ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

EDUCATION SERVICE

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

10 JUNE 2021

EDUCATION CHANGE PROGRAMME – OVERVIEW REPORT

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The Scottish Government has identified Education as its top priority service in recent years and it has been the focus of a wide range of policy reviews with a clear ambition to improve education and close the poverty related outcome gap with John Swinney, Depute First Minister stating in 2018;

'Closing the attainment gap is this government's number one priority. Every child should have the best possible start in life, no matter their background.'

1.2 The Scottish Education policy direction as set out in Scottish Government National Improvement Framework provides challenge and legislation to Scottish Education to raise attainment with a focus on improving learning outcomes. One of the driving forces within current educational reform in Scotland is to empower schools, Head Teachers and teachers roles within the delivery of the local authority service and devolve resource management as much as possible. In Empowering Schools: A consultation on the provisions of the Education (Scotland) Bill, (2017), the Scottish Government advocated a shift towards a self-improving system where empowered Head Teachers are leaders of learning, working closely with other leaders, teachers and other professionals, to lead curricular development and improvement. Part of this development has seen the protection of teacher numbers and the consequential increase on financial pressures within other parts of the service.

1.3 To deliver a sustainable Education service in this rural area a change programme has been introduced and is being led by an Education Transformation Board constituted of a range of key stakeholders. The scope of activity is being undertaken through 10 workstreams and an update and recommendations on the key issues being covered in each of those is set out in this report pack. The workstreams can be classified as a) those which impact on direct delivery of service and b) the enablers which are essential to underpin the changes in infrastructure and environment required to ensure high quality Education services in the future.

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EDUCATION CHANGE PROGRAMME – OVERVIEW REPORT

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report pack sets out the key findings of ten workstreams which were undertaken as part of a change programme to scrutinise and evaluate key elements of the Education service in this area. The work challenged existing practices and aimed to discover if new and improved ways of working could be implemented to secure high quality education services for the future benefit of children and young people in Argyll and Bute. It took particular account of the challenges faced due to the significant geographic and scale factor dispersion encountered in the Learning Estate. The empowerment of headteachers in accordance with national policy was at the heart of the discussions.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to agree and note as required the following list of recommendations which have emerged from the aggregation of all the accompanying workstream reports which have formed the overall Education Transformation Programme.

School Leadership Structures

3.1 Agree the school leadership model which will support a cluster of schools.

3.2 To progress with the wider engagement stage and implementation for the three early adopter clusters in Kintyre, Bute and Dunoon.

3.3 To note the consultation process, led by the Chief Education Officer, which will meet the needs of our communities, our staff and their representative bodies and the wider group of stakeholders.

Streamlining Central Education Management Team

3.4   Approve the implementation of the new structure for 2022/23 onwards.

Business Managers for Schools

3.5   Note the work carried out by the group has been concluded and no further action will be taken in relation to this.

Schools Generating Additional Income

3.6   Note the options being explored in respect of increasing the letting of school facilities and agree that an outdoor market is piloted at Lochgilphead Joint Campus in early summer.

3.7   Note the outcome of the benchmarking exercise carried out with other local authorities in respect of sponsorship activity and that no further action will be taken in this regard.

3.8   Agree that arrangements are put in place to pilot the use of Oban High School car park on a commercial basis.

3.9   Agree that all schools in Argyll and Bute proactively seek to save energy in respect of a reduction in electricity, water and waste, for example via the Eco Schools Programme.

3.10   Note that the use of school hostels on a commercial basis will be explored as part of the Shared Services Project with HSCP, being led by Commercial Services.

3.11   Note that there is limited scope to utilise the Argyll Art Collection on a commercial basis, however it is recommended that schools are encouraged to continue using pupil artwork/photography to raise funds.

3.12   Note that a number of funding streams are being explored to support the continued investment in the Argyll Art Collection to ensure that it is curated and conserved for future generations.

3.13   Agree that arrangements are put in place to pilot a wraparound hours model within Campbeltown.

Devolved School Management

3.14   Note the progress made in relation to the revised Scheme of Devolved School Management in line with new legislation.

Learning Estate Strategy

3.15   Note the ongoing work in relation to the Learning Estate Strategy and that a presentation will be made to the Community Services Committee in August.

Digital Literacy

3.16   Note the ongoing work to increase the use of digital technologies to enhance learning and teaching across Argyll and Bute in order to provide our learners with a flexible and modern education experience.

Curriculum and Learning

3.17   Note the ongoing work to develop commonality of senior phase timetables across Argyll and Bute for implementation on a phased basis in sessions 2021/2022 and 2022/2023.

Early Years Review of Central Team

3.18   Endorses the work undertaken by the Early Years transformation workstream to review the work structure and roles of the Early Years Team.

3.19   Agree that the workstream should continue with the planned actions and that a further update will come to the Community Services Committee in December 2021.

Asymmetric Week

3.20   Agreed that the asymmetric week structure is not introduced in Argyll and Bute schools at present but could be revisited in the future once the common senior phase timetable is established and embedded and its associated benefits have been confirmed and realised.

4.0   DETAIL

4.1   The Scottish Government's vision for Education in Scotland is:

- Excellence through raising attainment: ensuring that every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, set out within Curriculum for Excellence levels, and the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed; and

- Achieving Equity: ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

The National Improvement Framework is designed to deliver the twin aims of excellence and equity and provides challenge and legislation to Scottish education authorities to raise attainment with a focus on improving learning outcomes. This is based on a self-improving system through enhanced empowerment for Schools and Headteachers.

4.2   Within this context for education policy and practice consideration is required on the impact for rural schools. Education policy-makers and practitioners must understand their place in a much larger and interconnected manner in relation to social, economic and environmental influences. The importance of place and space in the delivery of rural education is an important factor on the achievements of the young people involved.

4.3   In Argyll and Bute the following percentage of schools are classified as Accessible Rural 7.0%, Remote Rural 5.2% and Very Remote Rural 38.3%. This is in comparison to a Scotland percentage of Accessible Rural 11.7%, Remote Rural 3.2% and Very Remote Rural 2.9%. Currently 48 schools within our authority are listed as Remote or Very Remote Rural.

4.4   The OECD Education Working Paper No 196, Echazarra and Radinger (2019) describes distinctive characteristics which shape the learning experience in rural contexts. This research was carried out across OECD countries and partners in relation to learning in rural schools across the OECD countries and based on PISA 2015 and TALIS 2013 data. This document describes the unique characteristics of rural areas and communities across countries. It also gives an update view on rural education across countries and in an international context. In section 5 the paper puts forward considerations drawn from the research that should influence policies that may help to overcome barriers in rural education.

4.5   The areas identified are:

- Contextualising policies and research by reflecting the role of place, and developing local and school capacity in rural areas
- Preparing and developing teachers and leaders for rural contexts, and building supportive professional working environments in rural schools
- Connecting rural schools with other schools and supports
- Making effective use of technologies and distance learning for student and educator learning
- Reorganising school networks
- Facilitating transitions to secondary and post-secondary education and the labour market

4.6   The main focus over the last few years has been on the sustainability and viability of rural schools and the definition of what is viable and what is not. This issue has often been contentious. Slee and Miller (2015) in their literature on school closures found little evidence that school closures have an economic impact on communities, however, does impact on demographic changes within communities. Rural schools face a unique set of challenges, predominately due to their geographic context. Although some rural schools have successfully and

creatively met these challenges, many still struggle. The need to attract and retain highly qualified teachers, for example, is especially pronounced in rural schools and many job adverts are unfilled.

4.7   This is a time of significant change for Education and Children's Services. The pace of change, the drive to improve services and the financial context combine to place increasing demands on the delivery of education. Despite these challenges, it is important that we remain ambitious to ensure the best outcomes for our children and young people.

4.8   The National Outcomes for Scotland include:

- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
- We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society
- We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk

These are inarguably the driving forces behind the work we do and are reflected in national strategies such as the National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education and in our local strategies for delivering services in Argyll and Bute. The key drivers for improvement which feature in the Scottish Government's annual NIF and Improvement Plan are:-

- School leadership
- Teacher professionalism
- Parental engagement
- Assessment of children's progress
- School improvement
- Performance information

4.9   Scotland's curriculum – Curriculum for Excellence (Cfe) – helps our children and young people gain knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the 21st century. Cfe places learners at the heart of education. At its centre are four fundamental capacities which reflect and recognise the lifelong nature of education and learning. The four capacities are aimed at helping children and young people to become:-

- Successful learners
- Confident individuals
- Responsible citizens
- Effective contributors

4.10   Children and young people's rights and entitlements are central to Scotland's curriculum and every child and young person is entitled to experience:-

- A curriculum which is coherent from 3 to 18
- A **broad general phase**, including well planned experiences and outcomes across all the curriculum areas from early years through to S3. This includes understanding the world, Scotland's place in it and the environment, referred to as Learning for Sustainability.

- A *senior phase* after S3, which provides opportunities to attain and achieve, including to study for qualifications, awards and other planned activities to develop the four capacities.
- Opportunities for developing skills for learning, life and work.
- Opportunities to maximise their individual potential, benefitting from appropriate personal support and challenge.
- Support to help them move into positive and sustained destinations beyond school.

4.11 The Council's approved overarching strategy for Education is "Our Children Their Future" which states that "Our vision is underpinned by our values: respect, openness and fairness". This vision will be delivered for all our children through the following 6 key objectives".

- Raise educational attainment and achievement for all
- Use performance information to secure improvement for children and young people
- Ensure children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
- Equip young people to secure and sustain positive destinations and achieve success in life
- Ensure high quality partnership working and community engagement
- Strengthen leadership at all levels

4.12 To deliver a sustainable Education service in this rural area of Argyll and Bute a change programme has been introduced and is being led by an Education Transformation Board constituted of a range of key stakeholders. The scope of activity is being undertaken through 10 workstreams and an update and recommendations on the key issues being covered in each of those is shown in the attached sections of this report pack. The workstreams can be classified as a) those which impact on direct delivery of service and b) the enablers which are essential to underpin the changes in infrastructure and environment required to ensure high quality Education services in the future.

1. Schools Leadership Structures
2. Streamlining Central Management Team
3. Business Managers for Schools
4. Generating Additional Income
5. Devolved School Management
6. Learning Estate Strategy
7. Digital Literacy
8. Curriculum and Learning
9. Early Learning and Childcare
10. Asymmetric Week

A Change programme for a sustainable Education service

Summary environmental scanning overview
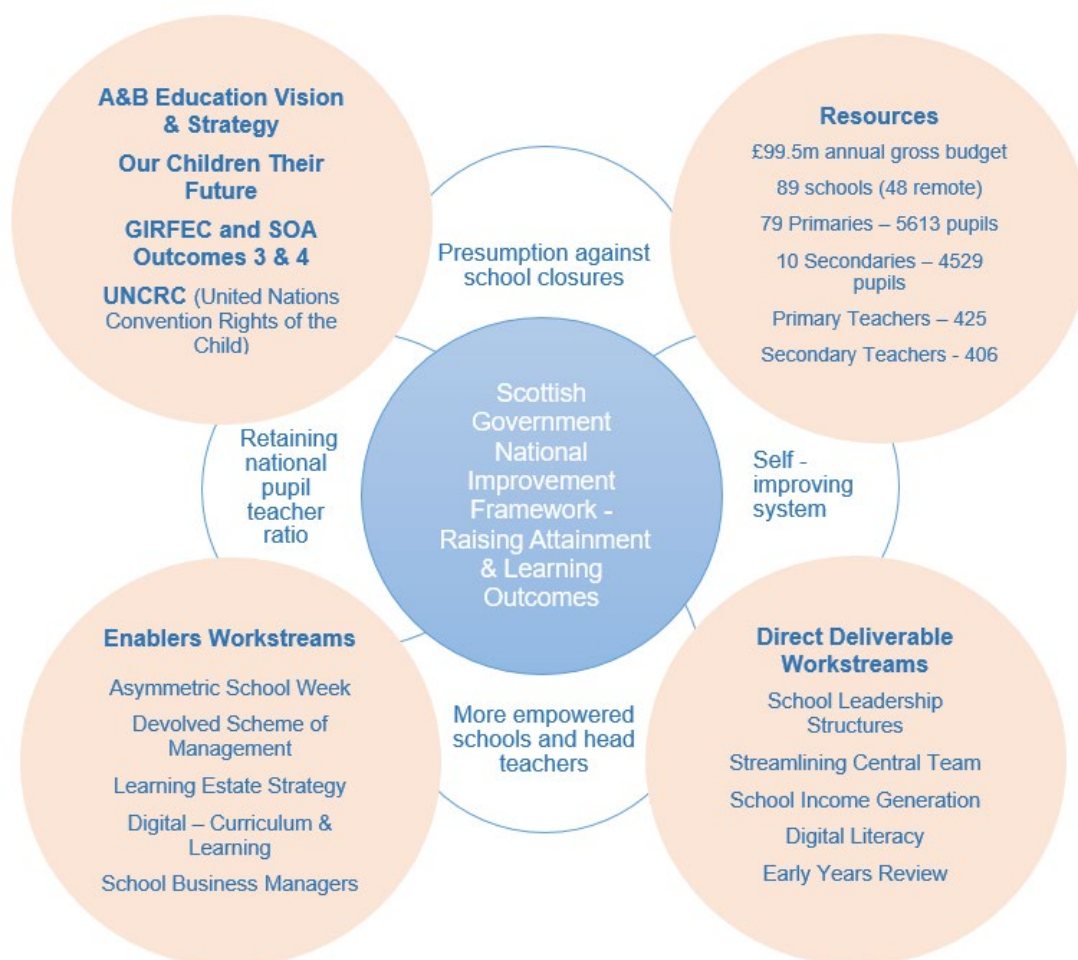
4.13 The central ring in the above diagram highlights the key national vision that Education focuses upon and the four mid connecting blocks show key parameters of national policy which services must operate within. The four outer circles show the resources and strategic local context for the Education service in Argyll and Bute and the 10 workstreams that have been taken forward to help achieve a sustainable service for the future.

