer version to make this document accessible to parents and some other stakeholders, as well as considering a way of making this strategy accessible and meaningful to children and young people;
 - Many respondents request increased information on how the strategy will be translated in to practice across the whole Education Service, how it will be monitored and how impact will be identified;
 - Concerns were expressed over the meaningful delivery of this strategy given financial constraints and reducing services, and
 - While continuous improvement is viewed as important, some schools urged caution over managing the number of changes or new developments expected.

5.3 Response to the consultation

Following a thematic analysis of all responses, changes have now been made to *Our Children, Their Future*. This has included shortening sentences and further explaining more technical language. As most respondents were positive about the title, the document will continue to be named *Our Children, Their Future*.

More explicit information on *Planning to Deliver Improved Outcomes* was added at section 8. This details that Education Services, in delivering the Education Vision and Strategy will:

1. Take action to deliver the key ambitions for our children, young people and communities;
2. Monitor progress against clear measures which are found in Council, Service and School Improvement Plans, and
3. Sustain continuous improvement and address agreed areas for further development highlighted through self-evaluation.

5.4 Next steps

The following action will now be taken:

- Subject to Council approval, the final version of *Our Children, Their Future* will be formatted and published electronically and in hard copy,
- The information in section 5 that provides an overview of the cross cutting themes, key objectives and associated priority actions will be developed as a single page strategy, and produced in poster form, and

- Work will now be progressed to produce a summary version of the strategy for parents along with a format that is accessible to children and young people.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 This Strategy presents an opportunity for Education Services to effectively respond to the changing National and local policy contexts to ensure the future delivery of an Education Service which supports our children, young people and communities to achieve the best possible outcomes. It is important that *Our Children, Their Future* is shared widely, understood by all and used as a working document to shape the delivery of education services across all areas.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Policy: This strategy presents an opportunity for the Education Service to effectively respond to the changing policy context at both National and local levels.
- The strategy makes an effective contribution to SOA outcomes 3 and 4.
- 7.2 Financial: None
- 7.3 Legal: The council has a responsibility to discharge its obligations in relation to education legislation, as prescribed in both the Education Act 2016 and in doing so seek to do this to a high standard.
- 7.4 HR: None
- 7.5 Equalities: The Education Vision and Strategy takes account of the statutory duties on local authorities to plan to reduce educational equalities of outcome.
- 7.6 Risk: None
- 7.7 Customer Service: None

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Final Draft Our Children, Their Future