4.14 Teacher numbers - the Local Government Finance Circular No. 5/2021 Section 4 sets out the condition that Councils must continue to support both maintaining the pupil teacher ratio at a national level and ensuring that places are provided for all probationers who require one under the teaching induction scheme in order to retain additional staff funding. The Council's annual teacher employee costs are just over £50m which is essentially a non-controllable cost due to the national pupil teacher ratio target which, if breached, could result in a direct financial penalty. The national ratio is reported annually through the Summary Statistics for schools from the Scottish Government. Over the last 7 years, the National ratio has remained fairly constant between 13.5 and 13.6. The position in Argyll & Bute since 2014 has varied between 12.2 and 12.5, leaving marginal scope for

change. The challenge of filling teacher vacancies in many rural parts of the area is an ongoing issue.

4.15   It is recognised that change is necessary and the focus is on challenging the status quo and doing things differently to improve services through the use of enhanced digital learning opportunities and empowered management practices that complement the dispersed rural population of this area. The impact of the pandemic over the last year has highlighted the need to have a flexible approach. This may require an alternative way of undertaking business but the emphasis will be to retain valued services in a local setting. The workstreams form the foundation blocks for achieving the longer term programme outcomes. The programme followed the key principles of the Prince 2 methodology with a project team undertaking each of the 10 options being taken forward and providing regular highlight reports to the Board.

4.16   A key ingredient in taking forward a number of the workstream recommendations will involve extensive stakeholder consultation. The Council has no in-house marketing resource and additional capacity has been procured in order to effectively undertake this aspect of the implementation stage.

5.0   CONCLUSION

5.1   Education Scotland reported to Council in late 2018 that the authority had made positive and continued progress in the improvement of the strategic management of the Education service and noted the strong capacity to enhance educational leadership across the authority. Building on this position, a programme of transformational change was initiated to ensure that pro-active strategic leadership would be at the core of ongoing educational improvement activities. This set of reports provides members with an update on the work that has been carried out and proposals for continuous improvement.

6.0   IMPLICATIONS

6.1   Policy – The proposals fit with national and local Education policy

6.2   Financial – no cost demands and potential savings identified by workstream

6.3   Legal – Enables the Council to meet its duties as an Education authority

6.4   HR – TU's have been involved and full detailed consultation will be undertaken during the implementation phase for agreed options

6.5   Fairer Scotland Duty: - N/A

6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – in line with requirements

6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – proposals take full account of rural place perspective

6.5.3 Islands – consistent pan area approach and impact assessment on specific islands will be undertaken during implementation phase

6.6. Risk – every effort taken to manage and mitigate risks from proposals

6.7 Customer Service – delivering improved front line service at the core of all the proposals

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Policy Lead for Education

10 May 2021

For further information contact:

Louise Connor, Head of Education: Learning & Teaching, and Chief Education Officer

Donald MacVicar, Transformation Project Officer

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The school leadership workstream was tasked with developing a strategy and models that could be implemented across our school estate in relation to the leadership and management of a cluster of schools.

1.2 To meet the brief and most importantly the challenges of delivering excellent learning and teaching, empowered leaders and learners and best value across our learning estate we have developed our own cluster leadership model. This model reflects the diversity of Argyll and Bute schools and understands our learners, staff, parents and communities in their specific contexts. The main focus of the model centres upon the educational benefits for our learners.

1.3 The Argyll and Bute cluster leadership model has been created with the input of Head Teachers and education professionals from across the authority. The model we have created is scalable and reflects the rural nature and uniqueness of the delivery of education in our area.

1.4 There are a number of challenges in delivering education in an authority as diverse as our own. These challenges include the equality of educational opportunity and improving attainment for all. The school leadership model for a cluster of schools will deliver educational benefits for both learners and school leaders.

1.5 For our learners the educational benefits include improved educational outcomes, improved curriculum development and learning and teaching meeting learners' needs, improved sharing of resources and improved partnership working with schools in a cluster all resulting in positive and sustained destinations for our young people.

1.6 For our school leaders the educational benefits include empowerment of school leaders, career enhancement and progression, continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities and reducing the likelihood of failure to recruit to key posts.

2.0   DETAIL

2.1   In preparation for this workstream considerable research has been undertaken on models of school leadership both across Scotland and further afield. We have also evaluated and considered the lessons learnt of our shared headship model. With this information we embarked on a series of workshops with Head Teachers (HTs) from across the authority with experience in leading primary and secondary schools; rural, remote rural and town schools and; schools with very small, small, medium and larger rolls to create our own Argyll and Bute leadership model.

2.2   22 Head Teachers have participated in 7 workshops and the school leadership model they helped to create has been developed iteratively using theoretical clusters of schools to draw out a model which at each workshop has been tested and improved upon.

Leadership Model

2.3   This school leadership model which has been developed supports a group of schools termed a cluster. The cluster can include primary, secondary and 3-18 schools. The cluster of schools should be thought of as a virtual campus with each of the schools within the cluster retaining their own identity within the campus model, including the school's names, uniform, plans, handbook and importantly the schools values and their ethos are shared and respected by all of the schools within their cluster.
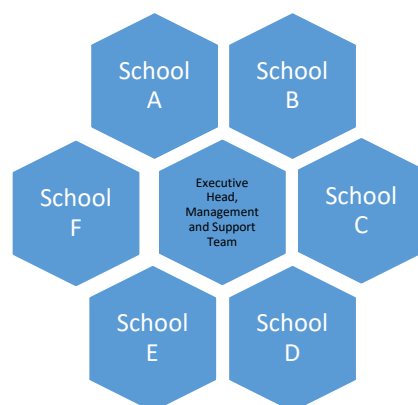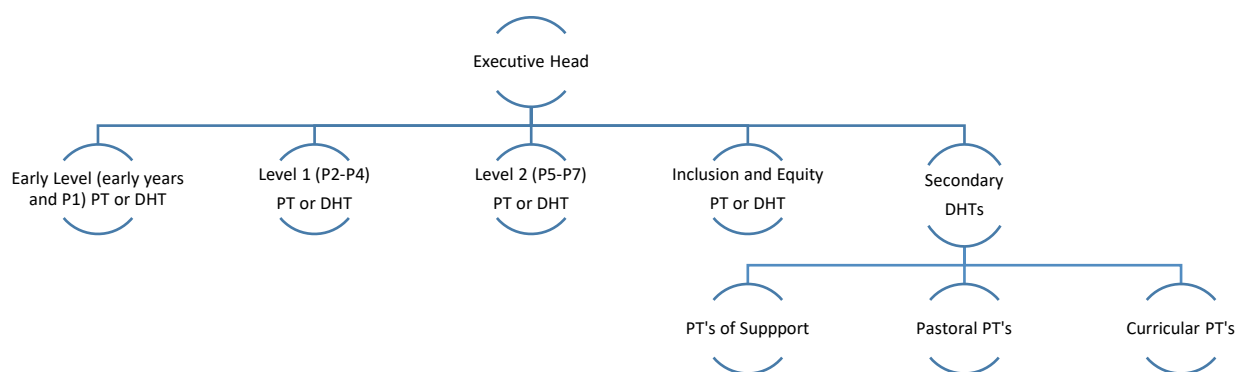
Figure 1: virtual campus

2.4   The cluster of schools will be led by an Executive Head Teacher. The leadership team which sit under the Execute Head will be based on a thematic

approach and will support the curricular levels within Curriculum for Excellence across the schools within the cluster, figure 2. The entitlement to deputy head teachers and principal teachers that make up the cluster leadership team will be determined by a combination of the combined roll and other factors unique to the cluster.

Figure 2 Cluster leadership model

Executive Head

- Early Level (early years and P1) PT or DHT
- Level 1 (P2-P4) PT or DHT
- Level 2 (P5-P7) PT or DHT
- Inclusion and Equity PT or DHT
- Secondary DHTs
  - PT's of Suppport
  - Pastoral PT's
  - Curricular PT's

2.5   This thematic approach provide us with the opportunity to develop expertise at each level of Curriculum for Excellence across early years and the primary and secondary sectors. There are benefits in coherence in curriculum, sustainability and support for transitions. This model also provides better career progression and better training and mentoring at each of the levels.

2.6   Due to the difference in inspection approach, differing paperwork, policies and planning for Early Years there would be management support for all Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and primary 1 classes across the cluster. This could be a Principal Teacher (PT) or a Deputy Head Teacher (DHT) for Early Level depending on the size of the cluster. Level 1, primary 2 to 4, and Level 2, primary 5 to 7, would also have management and leadership provided by a PT or DHT across the cluster, again dependent on the size of the roll, the unique challenges and makeup of the cluster. Inclusion and equity including the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) agenda and Additional Support Needs (ASN) support would also benefit from its own management and PT or DHT support across the cluster to augment the support provided by the central team.

2.7   This thematic approach with the primaries also mirrors the approach taken in secondary schools of pastoral care and the promoted points' model in secondary. The secondary promoted posts model has been revised following discussions at the Education Budget Working Group which reports to the Education Transformation Board.

2.8   This leadership model enables parents, and other professionals, who wish to discuss a pupil's well-being and/or attainment access to a senior educationalist who will have comprehensive knowledge of the pupils in their cohort and who

can respond to issues relating to the appropriate age and stage of education irrespective of which school their child attends.

2.9 The executive head and the senior leadership posts within a cluster will be challenging roles and those taking on the role will be supported by the authority to develop the necessary skills, capacity and experience. Recruitment to these posts will follow the council's recruitment process which will be reviewed to ensure that it meets the requirements for posts of this seniority in the Education Service and could include an element of chief officer recruitment process and importantly as per the legislative requirement will involve the parent councils.
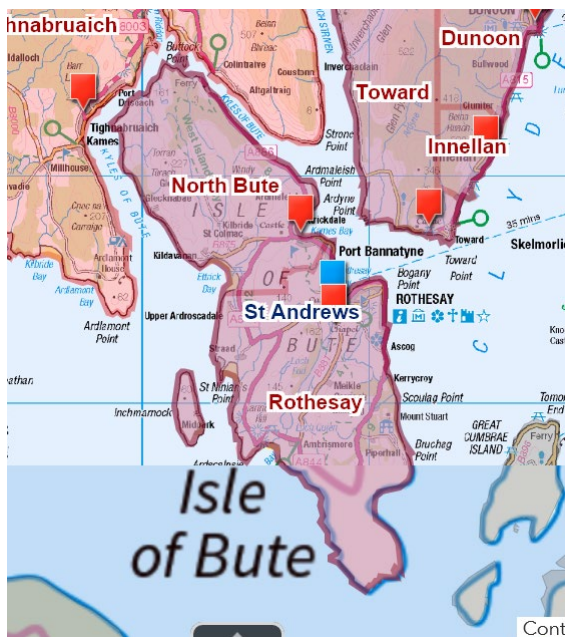
Clusters

2.10 In identifying the schools that will be included in a cluster geographical and community connections are the dominant factor. The combined number of pupils should not limit the number of schools under the one Executive Head Teacher and their leadership team. The model can be sized up and down according to the number of schools and the combined roll. The leadership team in a cluster of smaller school may have a teaching commitment and in the larger clusters these posts would be non-teaching. Leadership posts would either be depute head teachers or principal teachers and the minimum requirement is that the posts in the model in figure 2 are in place and in each school building there is a promoted member of staff. Leadership posts with a curricular responsibility and who also retain responsibility for a school building could be given the title head of school.

2.11 Staff would become part of a cluster and not part of a school and could therefore be moved accordingly either on a temporary basis to provide cover or on a longer term basis to support a specific development need in one of the schools. Educational resources would be purchased and shared amongst all of the schools in the cluster, providing best value and equity. Better targeting of resource will allow smaller schools to benefit from more and better access to resources and opportunities to support learning and teaching.

2.12 Following workshops and engagement with the Chief Education Officer a number of clusters have been identified for Argyll and Bute. The intention is that the move to this new model should take place on a phased basis and, to embed all learning from the implementation to progress with an initial phase of three clusters as early adopters. These clusters would be in Kintyre, Bute and Dunoon.

2.13 The proposed Kintyre cluster would see a cluster with a combined roll of 885 pupils and 1 secondary and 6 primaries coming together all situated on the Kintyre peninsula, map 1. The educational benefits for the proposed Kintyre cluster are detailed in appendix 1 below.

Map 1 – potential Kintyre cluster

2.14 The proposed Bute cluster would include the two primaries and the joint campus on the Isle of Bute, map 2, and create a cluster with a combined roll of 649 pupils

Map 2 – potential Bute cluster

2.15 The proposed Dunoon cluster would see a cluster of potentially 7 primaries and 1 secondary with a combined roll of 1,450 pupils. The primaries would be within or in close proximity to the town of Dunoon, map 3.
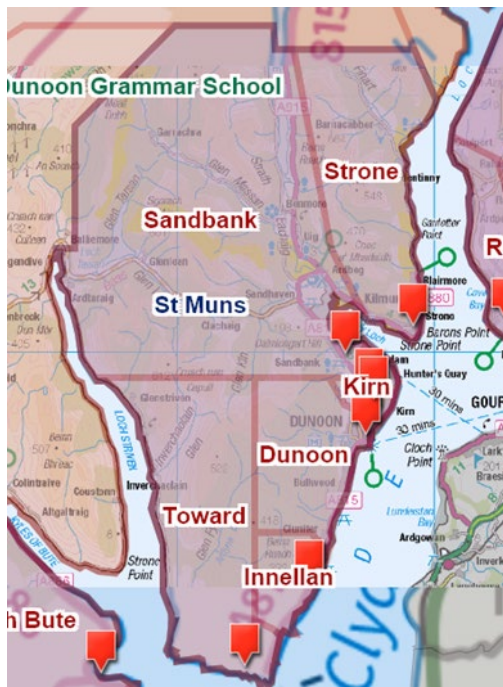
Map 3 - potential Dunoon cluster

2.16   The Early Adopter clusters in Bute and Dunoon include the Roman Catholic denominational primaries of St Andrews and St Muns and we are mindful of the legislation regarding denominational education, specifically the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 as amended. An education authority has the sole power to appoint teachers to denominational schools, but there are additional statutory requirements which we are subject to. Any teacher appointed to a denominational school must be approved as regards religious belief and character by representatives of the church or religious body in whose interests the school is conducted (Section 21(2A) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980). We are meeting with the Catholic Church to discuss our proposals and once these discussions have concluded we will confirm the inclusion of the denominational primaries. In the event of the Church having no interest in denominational primary schools being part of the early adopter clusters then that matter will not be pursued further.

2.17   In order to progress the implementation of the early adopter clusters comprehensive consultation and engagement will be carried out with communities, staff, trade unions and the wide range of stakeholders. These proposals do not constitute "relevant proposals" under Schedule 1 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) 2010 Act and on the basis that the schools retain their own existing identities and locations, then the 2010 Act would not be triggered.   Consultation and engagement can therefore follow a format and approach of our choosing which reflects the needs of our communities, our staff and their representative bodies and the wider group of stakeholders led by the Education Service.

2.18 In order to support the implementation it will be necessary to engage in communication and engagement with multiple stakeholders and a wide and diverse group of communities. Our aim is to be accountable, authentic and approachable which will increase adoption and build advocacy for our model.

3.0 CONCLUSION

3.1 After consideration of the information provided above detailing the School Leadership Structures workstream, elected members of the Community Services Committee are asked to approve:

a) The school leadership model which will support a cluster of schools.

b) To progress with the wider engagement stage and then implementation for the three early adopter clusters in Kintyre, Bute and Dunoon.

c) To note the consultation process, led by the Chief Education Officer, which will meet the needs of our communities, our staff and their representative bodies and the wider group of stakeholders.

3.2 The opportunity to develop and implement cluster leadership models across Argyll and Bute are both exciting and innovative. They offer real benefits to learners and leaders in our schools and will help us to address our biggest challenge of equity of provision in an authority as diverse as ours.

3.3 As we move to the wider consultation and engagement all stakeholders will have the opportunity to shape the model to ensure it meets their needs. There will be challenges but the opportunities that this offers Argyll and Bute's children and young people are clear and will see us responding to both the policy and legislative requirements from Scottish Government and the demands of our communities.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Policy – the school leadership model fits with both national and local Education policy.

4.2 Financial – there will be no cost demands and implementing the model could deliver potential savings when implemented.

4.3 Legal – implementing the model helps to ensure the authority meets its statutory duties and inspections.

4.4 HR – full and detailed consultation will take place with the Trade Unions.

4.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: - a full equality impact assessment will take place as we move to the implementation phase.

4.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics

4.5.2 Socio-economic Duty

4.5.3 Islands

4.6. Risk – every effort will be taken to mitigate against risks as we progress with the implementation.

4.7 Customer Service - delivering improved front line service is at the core of this proposal.

Appendices: <u>Educational Benefits Reports</u>

Appendix 1 – Kintyre Cluster

Appendix 2 – Bute Cluster

Appendix 3 – Dunoon Cluster

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19.05.2021

Appendix 1: KINTYRE CLUSTER EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

▶ Castlehill PS
▶ Drumlemble PS
▶ Carradale PS
▶ Glenbarrr PS
▶ Dalintober PS
▶ Southend PS
▶ Campbeltown Grammar

Combined school rolls: 885
combined ELC roll: 54

	Castlehill	Drumlemble	Carradale	Glenbarr	Dalintober	Southend	Campbeltown Grammar
School roll	202	32	16	10	241	6	378
ELC roll		2	1		51		
Forecast school roll 2024	164	11	10	44	186	0	413

Assessment of the likely educational benefits on pupils:
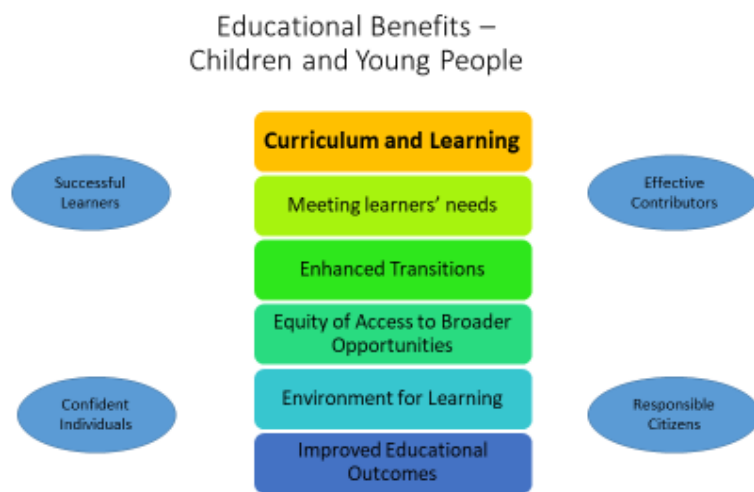
Educational Benefits –
Children and Young People

Successful
Learners

Curriculum and Learning

Meeting learners' needs

Enhanced Transitions

Equity of Access to Broader
Opportunities

Environment for Learning

Improved Educational
Outcomes

Effective
Contributors

Confident
Individuals

Responsible
Citizens

The Education Service believes that there will be considerable educational benefits arising from this cluster proposal. These centre around;

- Curriculum and Learning;
- Meeting learners' needs;
- Enhanced transitions;
- Equity of access to broader opportunities;
- Broadening the range of opportunities;
- The environment for learning and
- Improved educational outcomes.

Curriculum and Learning

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are empowered to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community.

There is a continual challenge for all schools to deliver a school improvement agenda and deliver effectively the principles and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence. The National Improvement Framework priorities include raising attainment for all, and closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.

The curriculum includes a broad range of experiences across key contexts, including learning within individual curricular areas, learning across curricular areas (interdisciplinary learning), opportunities for achievement and wider experiences which reflect the whole school's ethos. Teachers plan across these four contexts to ensure every child and young person develops knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work.

In Kintyre, the joint headship models between Castlehill, Drumlemble and Carradale and Dalintober and Glenbarr have already established highly effective partnerships and developed positive working relationships between all the schools. The schools work closely together to plan and implement improvements for children and young people in the area. This facilitates joint working and a shared understanding of the needs in the community. The Kintyre cluster will offer a learning environment that encourages sound levels of achievement and provides a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve their full potential as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. The ethos of the schools is very positive and conducive to helping pupils succeed.

Curriculum and learning provision to children and young people in Kintyre will benefit from a cluster model of school leadership and improvement activities:

- The opportunities for curriculum design and moderation between staff in different schools will be enhanced, leading to greater sharing of good practice and innovation in curriculum building. The process of collegiately designing learning experiences and assessment tools will also naturally promote a more consistent understanding of standards among teaching staff, which will provide increased levels of reliability and validity in assessment data across the Kintyre cluster schools.

- Pupils across schools will benefit from working together in a more frequent and structured way. The pupil voice will be stronger, learners will increasingly share their learning, thinking and ideas and pupils will have greater opportunities to develop social and interpersonal skills and broaden their range of learning experiences. Examples of pupil experiences which already benefit from close working between Kintyre schools are the Digital Pupil Committee and the range of learning visits between schools which were occurring before COVID restrictions were introduced.

Meeting Learners' Needs

The shared headships model in Kintyre has provided clear indications of how learners' needs can be more effectively met via a cluster model of governance and management.

- As referred to above, the cluster model allows more effective strategic approaches to curriculum planning – the continued development across schools of opportunities within the curriculum to meet the needs of all our children and young people.

- Cluster leadership will ensure children and young people receive a consistent learning experience across the Kintyre cluster. In the present joint-headships model, collegiate planning of curriculum and learning experiences across schools has led to high quality consistency in provision, while recognising the different contexts and cultures in individual schools.

- In a Kintyre cluster model, support staff will share experience, expertise and skills to ensure all staff are upskilled to address the needs of our children and young people. In the existing joint-headships model, there has been more effective collaboration between key staff on best practice and effective interventions in meeting learners' needs. Examples exist of practice in one Kintyre school having been successfully adopted for pupils in another school through the enhanced channels for communication and practice-sharing created by the model.

- Furthermore, the fluidity and flexibility in staffing created across a cluster of schools will allow the most appropriately skilled staff to direct their practice and expertise towards the children in the cluster who most require it, irrespective of which school a pupil attends.

- The cluster model also creates improved opportunities for our gifted and talented children and young people. Collegiate work between cluster schools will allow better pathways to be developed to ensure gifted and talented pupils in Kintyre have wider opportunities and a clear plan for progression in all curricular areas.

Enhanced Transitions

A cluster model in Kintyre will facilitate smoother, more coherent and effective transitions for all learners.

- In Kintyre, the closer connections between schools will allow pupils in a rurally remote setting such as Carradale to have regular and structured contact with their peers in the more urban area of Campbeltown over the whole of their primary education, preparing them more effectively for transition to secondary school, both in terms of their interpersonal relationships and their understanding of the different environment and context.

- As indicated above, the increased collegiate working and sharing of practice and information across the cluster will ensure the planning and delivery of more personalised and bespoke enhanced transition opportunities for vulnerable children and young people.

- The cluster model will benefit planning for transitions. Collaborative work between cluster schools will reduce the need for individual planning between Campbeltown Grammar School and each individual primary, freeing up resources, and increasing the consistency and quality of transitional provision, particularly in the key Responsibility of All areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing.

- This level of enhanced planning between secondary and primary schools within the cluster will allow an effective combination of face-to-face and digital transition provision to be delivered over a longer period of time. Provision to primary children by secondary staff will become a norm, enhancing overall curricular learning experiences for children, as well as greatly benefitting their transition experience.

Equity of Access to Broader Opportunities

In a Kintyre cluster model, a broader range of opportunities can be offered to all pupils through the combining of budgets, resources and professional expertise, and the greater logistical capacity the model would bring.

- The quality and consistency of curriculum and educational experiences provided to learners will be increased as a result of greater planning and evaluation between staff across schools. Such benefits have already been achieved via the existing model of joint headships in the area.

- Similarly, and as previously referenced, there will be greater opportunity to collegiately plan and develop the important learning context of interdisciplinary learning, where planning and provision cover outcomes across a range of subject areas.

- Opportunities to recognise and celebrate pupils' achievement across the whole Kintyre cluster will be increased, increasing children and young people's motivation to achieve and progress, and developing their understanding of the wider educational context across the area.

- The cluster model in Kintyre will support the sharing across schools of opportunities stemming from each school's local community projects and partnerships. This will strengthen a curriculum which broadens pupils' experiences and develops life and employability skills. Examples of projects which are being shared through the existing joint-headships model in Kintyre include three primaries working together with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and the Bikeability programme. Head Teachers see great potential to develop these and a wide range of new projects within the cluster model.

- The greater capacity of staff to plan more effectively across schools, bringing greater and more varied levels of experience and expertise, and an increase in effective logistical planning, will extend opportunities for children with specific or complex needs to access a wider range of opportunities, both with their peers, and as part of their individual educational plans.

- A greater balance of curriculum areas within the cluster curriculum framework will be achieved through the pooling of subject expertise among teachers, and the equitable delivery of subject areas to all schools. This will give pupils access to subject areas not previously available to pupils in some schools.

Environment for Learning

The cluster model in Kintyre will allow all children to access a greater variety of high quality learning environments across a greater number of settings.

- Effective planning with parents and transport services will allow pupils to move around different cluster schools to take advantage of the facilities best suited to particular areas of learning. In the Kintyre cluster, this will allow pupils access to better facilities and provision relating to PE, Music and IT, and practical subjects such as Home Economics, Technical and Drama.

- Outdoor Learning provision will also be improved for all learners. The excellent Outdoor Learning facilities at Carradale Primary School, and the opportunities for learning beyond the classroom afforded by its unique rural location, will be made available to children form the more urban schools in and around Campbeltown.

- Conversely, the schools within Campbeltown will offer an effective, safe base for learning for pupils from rural schools such as Carradale Primary, and allow them more easily to explore learning in urban contexts and less familiar environments.

- The digital learning environment would be enhanced through a Kintyre cluster model. Teachers' knowledge and skills in using digital platforms for learning and teaching will be more effectively shared among colleagues, and teachers across the cluster will work collaboratively to build online learning experiences and resources for digital Family Learning in pupils' homes.
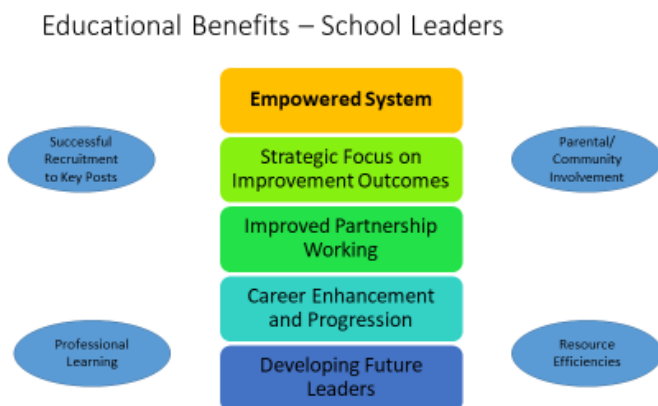
Improved Educational Outcomes

All of the above factors detailing the educational benefits of a cluster model for Kintyre will deliver improved educational outcomes for children and young people.

- Pupil attainment across the cluster, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy, will increase as a result of increased effectiveness in curriculum planning and delivery brought about by the high-quality, high-level collegiate work of teachers and leaders across schools.

- Similarly, the enhanced collaborative work of teachers across the cluster in developing the highest quality of learning, teaching and assessment will impact positively on pupil attainment.

- Strengths across the cluster will be shared. Existing good practice will be recognised and identified within the cluster, and incorporated into strategic planning to improve provision and ensure equity of experience for young people across the cluster.

- The cluster model will facilitate improved tracking and monitoring across the cluster from Early Level to 4th Level. This will inform curriculum development and planning, ensuring areas of lesser attainment are addressed. It will also allow development needs common to more than one school to be identified and addressed more efficiently and coherently. The cluster model of tracking and monitoring will allow the directing of expertise from other cluster schools to support a school's drive for improvement, and will encourage collaborative planning of interventions suggested by tracking and monitoring of attainment.

- While recognising the unique situation, context and curriculum rationale of each school within a cluster, the Kintyre cluster model will allow a strong degree of common, consistent strategic planning and self-evaluation. School Improvement

Planning and Standards and Quality Reporting across the primary schools in the joint-headships model currently focus on three common priorities – Digital Learning, Health and Wellbeing and Outdoor Learning – and this commonality of focus is leading to improved, more sustainable outcomes for pupils. A cluster model for Kintyre would allow such improvements to be further developed.

<u>Assessment of the likely educational benefits for school leaders:</u>

The cluster model will bring a range of benefits relating to the empowerment of school leaders in their work to improve provision and outcomes for children and young people, and the development of leadership skills in the education workforce.

Educational Benefits – School Leaders

- Empowered System
- Successful Recruitment to Key Posts
- Strategic Focus on Improvement Outcomes
- Parental/ Community Involvement
- Improved Partnership Working
- Career Enhancement and Progression
- Professional Learning
- Developing Future Leaders
- Resource Efficiencies

Strategic Focus on Improvement Outcomes

- As referred to above, the establishment of common strategic improvement priorities across the Kintyre cluster will enhance capability, coherence and consistency in improvement planning, allowing for greater consultation, planning and collaborative sharing of practice between staff in different cluster schools. This has been a successful aspect of the existing joint-headships model in Kintyre, which will be developed and built upon.

- Cluster budget planning will allow for greater discussion around how financial resources are used coherently and sustainably to improve learning experience for children and young people. The sharing of resources can allow spending to go further, creating best value for stakeholders. Using common resources will also allow strategic planning among cluster staff relating to how resources are best employed for learning.

- The Executive Leadership model across the Kintyre cluster will create greater consistency of leadership. The Executive Head Teacher, Depute Head Teacher and other staff empowered to take on leadership roles would lead specific aspects of improvement across the cluster, and have a valuable overview of progress across the different schools.

- The cluster model puts in place the same Head Teacher from Pre-5 to S6. This will establish strong relationships with families and build trust, encouraging and empowering parents and carers of children at all stages to contribute to planning and self-evaluation for improvement.

- Staff will be employed to the cluster, both teaching and support staff. Staff can therefore bring their particular strengths and areas of expertise to support other schools within the cluster.

Career Enhancement and Progression and Developing Future Leaders

Empowerment of education staff, and building their motivation, participation and ambition will be at the heart of cluster model provision.

- Executive Headships will be attractive, well-remunerated posts, attracting high-quality candidates, both from within the Kintyre area, and from elsewhere in Argyll and Bute and Scotland. This will help address the issue of attracting staff to the Kintyre area.

- The executive nature of remits and responsibilities of Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers within the cluster model will allow practitioners to more quickly and effectively develop their capacities and capabilities as leaders. Argyll and Bute will therefore be able to "grow our own" leaders, encouraging staff retention and creating a staff with understanding of local contexts and issues.

- The frequent strategic engagement with each other of staff from across the cluster will build their capability and motivation to drive improvement. Such engagement develops knowledge and insight into learning, improving both delivery of learning experiences and understanding of how to bring about improvement. These cluster-wide strategic conversations will empower and build confidence in teachers, preparing them for leadership and creating sustainability of leadership in Kintyre.

Stakeholders - Improved Partnership Working

- The opportunity for children and young people to work more closely with their peers in other schools will broaden their learning experiences, create more opportunities for peer support, help them apply their skills in unfamiliar contexts and develop interpersonal and communication skills and confidence.

- A cluster model in Kintyre would bring improved communication among school staff and between ELC, primary and secondary sectors. Co-ordination and planning of all aspects of educational provision would be enhanced.

- Existing external partnerships established by schools will extend to all schools in the Kintyre cluster, broadening learning experiences and opportunities for children and young people. Events and experiences organised in conjunction with partners would be accessible to all pupils in the cluster.

- The achievements of children and young people will be more widely recognised and celebrated across all schools in the cluster.

- A cluster model would improve communication between schools and parents/carers, achieving greater consistency in sharing information with parents across the area.

- More consistently developed partnership between schools and parents/carers will create an environment for Family Learning across the Kintyre cluster, where children's learning extends into the home. A cluster model will allow consistent support for parents/carers across schools, helping them in engaging effectively with their children's learning, and in creating the appropriate environment for learning in the home.

- Greater partnership working between schools and their communities will benefit the whole community of South Kintyre, bringing the community together and establishing links between geographical areas which previously did not exist.

- Closer working between Parent Councils would be achieved through a Kintyre cluster model. Good practice, knowledge and skill would be more readily shared between Parent Councils, and the parental voice of the whole cluster community would become stronger.

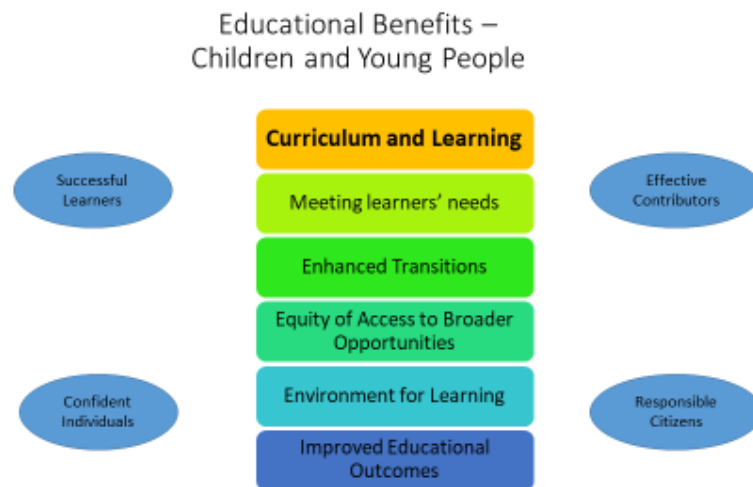## Appendix 2: BUTE CLUSTER EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS
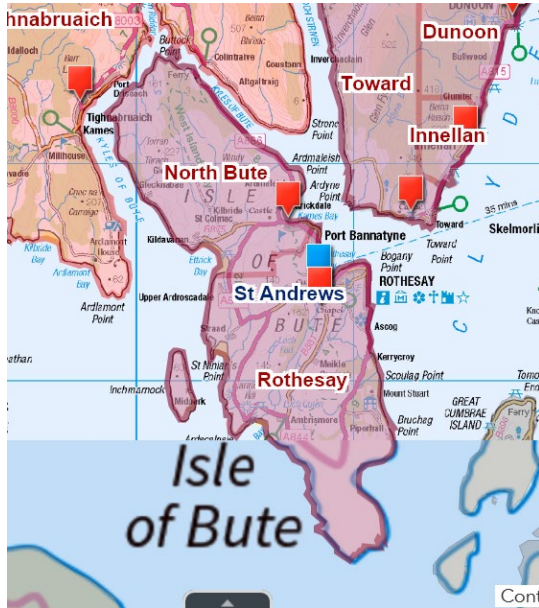
► Rothesay Joint Campus
► North Bute PS
► St Andrews PS

Combined school rolls: 649
ELC roll: 45

	Rothesay Primary	Rothesay Academy	North Bute	St Andrews
School roll	246	307	38	58
ELC roll	45			
Forecast school roll 2024	234	294	34	46

Assessment of likely educational benefits on pupils

Educational Benefits –
Children and Young People

Curriculum and Learning

Meeting learners' needs

Enhanced Transitions

Equity of Access to Broader Opportunities

Environment for Learning

Improved Educational Outcomes

Successful Learners

Effective Contributors

Confident Individuals

Responsible Citizens

The Education Service believes that there will be considerable educational benefits arising from this cluster proposal. These centre around;

- Curriculum and Learning;
- Meeting learners' needs;
- Enhanced transitions;
- Equity of access to broader opportunities;
- Broadening the range of opportunities;
- The environment for learning and
- Improved educational outcomes.

Curriculum and Learning

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community.

There is a continual challenge for all schools to deliver a school improvement agenda and deliver effectively the principles and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence. The National Improvement Framework priorities include raising attainment for all, and closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.

The curriculum includes a broad range of experiences across key contexts, including learning within individual curricular areas, learning across curricular areas (interdisciplinary learning), opportunities for achievement and wider experiences which reflect the whole school's ethos. Teachers plan across these four contexts to ensure every child and young person develops knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work.

The Bute Cluster offers a learning environment that encourages sound levels of achievement and provides a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve their full potential as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. The cluster has a very positive ethos and conducive to helping pupils succeed.

The Bute Cluster has already established highly effective partnerships and developed positive working relationships between all the schools. The Cluster works closely together to plan and implement improvements for children and young people in the area.

There is a focus in the cluster on outdoor learning which starts with the ELC and follows into the broad general education and strong partnerships exist with Mount Stuart Trust, Beach Watch Bute and Live Argyll.

The cluster is well established and supportive of each other sharing resources. In the past three years Rothesay Joint Campus leadership team have supported North Bute and St Andrews at times of change in their senior leadership team and recruitment challenges.

Meeting learners' needs

- As referred to above, the cluster model allows more effective strategic approaches to curriculum planning – the continued development across schools of opportunities within the curriculum to meet the needs of all our children and young people.

- Cluster leadership will ensure children and young people receive a consistent learning experience across the Bute cluster.

- In a Bute cluster model, support staff will share experience, expertise and skills to ensure all staff are upskilled to address the needs of our children and young people. This will be particularly of benefit in areas such as bereavement, mental health awareness, those at risk of becoming school refusers. Throughout this sharing of experience and resources parents will be informed and aware of the wider choices open to them around the range of support available and how it can be utilised to meet their child's needs.

- Rothesay Joint Campus benefits from a family liaison officer who is based in the school on a full time basis. This post has been at the forefront of the development of nurture and crisis intervention and there is now a high level of expertise in supporting children who have experienced trauma. This support will be extended across the cluster to meet community need.

- Furthermore, the fluidity and flexibility in staffing created across a cluster of schools will allow the most appropriately skilled staff to direct their practice and expertise towards the children in the cluster who most require it, irrespective of which school a pupil attends.

- Being an island Bute schools access to supply staff can be challenging, a cluster model would allow more flexible use of staffing resources both teaching and non-teaching and ensure that needs can be supported effectively.

- The cluster model also creates improved opportunities for our gifted and talented children and young people. Collegiate work between cluster schools will allow better pathways to be developed to ensure gifted and talented pupils in Bute have wider opportunities and a clear plan for progression in all curricular areas.

- There is a high level of ASN support provided in Bute including a number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The cluster leadership structure would offer enhanced approaches to GIRFEC and a consistency of approach which would maximise the use of resources both physical and human.

Enhanced transitions

A cluster model in Bute will facilitate smoother, more coherent and effective transitions for all learners.

- In Bute the closer connections between schools will allow pupils to have regular and structured contact with their peers over the whole of their primary education, preparing them more effectively for transition to secondary school, in terms of their interpersonal relationships. This will be particularly beneficial to children in the smaller primary schools of North Bute and St Andrew's. This will enhance transition opportunities for vulnerable children and young people and support earlier pastoral transitions for all. Enhancement of key staff/pupil relationships over a longer period of time which will alleviate pupil anxiety with regard to transitions.

- As indicated above, the increased collegiate working and sharing of practice and information across the cluster will ensure the planning and delivery of more personalised and bespoke enhanced transition opportunities for vulnerable children and young people within the cluster curriculum plan.

- The cluster model will benefit planning for transitions. Collaborative work between cluster schools will reduce the need for individual planning between Rothesay Academy and each individual primary, freeing up resources, and increasing the consistency, expectations and quality of transitional provision, particularly in the key Responsibility of All areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing.

- This level of enhanced planning between secondary and primary schools within the cluster will allow an effective combination of face-to-face and digital transition provision to be delivered over a longer period of time. Provision to primary children by secondary staff will become a norm, enhancing overall curricular learning experiences for children, as well as greatly benefitting their transition experience. Shared cultural experiences such as producing joint school shows/concerts and sharing visiting speakers/workshops/productions will also enrich curricular experiences of children and young people.

- Positive destination data can be shared across the Bute cluster and support the early introduction of career education within the primaries with sharing of secondary resources and specific subject expectations. Partnerships with local employers and the Mount Stuart Trust, the Pavilion Trust and Achievement Bute. Argyll College are also based at Rothesay joint Campus and have forged strong links with the school which has helped to prepare pupils for life beyond school.

Equity of access to broader opportunities

In a Bute cluster model, a broader range of opportunities can be offered to all pupils through the combining of budgets, resources and professional expertise, and the greater logistical capacity the model would bring.

- The quality and consistency of curriculum and educational experiences provided to learners will be increased as a result of greater planning and evaluation between staff across schools. There will be the ability to broaden opportunities in curricular areas such as sport, STEM, hospitality. The sharing of learning resources which may be outwith a school's budget to purchase will also broaden learning opportunities.

- Similarly, and as previously referenced, there will be greater opportunity to collegiately plan and develop the important learning context of interdisciplinary learning, where planning and provision cover outcomes across a range of subject areas. Opportunities to showcase pupil work throughout the community will increase, including cluster events.

- Opportunities to recognise and celebrate pupils' achievement across the whole Bute cluster will be increased, increasing children and young people's motivation to achieve and progress, and developing their understanding of the wider educational context across the area.

- The cluster model in Bute will support the sharing across schools of opportunities stemming from each school's local community projects and partnerships. This will strengthen a curriculum which broadens pupils' experiences and develops life and employability skills. Currently our schools work with a variety of partners across Bute on a number of projects such as the Mount Stuart art project, Thomson Court (care home) inter-generational activities and Bute Museum. Head Teachers see great potential to develop these and a wide range of new projects within the cluster model.

- The greater capacity of staff to plan more effectively across schools, bringing greater and more varied levels of experience and expertise, and an increase in effective logistical planning, will extend opportunities for children with specific or complex needs to access a wider range of opportunities, both with their peers, and as part of their individual educational plans.

- A greater balance of curriculum areas within the cluster curriculum framework will be achieved through the pooling of subject expertise among teachers, and the equitable delivery of subject areas to all schools. This will give pupils access to subject areas not previously available to pupils in some schools.

Environment for learning

The cluster model in Bute will allow all children to access a greater variety of high quality learning environments across a greater number of settings.

- Effective planning with parents and transport services will allow pupils and staff to move around different cluster schools to take advantage of the facilities best suited to particular areas of learning. In the Bute cluster, this will allow pupils access to better facilities and provision relating to PE, Music and IT, and practical subjects such as Home Economics, Technical and Drama.

- Outdoor Learning provision will also be improved for all learners. North Bute Primary will be well placed to share their good practice in Forest and Beach Schools with the more urban primaries on the island. Bute offers a unique outdoor environment sitting on the highland fault with tremendous marine, agriculture, aqua culture and forestry. Children have really turned to their natural environment over COVID and have been exploring the island and all it has to offer including setting up personal challenges of endurance.

- The digital learning environment would be enhanced through a Bute cluster model. Teachers' knowledge and skills in using digital platforms for learning and teaching will be more effectively shared among colleagues, and teachers across the cluster will work collaboratively to build online learning experiences and resources for digital Family Learning in pupils' homes.

- There will be increased opportunities to plan and share learning experiences across the Bute cluster and to familiarise children with the learning environments across the whole island both within and outwith the school buildings ie forest schools, beach schools, sports facilities and hospitality facilities.
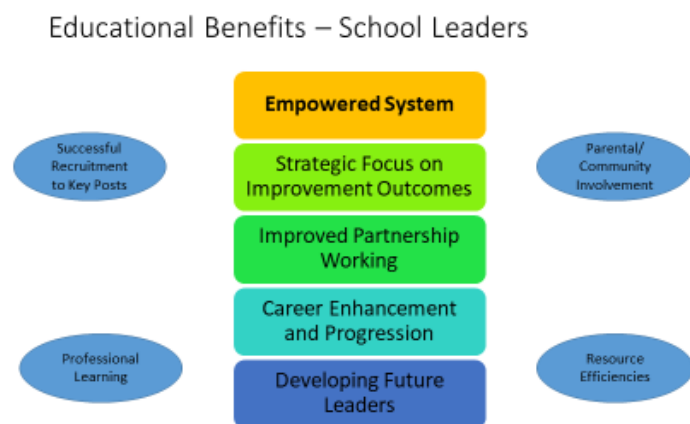
Improved educational outcomes

All of the above factors detailing the educational benefits of a cluster model for Bute will deliver improved educational outcomes for children and young people.

- Pupil attainment across the cluster, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy, will increase as a result of increased effectiveness in curriculum planning and delivery brought about by the high-quality, high-level collegiate work of teachers and leaders across schools.

- Similarly, the enhanced collaborative work of teachers across the cluster in developing the highest quality of learning, teaching and assessment will impact positively on pupil attainment. Enhanced moderation and assessment across schools will improve teacher professional judgement.

- Strengths across the cluster will be shared. Existing good practice will be recognised and identified within the cluster, and incorporated into strategic planning to improve provision and ensure equity of experience for young people across the cluster.

- The cluster model will facilitate improved tracking and monitoring across the cluster from Early Level to 4th Level. This will inform curriculum development and planning, ensuring areas of lesser attainment are addressed. It will also allow development needs common to more than one school to be identified and addressed more efficiently and coherently. The cluster model of tracking and monitoring will allow the directing of expertise from other cluster schools to support a school's drive for improvement, and will encourage collaborative planning of interventions suggested by tracking and monitoring of attainment.

- While recognising the unique situation, context and curriculum rationale of each school within a cluster, the Bute cluster model will allow a strong degree of common, consistent strategic planning and self-evaluation. School Improvement Planning and Standards and Quality Reporting across the primary schools in the Bute cluster will have a commonality of focus which will lead to improved, more sustainable outcomes for pupils.

Assessment of the likely educational benefits for school leaders:

The cluster model will bring a range of benefits relating to the empowerment of school leaders in their work to improve provision and outcomes for children and young people, and the development of leadership skills in the education workforce.

Educational Benefits – School Leaders

Empowered System

Successful Recruitment to Key Posts

Strategic Focus on Improvement Outcomes

Parental/ Community Involvement

Improved Partnership Working

Career Enhancement and Progression

Professional Learning

Resource Efficiencies

Developing Future Leaders

Strategic Focus on Improvement Outcomes

- As referred to above, the establishment of common strategic improvement priorities across the Bute cluster will enhance capability, coherence and consistency in improvement planning, allowing for greater consultation, planning and collaborative sharing of practice between staff in different cluster schools.

- Cluster budget planning will allow for greater discussion around how financial resources are used coherently and sustainably to improve learning experience for children and young people. The sharing of resources can allow spending to go further,

creating best value for stakeholders. Using common resources will also allow strategic planning among cluster staff relating to how resources are best employed for learning.

- The Executive Leadership model across the Bute cluster will create greater consistency of leadership. The Executive Head Teacher, Depute Head Teachers and other staff empowered to take on leadership roles would lead specific aspects of improvement across the cluster, and have a valuable overview of progress across the different schools.

- The cluster model puts in place the same Executive Head Teacher from Pre-5 to S6. This will establish strong relationships with families and build trust, encouraging and empowering parents and carers of children at all stages to contribute to planning and self-evaluation for improvement.

- Staff will be employed to the cluster, both teaching and support staff. Staff can therefore bring their particular strengths and areas of expertise to support other schools within the cluster.

Career Enhancement and Progression and Developing Future Leaders

Empowerment of education staff, and building their motivation, participation and ambition will be at the heart of cluster model provision.

- Executive Headships will be attractive, well-remunerated posts, attracting high-quality candidates, both from within the Bute area, and from elsewhere in Argyll and Bute and Scotland, including accessible areas of Inverclyde and Ayrshire.

- The executive nature of remits and responsibilities of Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers within the cluster model will allow practitioners to more quickly and effectively develop their capacities and capabilities as leaders. Argyll and Bute will therefore be able to "grow our own" leaders, encouraging staff retention and creating a staff with understanding of local contexts and issues.

- The frequent strategic engagement with each other of staff from across the cluster will build their capability and motivation to drive improvement. Such engagement develops knowledge and insight into learning, improving both delivery of learning experiences and understanding of how to bring about improvement. These cluster-wide strategic conversations will empower and build confidence in teachers, preparing them for leadership and creating sustainability of leadership in Bute.

Stakeholders - Improved Partnership Working

- The opportunity for children and young people to work more closely with their peers in other schools will broaden their learning experiences, create more opportunities for peer support, help them apply their skills in unfamiliar contexts and develop interpersonal and communication skills and confidence.

- A cluster model in Bute would bring improved communication among school staff and between ELC, primary and secondary sectors. Co-ordination and planning of all aspects of educational provision would be enhanced.

- Existing external partnerships established by schools will extend to all schools in the Bute cluster, broadening learning experiences and opportunities for children and young people. Events and experiences organised in conjunction with partners would be accessible to all pupils in the cluster.

- The role of the Health and Social Care Partnership will be strengthened across the cluster leading to enhanced support and better outcomes for pupils and their families.

- The achievements of children and young people will be more widely recognised and celebrated across all schools in the Bute cluster and bring greater pride across the education being offered.

- A cluster model would improve communication between schools and parents/carers, achieving greater consistency in sharing information with parents across the island.

- More consistently developed partnership between schools and parents/carers will create an environment for Family Learning across the Bute cluster, where children's learning extends into the home. A cluster model will allow consistent support for parents/carers across schools, helping them in engaging effectively with their children's learning, and in creating the appropriate environment for learning in the home.

- Closer working between Parent Councils would be achieved through a Bute cluster model. Good practice, knowledge and skill would be more readily shared between Parent Councils, and the parental voice of the whole cluster community would become stronger.

- Greater partnership working would bring the community together. Schools would not be working as individual schools and would introduce more cohesive systems across the Bute cluster.

Appendix 3: DUNOON CLUSTER EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS
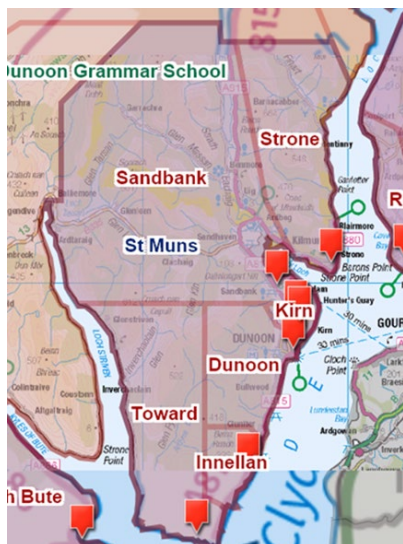
▶ Dunoon PS
▶ Kirn PS
▶ Sandbank PS including GMU
▶ St Muns PS
▶ Innellan PS
▶ Toward PS
▶ Strone PS
▶ Dunoon Grammar

Combined school rolls: 1,450
Combined ELC roll: 86

	Dunoon	Kirn	Sandbank	St Muns	Innellan	Toward	Strone	Dunoon Grammar
School roll	192	271	114	87	29	21	23	713
ELC roll	30	37	19					
Forecast school roll 2024	178	236	107	47	9	22	13	716

Assessment of the likely educational benefits on pupils:

Educational Benefits –
Children and Young People

Curriculum and Learning

Meeting learners' needs

Enhanced Transitions

Equity of Access to Broader Opportunities

Environment for Learning

Improved Educational Outcomes

Successful Learners

Effective Contributors

Confident Individuals

Responsible Citizens

The Education Service believes that there will be considerable educational benefits arising from this cluster proposal. These centre around;

- Curriculum and Learning;
- Meeting learners' needs;
- Enhanced transitions;
- Equity of access to broader opportunities;
- Broadening the range of opportunities;
- The environment for learning and
- Improved educational outcomes.

Curriculum and Learning

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community.

There is a continual challenge for all schools to deliver a school improvement agenda and deliver effectively the principles and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence. The National Improvement Framework priorities include raising attainment for all, and closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.

The curriculum includes a broad range of experiences across key contexts, including learning within individual curricular areas, learning across curricular areas (interdisciplinary learning), opportunities for achievement and wider experiences which reflect the whole school's ethos. Teachers plan across these four contexts to ensure every child and young person develops knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work.

The Dunoon Cluster offers a learning environment that encourages sound levels of achievement and provides a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve their full potential as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. The cluster has a very positive ethos and conducive to helping pupils succeed.

The Dunoon Cluster of schools have already established highly effective partnerships and developed positive working relationships between all the schools. The schools in the proposed Dunoon cluster work closely together to plan and implement improvements for children and young people in the area. The school community has a similar context due to the small geographical footprint. This facilitates joint working and a shared understanding of the needs in the community.

Meeting learners' needs

- As referred to above, the Dunoon cluster model allows more effective strategic approaches to curriculum planning – the continued development across schools of opportunities within the curriculum to meet the needs of all our children and young people.

- Cluster leadership will ensure children and young people receive a consistent learning experience across the Dunoon cluster. Individual Dunoon Primary schools will contribute strengths to develop a consistency of experience and opportunity across a range of curricular areas. For example, schools can be identified within the cluster which have a strong outdoor learning curriculum which would benefit other schools and secure equity. Work has already begun across the Dunoon cluster within the literacy curriculum. Accelerated Reader is a resource adopted by most schools in the area. The Dunoon Cluster model would expand on this shared approach to teaching and learning in literacy.

- In a Dunoon cluster model, support staff will share experience, expertise and skills to ensure all staff are upskilled to address the needs of our children and young people. Dunoon Grammar School and Dunoon Primary School both have Learning Centres which meet the needs of young people with complex needs. The knowledge and skills of staff who provide highly specialised support will be developed across the cluster providing a consistency of experience for children with additional support needs, thus securing inclusion and progress in learning.

- Furthermore, the fluidity and flexibility in staffing created across a cluster of schools will allow the most appropriately skilled staff to direct their practice and expertise towards the children in the cluster who most require it, irrespective of which school a pupil attends. The close proximity of schools within the Dunoon cluster will remove any barrier which may exist regarding travelling between settings.

- The Dunoon cluster model also creates improved opportunities for our gifted and talented children and young people. Collegiate work between cluster schools will allow better pathways to be developed to ensure gifted and talented pupils in Dunoon have wider opportunities and a clear plan for progression in all curricular areas. Partnership work already in place in individual schools would be expanded within the cluster to meet the needs of our highly able pupils and offer a breadth of experience. For example Dunoon Grammar School's links with Argyll College and local employers would afford opportunities for challenge and breadth of learning.

Enhanced transitions

A cluster model in Dunoon will facilitate smoother, more coherent and effective transitions for all learners.

- In Dunoon the closer connections between schools will allow pupils to have regular and structured contact with their peers over the whole of their primary education, preparing them more effectively for transition to secondary school, in terms of their interpersonal relationships. This will enhance transition opportunities for vulnerable children and young people and support earlier pastoral transitions for all. This will be especially beneficial to the school with smaller P7 cohorts, such as Strone, Innellan and Toward Primaries, transitioning in Dunoon Grammar.

- As indicated above, the increased collegiate working and sharing of practice and information across the cluster will ensure the planning and delivery of more personalised and bespoke enhanced transition opportunities for vulnerable children and young people within the cluster curriculum plan.

- The cluster model will benefit planning for transitions. Collaborative work between cluster schools will reduce the need for individual planning between Dunoon Grammar School and each of the seven primary schools, freeing up resources, and increasing the consistency, expectations and quality of transitional provision, particularly in the key Responsibility of All areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing.

- This level of enhanced planning between Dunoon Grammar and the seven primary schools within the cluster will allow an effective combination of face-to-face and digital transition provision to be delivered over a longer period of time. Provision to primary children by secondary staff will become a norm, enhancing overall curricular learning experiences for children, as well as greatly benefitting their transition experience.

- Positive destination data can be shared across the Dunoon cluster and support the early introduction of career education within the primaries with sharing of secondary resources and specific subject expectations. Responsibility for securing positive destinations for learners lies with all, as detailed in Our Children, Their Future. By having a strategic overview of this data, the success of individual primary schools in contributing to a young person achieving a positive destination will be used to develop an effective primary curriculum which supports successful outcomes.

- Transition from Early Year to Primary 1 would be enhanced through strategic planning at cluster level. Greater opportunity would be afforded pre-5 children to take part in transition events. The Dunoon cluster will work effectively with partner providers such as Patchwork Nursery, Clyde Cottage, Innellan Family Centre and individual childminders. At the earliest opportunity each cohort will develop interpersonal relationships with their peers who will be attending different schools. These relationships will remain with them throughout their primary experience and the transition into Dunoon Grammar School, where they reform as one cohort.

Equity of access to broader opportunities

In a Dunoon cluster model, a broader range of opportunities can be offered to all pupils through the combining of budgets, resources and professional expertise, and the greater logistical capacity the model would bring.

- The quality and consistency of curriculum and educational experiences provided to learners will be increased as a result of greater planning and evaluation between staff across schools.

- Similarly, and as previously referenced, there will be greater opportunity to collegiately plan and develop the important learning context of interdisciplinary learning, where planning and provision cover outcomes across a range of subject areas. Opportunities to showcase pupil work throughout the community will increase, including cluster events.

- Opportunities to recognise and celebrate pupils' achievement across the whole Dunoon cluster will be increased, increasing children and young people's motivation to achieve and progress, and developing their understanding of the wider educational context across the area.

- The cluster model in Dunoon will support the sharing across schools of opportunities stemming from each school's local community projects and partnerships. This will strengthen a curriculum which broadens pupils' experiences and develops life and employability skills. Increased communication with local groups such as, the Dunoon project, Bid Dunoon, The Cowal Highland Gathering and local tourism community will support the development of exciting tasks and opportunities

- The greater capacity of staff to plan more effectively across schools, bringing greater and more varied levels of experience and expertise, and an increase in effective logistical planning, will extend opportunities for children with specific or complex needs to access a wider range of opportunities, both with their peers, and as part of their individual educational plans.

- A greater balance of curriculum areas within the cluster curriculum framework will be achieved through the pooling of subject expertise among teachers, and the equitable delivery of subject areas to all schools. This will give pupils access to subject areas not previously available to pupils in some schools.

- The development of Broad General Education curriculum in Dunoon Grammar School will be developed by working closely with primary colleagues, thus securing a progression continuum as learners move across stages.

- In addition, the opportunities for increased partnership working both locally and nationally will support the induction of new opportunities across the Dunoon Cluster.

- At present, Dunoon schools with Early Years provision access the local environment to deliver the outdoor learning curriculum, in line with Argyll & Bute's Three Assets Approach. As stated above, the small geographical footprint of the Dunoon cluster means that they share the same environment, culture and context, but individually plan experiences with a range of opportunities.   The new model of leadership would ensure that planning in Early Years is consistent across all settings with an equity of opportunities and experiences. Strengths would be shared to ensure a rich Early Years curriculum. Partnership working would also be developed in line with the Three Assets Approach

Environment for learning

The cluster model in Dunoon will allow all children to access a greater variety of high quality learning environments across a greater number of settings.

- Effective planning with parents and transport services will allow pupils and staff to move around different cluster schools to take advantage of the facilities best suited to particular areas of learning. Facilities would be viewed as a shared resource which is equally accessible to all pupils.   In the Dunoon cluster, this will allow pupils access to better facilities and provision relating to PE, Music and IT, and practical subjects such as Home Economics, Technical and Drama.

- Outdoor Learning provision will also be improved for all learners. For example, the excellent outdoor learning opportunities afforded at Toward and Innellan Primaries can be made available to schools who are based in town and therefore have a reduced capacity to offer rich learning experiences beyond the classroom.

- Outlying schools such as Strone, Toward and Innellan will also able to use the facilities of the town schools which would allow them greater access to experiences in Dunoon town centre. These include theatre events, local museums, the swimming pool, local shops and community events.

- Children with additional support needs will be able access learning environments and experiences equally across the cluster. For example Dunoon Primary has high and low sensory rooms that could be accessed for therapeutic purposes. It's Family Room, which was part of the refurbishment of Dunoon Primary, is a community facility situated in the centre of the town which could be accessed by all cluster schools for engagement with the wider Dunoon community.

- The digital learning environment would be enhanced through a Dunoon cluster model. Teachers' knowledge and skills in using digital platforms for learning and teaching will be more effectively shared among colleagues, and teachers across the cluster will work collaboratively to build online learning experiences and resources for digital Family Learning in pupils' homes.

- With the planned creation of a STEM HUB in the town, there is a unique opportunity for the Dunoon Cluster to work in close partnership with colleagues to develop highly effective Digital and STEM learning pathways. By developing this partnership as a cluster, equity of access and experience in this core area of education will be secured.

Improved educational outcomes

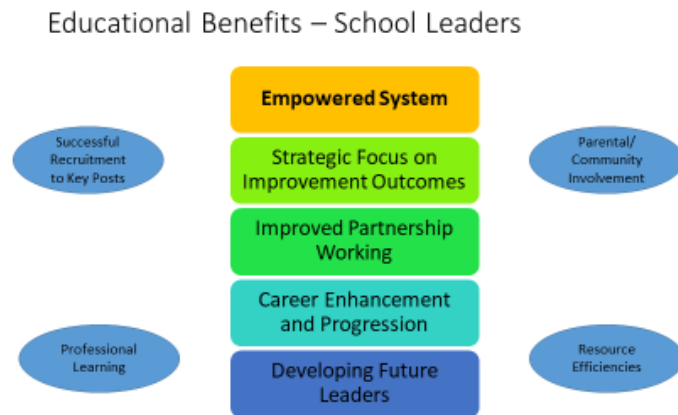All of the above factors detailing the educational benefits of a cluster model for Dunoon will deliver improved educational outcomes for children and young people.

- Pupil attainment across the cluster, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy, will increase as a result of increased effectiveness in curriculum planning and delivery brought about by the high-quality, high-level collegiate work of teachers and leaders across schools.

- Similarly, the enhanced collaborative work of teachers across the cluster in developing the highest quality of learning, teaching and assessment will impact positively on pupil attainment. Moderation across the cluster will be 'built-in' to the Dunoon model and will not have to separately planned and implemented. Consistent moderation across all levels will result in a shared, ambitious standard of teaching and learning.

- Strategic planning on a cluster level frees time in individual schools to plan teaching and learning which has the greatest impact in the classroom.

- A strategic overview of attainment data across all schools will highlight areas of strength which will then be shared across the cluster. Existing good practice will be recognised and identified, and incorporated into strategic planning to improve provision and ensure equity of experience for young people across the cluster.

- The cluster model will facilitate improved tracking and monitoring across the cluster from Early Level to 4th Level. This will inform curriculum development and planning, ensuring areas of lesser attainment are addressed. It will also allow development needs common to more than one school to be identified and addressed more efficiently and coherently. The cluster model of tracking and monitoring will allow the directing of expertise from other cluster schools to support a school's drive for improvement, and will encourage collaborative planning of interventions suggested by tracking and monitoring of attainment.

- While recognising the unique situation, context and curriculum rationale of each school within a cluster, the Dunoon cluster model will allow a strong degree of common, consistent strategic planning and self-evaluation. School Improvement Planning and Standards and Quality Reporting across the primary schools in the Dunoon clusters will have a commonality of focus, which will lead to improved, more sustainable outcomes for pupils.

Assessment of the likely educational benefits for school leaders:

The cluster model will bring a range of benefits relating to the empowerment of school leaders in their work to improve provision and outcomes for children and young people, and the development of leadership skills in the education workforce.

Educational Benefits – School Leaders

Strategic Focus on Improvement Outcomes

- As referred to above, the establishment of common strategic improvement priorities across the Dunoon cluster will enhance capability, coherence and consistency in improvement planning, allowing for greater consultation, planning and collaborative sharing of practice between staff in different cluster schools.

- Cluster budget planning will allow for greater discussion around how financial resources are used coherently and sustainably to improve learning experience for children and young people. The sharing of resources can allow spending to go further,

creating best value for stakeholders. Using common resources will also allow strategic planning among cluster staff relating to how resources are best employed for learning.

- The Executive Leadership model across the Dunoon cluster will build on the effective cluster working partnerships already in place, while creating greater consistency of leadership. The Executive Head Teacher, Depute Head Teachers and other staff empowered to take on leadership roles would lead specific aspects of improvement across the cluster, and have a valuable overview of progress across the different schools.

- The cluster model puts in place the same Executive Head Teacher from Pre-5 to S6. This will establish strong relationships with families and build trust, encouraging and empowering parents and carers of children at all stages to contribute to planning and self-evaluation for improvement.

- Staff will be employed to the cluster, both teaching and support staff. Staff can therefore bring their particular strengths and areas of expertise to support other schools within the cluster.

Career Enhancement and Progression and Developing Future Leaders

Empowerment of education staff, and building their motivation, participation and ambition will be at the heart of cluster model provision.

- Executive Headships will be attractive, well-remunerated posts, attracting high-quality candidates, both from within the Dunoon area, and from elsewhere in Argyll and Bute and Scotland.

- The executive nature of remits and responsibilities of Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers within the cluster model will allow practitioners to more quickly and effectively develop their capacities and capabilities as leaders. Argyll and Bute will therefore be able to "grow our own" leaders, encouraging staff retention and creating a staff with understanding of local contexts and issues.

- The role of Principal Teachers in the cluster model will allow practitioners to gain experience in a middle leadership role which is vital to the effective leadership of a primary school.

- The frequent strategic engagement with each other of staff from across the cluster will build their capability and motivation to drive improvement. Such engagement develops knowledge and insight into learning, improving both delivery of learning experiences and understanding of how to bring about improvement. These cluster-wide strategic conversations will empower and build confidence in teachers, preparing them for leadership and creating sustainability of leadership in Dunoon.

Stakeholders - Improved Partnership Working

- The opportunity for children and young people to work more closely with their peers in other schools will broaden their learning experiences, create more opportunities for peer support, help them apply their skills in unfamiliar contexts and develop interpersonal and communication skills and confidence. The wellbeing of our pupils will be directly impacted when given the opportunity to develop interpersonal relationships with their peers in other schools.

- A cluster model in Dunoon would bring improved communication among school staff and between ELC, primary and secondary sectors. Co-ordination and planning of all aspects of educational provision would be enhanced.

- Existing external partnerships established by schools will extend to all schools in the Dunoon cluster, broadening learning experiences and opportunities for children and young people. Events and experiences organised in conjunction with partners would be accessible to all pupils in the cluster.

- The achievements of children and young people will be more widely recognised and celebrated across all schools in the cluster.

- A cluster model would improve communication between schools and parents/carers, achieving greater consistency in sharing information with parents across the area.

- More consistently developed partnership between schools and parents/carers will create an environment for Family Learning across the Dunoon cluster, where children's learning extends into the home. A cluster model will allow consistent support for

parents/carers across schools, helping them in engaging effectively with their children's learning, and in creating the appropriate environment for learning in the home.

- Closer working between Parent Councils would be achieved through a Dunoon cluster model. Good practice, knowledge and skill would be more readily shared between Parent Councils, and the parental voice of the whole cluster community would become stronger.

- Greater partnership working would bring the community together. Schools would not be working as individual schools and would introduce more cohesive systems across the Dunoon cluster.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL   **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

EDUCATION SERVICE   **10 JUNE 2021**

STREAMLINING CENTRAL EDUCATION MANAGEMENT TEAM

1.0   INTRODUCTION

1.1   The workstream aimed to analyse the role of the services within the remit of the central management support teams in the Education Service to establish if there is a more cost effective alternative service delivery model that can be implemented. Whilst it is recognised that the improvement of learning outcomes will not be enhanced by diminishing the overall support and challenge to schools, there is potential to undertake this function in a different way by streamlining the role of the central team, expanding partnership working within the Northern Education Alliance and potentially devolving some responsibilities to schools and their senior management teams to lead curricular development and improvement in line with the self-improving system.

1.2   The primary objective is to ensure a robust team with the capacity to support the sustainability and viability of schools within the unique geographic area of Argyll and Bute. To do this the project also requires to take account of the emerging findings on the most effective management arrangements for school leadership structures in future.

2.0   DETAIL

2.1   The project scope covered a budget of around £1.7m, including 12 Education manager/officer posts, the Digital Learning and Community Learning Leads, and the 12 Education support HQ posts which are mainly administrative support. The Early Years support staff are not included other than the senior manager post and the Principal Psychologist costs are included to cover all central management roles. However, the Heads of Service budget is not included as it has been dealt with as part of the most recently implemented review of the Corporate Chief Officer structure.
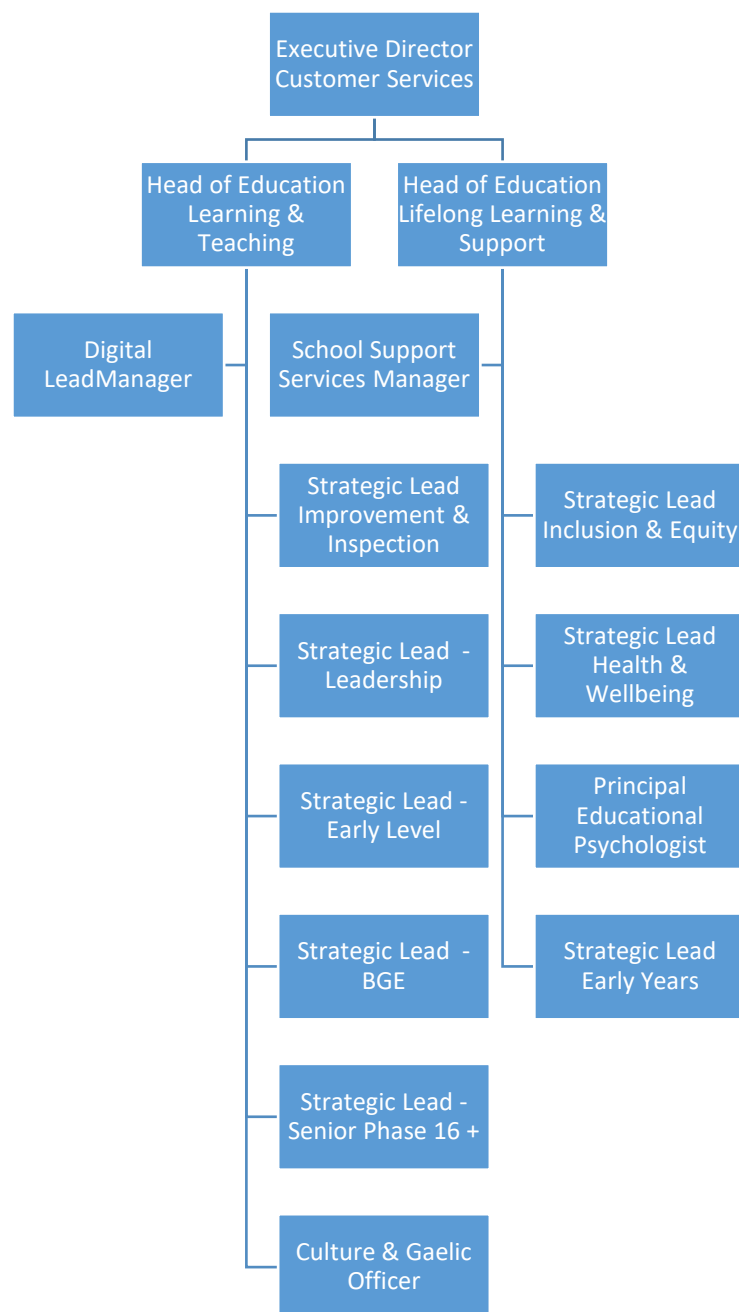
2.2   For background information, Education Scotland carried out an inspection of the Education functions of Argyll and Bute Council (INEA) in 2016 and returned in 2018 to carry out further visits to monitor progress.   The follow up report stated that the authority had made positive and continued progress since the original inspection. It was noted that a key element within this was the strong capacity of the two Heads of Service to enhance educational leadership across the authority and the increased knowledge and capacity of the central team to provide higher levels of support and challenge. A sound evaluative process to identify risks had been put in place and a carefully structured annual programme of quality improvement school visits by central team officers provided a more consistent approach with a clear purpose and opportunities to engage with children and young people. The importance of having a robust and effective central support team to ensure the Council fulfils its statutory duties and complements the role of empowered Head Teachers was reinforced by Education Scotland.

2.3   The workstream looked at the roles of the senior management teams in larger schools to determine what capacity they have, and what amendments to job sizing would be required if those teams could take on broader quality assurance responsibilities in future for the benefit of the wider Council area. However, the Head Teacher charter already requires devolving more responsibility in relation to staffing, budgets, curriculum and learning and teaching directly to Head Teachers which limits the capacity available to undertake other work.   The potential for current practitioners, e.g. Deputes, to undertake a pan authority lead role on key service themes was considered. It was felt that this works well for a time limited period when backfill can be arranged but that introducing posts of this nature, with time split weekly between the school and a broader area on a permanent basis would create management, accountability and job satisfaction issues.

2.4   There is also the possibility to create more formalised collegiate support within existing geographic cluster groups to reduce reliance on centrally provided services, but the move towards an Executive Headship model will take this approach forward in a more formal and enhanced manner.

2.5   The added value and potential economies of scale that could be achieved through increased partnership working within the Northern Alliance have also been considered and the potential option of collaborative groups of Head Teachers receiving more direct guidance from the Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC). There are benefits in this partnership which are now bearing fruit, but they are unable to offer resources as a direct replacement for the capacity required to meet the Council's statutory duties as an Education authority.

2.6   Benchmarking of activities across a number of RIC's has identified that there are a range of approaches to providing the central education support functions in Councils. The information showed that although the Education manager, officer and support officer roles have standard national grades under the Teachers grading structures, the terminology applied to posts varies considerably and there is no commonly applied model. With the scaling factor across authorities so wide

ranging, even within RIC's, each Council has adopted its own staffing structure to accommodate local circumstances and no meaningful activity based costing could be undertaken.

2.7 A qualitative survey of head teachers on the role of the central team functions was completed in early 2020. The feedback was very positive about the role of the Support Services team, but other than the Additional Support Needs team, the responses provide limited information on some of the other professional Education roles. However, follow up enquiries highlighted the value and need for the quality improvement role provided.

2.8 The project has highlighted the logistical and geographic challenges in achieving 3 visits a year to each school. It was agreed that the comprehensive implementation of skype for business across the whole school estate would be of significant benefit for the productivity of the central team and that a geographical area based link officer role provided significant value. The Covid Pandemic has forced changes in the manner of providing support to schools and opportunities for enhanced digital learning support have been embraced across the central management team to the benefit of the teaching and other school staff. The role of the Digital Learning Lead within the central team was highlighted as being of key significance in supporting the quality and efficiency of the Education service of the present and future.

2.9 It was identified that there have been some minor inconsistencies within the operational implementation of the current approach within the four areas. This has proved a challenge due to the major impact of the Pandemic on Education Services over the last year. Staff turnover has impacted on the team and a number of roles have been covered on a temporary basis pending the outcome of this review. However, it has been agreed that there should be a clear management structure without any matrix reporting for staff and the arrangement with a known specific support contact for each school provides an effective working model and enhances the quality improvement function of the local authority.

2.10 The current arrangement of the Principal Educational Psychologist and her team reporting directly to a Head of Service has worked well in recent years and with the increasing need for specialised support from this team there is no proposal to alter this set up.

2.11 The School Support Services manager post and her team were highly valued in the Head Teacher survey undertaken prior to the Pandemic and have undertaken a wider range of activities over the last year to assist in the successful operation of the service. The role of the team in co-ordinating a wide range of functions has been of significant benefit to the Heads of Service and Head Teachers. The manager post will be re-evaluated to ensure it is appropriately graded for the work undertaken.

2.12 In addition to the above, there are currently 4 TZF grade posts, 8 TZE posts, 1 LGE 14 and 1 LGE 13 posts in the central team. Having considered in detail the

roles needed to sustain service improvements in future years and meet the requirements of the INEA inspection it is proposed that the team in future will comprise of 8 TZF posts, 1 TZE post and 1 LGE 14 post. In total, including the saving from the LGE 13 Community Learning post which is part of the central team and has just been agreed as a redundancy by the Council as part of the CLD staff transfer to Live Argyll, the revised structure will result in a saving of just over £300k from 2022/23 onwards. Due to retirements and managed vacancies it is anticipated that there will be no compulsory redundancies due to this proposal.

2.13   The proposed organisational structure for central Educational Support services is shown underneath. This reflects the need to provide cohesive area and sector links across Early Years, Primary and Secondary, and a strategic overview of all the key national priorities for Education set out in the National Improvement Framework. It also delivers on the focus for improvement and inspection to ensure that the key aims of excellence and equity are delivered.

Organisation chart:

- Executive Director Customer Services
  - Head of Education Learning & Teaching
    - Digital LeadManager
    - School Support Services Manager
    - Strategic Lead Improvement & Inspection
    - Strategic Lead - Leadership
    - Strategic Lead - Early Level
    - Strategic Lead - BGE
    - Strategic Lead - Senior Phase 16 +
    - Culture & Gaelic Officer
  - Head of Education Lifelong Learning & Support
    - Strategic Lead Inclusion & Equity
    - Strategic Lead Health & Wellbeing
    - Principal Educational Psychologist
    - Strategic Lead Early Years

2.14   All of the posts will have common responsibilities for sector strategic planning, Northern Alliance RIC workstreams and committee report preparation.   In addition, the key areas of responsibility for the posts in the diagram are as follows.

Post	Key areas of responsibility

Strategic Lead – Improvement & Inspection	- Improvement planning - Self-evaluation in schools. - Support for HMI. - Data analysis - Performance Management - Co-ordination of school quality improvement visits - Quality assurance of challenge and support visits - Annual Plan - Ongoing engagement HMI visits - School Consultations
Strategic Lead - Leadership	- GTCS including referrals - Coaching strategy - Professional Learning at all levels - LA and National - Link schools group - Probationers - Newly Appointed Head Teachers. - School Quality Improvement visits - PRD & Professional Update - Staffin6
Strategic Lead – Early Level	- Curriculum (2-6) - Learner pathways - Assessment and Moderation - Tracking and Monitoring - Link schools group - School Quality Improvement visits - Literacy and Numeracy
Strategic Lead – BGE	- Curriculum (6-12) - Learner pathways - Assessment and Moderation - Tracking and Monitoring - Link schools group - School Quality Improvement visits - Literacy and Numeracy
Strategic Lead – Senior Phase & 16+	- Curriculum (12-18) - Senior phase learner pathways - SQA - Positive destinations - Link schools group - School Quality Improvement visits - Participation - SDS - DYW - Transition - Accredited experiences and awards - Digital Learning Technologies
Culture & Gaelic Officer	- Gaelic - Modern Languages 1 +2 - School Quality Improvement visits - Culture - Music provision
Strategic Lead – Inclusion & Equity	- Child Protection and Safeguarding - Pupil support - ASN

	• GIRFEC • Link Schools group • School Quality Improvement visits • Care experienced children & young people • Home Learners • Interrupted Learners • LGBTQI
Strategic Lead – Health & Wellbeing	• Health and Wellbeing Curriculum • Lead link with HSCP and CFT • Partnership with other council services • Link Schools group • Global citizenship • UNCRC • Rights Respecting Schools • Parental Engagement • School Quality Improvement visits • Family learning
Strategic Lead - Early Years	• EY staffing • Support birth – 2 • Management of community child minding service • EY services management & delivery • Commissioning and engagement with funded providers • PL in ELC • Out of school care • QA for outside providers • SLA's • School Quality Improvement visits • Family support • QA ELC • HMI and Care Inspections • Support to Third sector childcare partners • Transitions

3.0 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 This proposal is considered to offer a dynamic and flexible team structure which will enable the authority to successfully support the schools to meet the aims of the Council's vision for Education and the national policy directives relating to excellence and equity for all our children and young people. It has also taken account of the financial pressures on the front line school services and aims to deliver best value through a cost effective team and the delivery of savings in line with the forecast future demands on the Council's budget.

3.2 It recommended that members approve the implementation of the new structure for 2022/23 onwards.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Policy – This fits clearly with the Council's Education policies

4.2   Financial – This offers an annual saving of around £300k

4.3   Legal – Helps ensure the authority meets its statutory duties and inspections.

4.4   HR – There will be a reduction of 2 fte and no compulsory redundancies

4.5   Fairer Scotland Duty: - No implications

4.5.1   Equalities - protected characteristics – in line with requirements

4.5.2   Socio-economic Duty – N/A

4.5.3   Islands – N/A

4.6.   Risk- potential impact mitigated through proposals

4.7   Customer Service – supports the key front line delivery aims of the service

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Yvonne McNeilly, Policy Lead for Education

12 May 2021

For further information contact:

Louise Connor, Head of Education; Learning & Teaching, and Chief Education Officer

Donald MacVicar, Transformation Project Officer

BUSINESS MANAGERS FOR SCHOOLS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

1.1   A Project Group was established to carry out a review of the business support in place for schools across the Authority and to ascertain if there was a benefit in carrying out a redesign of this support both in financial terms and in terms of service to the school.

1.2   The project was to look at the provision of business managers to support all schools and the benefits that would be associated with that post.

2.0   DETAIL

2.1   The project Group was brought together incorporating the School Services Support Manager, 2 x AFAs, a secondary head teacher, 2 primary head teachers and a union representative of EIS

2.2   A questionnaire was developed and circulated to all head teachers throughout the Authority regarding the current provision and what additional functions could be carried out by a business manager that wasn't currently covered with the remit of the AFA currently in post. The feedback from Primary schools was that they were content with the current support that they received from their AFAs and would not be willing to give up any budget to support the post. Feedback from the larger secondary schools was that they would welcome the new post of Business Manager but most would be unwilling to sacrifice budget/posts to obtain it. There was one secondary school who would be willing to cover the costs of this post should it progress.

2.3   Feedback from other Authorities across Scotland had been collated but the disparity was too great to form any particular consistency from.

2.4   The group drafted a job description and person specification for the a new Business Manager based on the tasks carried out within other Local Authorities and there were a number of concerns raised in relation to the impact that these tasks would have on depute head teacher posts currently within our schools.

2.5 It was agreed that the establishment of a Business Manager post would mean that secondary schools would have to sacrifice a depute in order to facilitate the post. This would have an impact on progression for teaching staff which unions would be unhappy to support.

2.6 The Education Transformation Board agreed at the meeting held on 9 September 2020 that work by this group should be suspended due to the lack of appetite to progress this by schools. Work could resume at a later date should there be sufficient justification for that.

3.0 CONCLUSION

3.1 That the Community Services acknowledge the work carried out by this group has been concluded and no further action will be taken in relation to this.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Policy - none

4.2 Financial - none

4.3 Legal - none

4.4 HR - none

4.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: none

4.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics - none

4.5.2 Socio-economic Duty - none

4.5.3 Islands - none

4.6. Risk - none

4.7 Customer Service - none

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Education Policy Lead

For further information contact: Susan Tyre, School Services Support Manager

SCHOOLS GENERATING ADDITIONAL INCOME

1.0   INTRODUCTION

1.1   The purpose of this report is to update the Community Services Committee on work of the Income Generating Project Team that was set up to examine ways in which additional income could be generated across the school estate to offset budget reductions and help to provide a sustainable educational service in Argyll and Bute for future years.

1.2   The focus of the project was to look at developing a more innovative approach to the use of school buildings and to determine whether they can become more in the way of community/commercial assets in future.   Building on the initial ideas which were generated by the Education Budget Working Group (EBWG), the Project Team focused on the following key areas:-

    A. Letting of School Facilities
    B. Sponsorship
    C. Commercial use of School Car Parks
    D. Reduction of Energy Consumption
    E. School Hostels
    F. Argyll Art Collection
    G. Early Years

2.0   DETAIL

2.1   To explore the feasibility of each of the income generating ideas a Project Team was established, consisting of the following membership:

- Donald MacVicar – Programme Manager
- Laura Blackwood – Project Lead
- Kjeld Thorup – Finance Rep
- Anne Devine – Education Rep – Secondary
- Alison Palmer – Education Rep – Primary
- Kathryn Wilkie – Education Rep – Central Team
- Lorna Cameron – Education Reps – Early Years
- Ailsa Dominick – Education rep – Early Years
- Jayne Jones – Commercial Services Rep
- Carianne De Koning – Commercial Services Rep
- David Allan – Commercial Services Rep

2.2 The following sections provide an update on the work that has been carried out to date by the Project Leads in respect of each of the proposals.

2.3 Letting of School Facilities

2.3.1 The focus of this proposal was to look at potential income generating opportunities by maximising the use of school facilities. A number of suggestions have been put forward by the Project Team, including:-

- A review of the current external letting arrangements for Secondary Schools – Live Argyll currently let all secondary school facilities out on behalf of the Council and retain any income generated. It is proposed that this matter is picked up as part of the annual review of the SLA in 2022/23. Linked to this, it is also proposed that the booking and charging processes for external lets are reviewed with a view to improving and streamlining the current set up.
- School Kitchens – an exploration of options to increase use of school kitchens during evenings and weekends, including partnership working with local businesses who would benefit from this arrangement. It is proposed that this option will be explored further once restrictions are sufficiently relaxed.

2.3.2 In addition to the above, one of the main areas identified was to market and promote the use of schools as venues for a range of community events. Taking account of the Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time of investigating these options, it was agreed that the most feasible course of action would be to pilot an outdoor market event, which are permitted. Following engagement with a number of Head Teachers, Lochgilphead Joint campus was identified as the pilot school.

2.3.3 If Members are agreeable, it is proposed that the outdoor market event will be arranged for a weekend in early summer (possible dates currently being explored in consultation with the Principal of Lochgilphead Joint Campus). The Council's Events Manager will lead on the arrangements for the event, building on the experience and success of similar events held at the Helensburgh Civic Centre. Stall Hire Scotland will be engaged to help facilitate stalls and market traders, and there will also be close working with the school, teachers, pupils, and the local community to identify a wide range of stalls for the event. The Council will raise income via stall/pitch fees and from operating their own drinks/catering stalls.

2.3.4 If the pilot event takes place and is deemed to be a success, plans would be put in place to replicate similar arrangements at other school locations across the authority.

2.4 Sponsorship

2.4.1 The proposal put forward by the EBWG was to look at opportunities to increase sponsorship activity across the Education Service/Council as a whole. At the present time there is a level of sponsorship activity already taking place across the authority, including a long standing sponsorship agreement with the Argyll

Piping Trust and other individual sponsorship arrangements across schools in respect of obtaining, for example, resources and equipment.

2.4.2 To assist in identifying any further sponsorship opportunities, a benchmarking exercise was undertaken with other local authorities, via the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES). All 32 Councils were contacted and a summary of the 6 responses received are detailed below:-

Council	Sponsorship Activity
Moray	Have put sponsorship on hold due to Covid-19, but have previously looked into specific advertising and sponsorship of Moray Music Centre. This included approaching instrument and accessory suppliers to request their sponsorship of programmes, advertising at concerts and promotion year round. No other sponsorship activity to report.
Dundee City	Application for Common Good Funding (Pipes and Drums Trust) on an annual basis (£58k) which they have to match fund to support staff costs. In addition, applications to other available funding streams.
Stirling	At present do not secure any income via sponsorship.
Highland	Explored the possibility of selling advertising space on Chromebooks but weighing up the modest levels of income and the potential negative reaction to advertising on pupil devices this was not pursued any further.
West Lothian	Use of sponsorship to fund corporate wide staff recognition and award programmes, and other one off events such as prizegivings/sporting events or to contribute to attendance at cultural events.
South Ayrshire	Have discussed the possibility of sponsorship but never progressed due to negativity attached to using schools for marketing purposes.

2.4.3 This was a useful exercise to carry out but unfortunately there were no new areas of sponsorship for the Council to purse as a result, as the Council have or are currently carrying out all of those identified. On this basis the work on this workstream has been concluded by the Project Team.

2.5 Commercial use of School Car Parks

2.5.1 The project group were asked to investigate the opportunity to utilise school car parks as chargeable public car parking during periods (such as school holidays) when they weren't in use by the school. Initially officers from Education assessed the schools to shortlist those where it was considered there would be demand for public parking and where the school layout would be suitable for this purpose. On the basis of this exercise, it was recommended that Oban High School was used as a pilot project to assess the feasibility, practicality and legality of the proposal.

2.5.2 Initial consultations were then undertaken with the Headteacher of Oban High School and Roads officers who raised a number of matters for consideration, which are summarised below:-

- School car park should not be used by public during the school day (7.30 – 18.00) due to security, welfare and child protection issues. Acceptance that all other days/times are suitable;
- Consultation and engagement with the school and other stakeholders if a decision is taken to amend the use of the school car park;
- Any proposed parking charges require to be in line with those currently in operation by Roads;
- Liaise with Legal Services in respect of the proposals, including any potential restrictions around the management of school car parks, including, for example, the use of car registration recognition systems and the enforcement of parking breaches;
- Current demand and parking infrastructure within the locality.

2.5.3 Thereafter, it was considered important to assess the legality of the proposals with Legal Services, which focused on two main areas of concern. Firstly, is there anything in the title to the school grounds which prohibits the proposed use or could lead to it being challenged. Secondly, is the operation of a chargeable car park (including enforcement) possible outwith Roads existing procedures / orders either operated by the council or privately. These matters are currently being assessed and will be considered further by the project team in due course.

2.5.4 In the meantime some thought has been given to the potential operational options should the issues above be resolved. The car park could either be operated internally by the council or by an external company with profits being shared. The internal operation would require resources to manage the car park and investment in ticketing infrastructure although it may be possible to tie this in with existing Roads operations. Under external management this could be undertaken remotely by a web based supplier, who will manage your car parking spaces via an online app. There are little or no costs for the set up or management of such a service, with income generated shared 80/20 in favour of the council. The supplier would undertake appropriate marketing of the car parking spaces and provide local enforcement officers.

2.5.5 Camper van parking was also considered as part of this process as this can be a significant issue in areas with high volumes of tourists. However, following discussions with Roads, it was considered that the investment levels to provide waste disposal facilities together with the potential conflict of providing this in school grounds made this a more difficult requirement to satisfy.

2.5.6 In terms of next steps the Project Team will:-

- Continue to liaise with Legal Services to determine whether there are any legal reasons not to pursue a pilot within Oban High School;

- Engage with colleagues in Roads and Infrastructure to ensure that the proposed pilot in not materially at odds with wider parking policy in Oban;
- Consult with other local authorities to ascertain whether others have pursued the use of school car parks as public car parks and if there are any lessons to be learned for their experience;
- Put in place arrangements for a pilot at Oban High School, if there is a desire to proceed with the proposal.

2.6   Reduction of Energy Consumption

2.6.1   The initial scope of this idea from the EBWG was to investigate any options available for education premises to generate income from renewable energy, including the use of solar panels, biomass generators and any other investment opportunities.

2.6.2   Following initial investigations it was apparent that consideration of renewables projects and income across the school estate was already being addressed as an integral part of larger corporate renewables sourcing projects led by the Head of Commercial Services. A strategic review of the Council's estate, carried out with support from experienced external consultants, resulted in the delivery of a range of economically viable projects being delivered across the school estate including biomass and solar pv.

2.6.3   On the basis of the existing corporate projects the Education Transformation Board (ETB) changed the scope of this proposal to energy reduction, with a particular focus on what activities schools can undertake to save energy in respect of a reduction in electricity, water, and waste, which are key components of the Eco Schools programme.

2.6.4   The uptake of Eco Schools across the authority is high with 84 out of 92 schools registered, with the majority of them having secured bronze, silver or green flag awards. Primary schools are particularly active, whilst there is scope for secondary schools to do more in terms of the eco agenda. At present there is no real incentive for schools to drive this forward in terms of generating income however, there is an opportunity for schools to contribute to the Council's climate change agenda and potentially reduce utility charges, by utilising the Eco Schools programme in a more proactive manner to save energy and potentially reduce utility charges.

2.7   School Hostels

2.7.1   Arising from discussions at the Project Team, there was a suggestion that it would be worthwhile exploring the use of the school hostels in Oban and Dunoon, on a commercial letting basis during the 6 week summer break. This is an idea which has been looked at previously on a number of occasions but to date has not been progressed.

2.7.2   The management of the two school hostels previously sat within the Education Service, but operation now lies with the HSCP following the integration of social care services in 2016. The hostels are, however, Council owned buildings. It is understood that staffing within the hostel is undertaken on a 40 week basis

and that the revenue budget sits within the HSCP, funded via GAE, based on the number of pupils occupying the hostel as a proportion of the school roll. Any proposal to operate the buildings outwith term time will require agreement from colleagues within the HSCP and careful consideration would need to be given to a number of factors, including who would manage the building, and potential costs associated with any letting opportunities, such as the additional cost of leaning, changing beds etc…

2.7.3 Having considered the terms of this idea, the Project Team agreed that there would be benefit in exploring further and that the most appropriate avenue for this would be via the Shared Services Project being taken forward by Commercial Services in partnership with the HSCP. FSM Consultancy were appointed on 12th April for a period of 12 months to act as Programme Manager for this piece of work. The project will initially focus on 'quick win' service delivery savings options that can be achieved on a shared basis but there is merit in looking at the future use of school hostels on a longer term basis as part of this work.

2.8 Argyll Art Collection

2.8.1 The Argyll Collection is a unique collection of 173 artworks, established between 1960 and 1990 by Mr James H Tyre, an Art Advisor for the then Argyll County Council, as a learning resource for the young people of Argyll and Bute. He achieved this with support from the author Naomi Mitchison who travelled extensively in Africa and Asia. The collection is divided up between school, with the intention that the pieces are rotated on a regular basis. Elements of the collection are also used for public exhibitions. The collection has historically been managed by the Education Service.

2.8.2 The ETB asked the Project Team to look at the feasibility of utilising elements of the Argyll Education Art Collection on a commercial basis, including the production of prints and other merchandise such as mugs and coasters.

2.8.3 The Council are owners of the Argyll Collection, however this does not grant the right to copy or replicate elements of the collection. Legally, prior consent must be sought from the copyright owner. On this basis an exercise was undertaken to establish the copyright holder for artists within the collection. A search using the Design and Artists Copyright Society (DACS), which is the main organisation representing artists in the UK and overseas, has enabled us to locate representation for four artists (Joan Eardley, John Byrne, Alan Davie and Robert MacBryde). Unfortunately this significantly limits the artwork that can potentially be used for commercial purposes.

2.8.4 To establish whether there would be merit in producing merchandise, the Project Lead undertook some research to collate the average retail prices and production costs for a range of artwork products including mugs, coasters, prints, calendars and greetings cards. Information was gathered from a number of sources, including local and national suppliers, and both physical and online retailers. Based on these details it is estimated that the potential profit margins would be very modest. For example, it is projected that the sale of 100 units of each product (mugs, coasters, prints, calendars and greetings cards) would

result in income levels of around £2000-£2500 (minus 5-10% payment to copyright holder).

2.8.5 Assuming that the Council wished to pursue the option of using these artworks on a commercial basis, an application would require to be submitted to obtain a copyright licence. This application would specify the type of product being created, print/production run, proposed retail/wholesale price, where it will be sold etc… If granted, typically a charge of 5-10% is applied to the retail price of each unit produced, so this would also need to be factored into any estimated profit margins.

2.8.6 There is a clear cultural interest in the Argyll Art Collection but it is difficult to determine any potential commercial market. Due to the limited artwork available and the minimal profits that could be achieved it is recommended that this proposal is not pursued any further.

2.8.7 An alternative proposal which could be taken forward by the Education Service is the use of pupil artwork/photography on a commercial basis. This already happens across a number of primary and secondary schools, for example the sale of calendars and Christmas cards at various points of the school term to generate funds for the school. This approach could be expanded across the school estate, with schools retaining all profits made for the benefit of pupils.

2.8.8 It should also be noted that the Cultural Coordinator within the Education Service, who manages the collection, is currently exploring a number of possible funding streams that can be accessed to support the continued investment in the collection to ensure that it is curated and conserved for future generations.

2.9 Early Years

2.9.1 This proposal is in respect of assessing the feasibility of extending the provision of early years hours within local authority establishments, which would offer parents and carers the opportunity to purchase wrap around care for their children outwith their funded 1140 hours Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). Feedback from recent consultations undertaken with parents in respect of the roll out of 1140 hours suggests that there is a demand for increased flexibility/more wraparound care, particularly within more rural locations.

2.9.2 The current operating model varies across establishments, but is normally within local authority hours of between 9am to 3pm, on a term time or 48 week basis. It is proposed that a pilot is carried out during summer 2021 to test whether an adapted model, providing increased child care opportunities for parents/carers is feasible. The service are currently working within the Scottish Government Covid 19 Guidance and this may impact on any proposed pilot. It is recommended that the pilot is undertaken within one of the local authority establishments in Campbeltown, on the basis that there are limited nursery services offering wraparound care within the area for 3 and 4 year olds.

2.9.3 The proposed operating model for the pilot is detailed below:-

Term Time

- Wraparound care could be purchased during holiday periods by families on a term time model.
- Wraparound hours could be sold outwith funded ELC between the hours of 8.30am until 9.00am and/or from 3.00pm until 5.30pm.
- 30 hours of funded ELC could be offered on a three day term time model of 8.30am to 5.30pm with the other two days being sold to families for wraparound.

48 Week Model

- Sessions are offered 48 weeks of the year with sessions at 8.30am to 1.30pm or 12.00pm to 5.00pm and the opposite session sold for wraparound care.

2.9.4 In the event that the pilot is agreed, the Early Years Officers leading on this project will pick up the necessary next steps in terms of putting in place arrangements including, for example, consultation with all key stakeholders (e.g. manager, staff, parents/carers, HR, Finance, Procurement).

2.9.5 If the pilot is successful and a decision is taken to roll out the wraparound model, parents and carers would require to be advised of the operating model in time for ELC Registration week. For example, if starting August 2022, all information would need to be available for January 2022.

3   **CONCLUSION**

3.1   Taking account of the work of the Project Team to date, Members are asked to consider the following recommendations in respect of each of the proposals discussed above:-

i.   Note the options being explored in respect of increasing the letting of school facilities and agree that an outdoor market is piloted at Lochgilphead Joint Campus in early summer.

ii.   Note the outcome of the benchmarking exercise carried out with other local authorities in respect of sponsorship activity and that no further action will be taken in this regard;

iii.   Agree that arrangements are put in place to pilot the use of Oban High School car park on a commercial basis;

iv.   Agree that all schools in Argyll and Bute proactively seek to save energy in respect of a reduction in electricity, water, and waste, for example via the Eco Schools Programme;

v.   Note that the use of school hostels on a commercial basis will be explored as part of the Shared Services Project with HSCP, being led by Commercial Services.

vi.   Note that there is limited scope to utilise the Argyll Art Collection on a commercial basis, however it is recommended that schools are encouraged to continue using pupil artwork/photography to raise funds.

vii.   Note that a number of funding streams are being explored to support the continued investment in the Argyll Art Collection to ensure that it is curated and conserved for future generations.

viii.   Early Years – agree that arrangements are put in place to pilot a wraparound hours model within Campbeltown.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1   Policy – proposals in line with national and local education policy

4.2   Financial – increased income generation / access to grant funding

4.3   Legal – in accordance with legislative requirements

4.4   HR – potential increase in staffing resource (e.g arising from extension of early years hours)

4.5   Fairer Scotland Duty: none arising from this report

4.5.1   Equalities - protected characteristics – none arising from this report

4.5.2   Socio-economic Duty – none arising from this report

4.5.3   Islands – none arising from this report

4.6.   Risk – none arising from this report.

4.7   Customer Service – possibility of increased access to services (early years)

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Education Policy Lead

11th May 2021

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DEVOLVED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

1.0   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Devolved School Management was introduced in 1993 to enhance and improve the management of resources at school level.   The Devolved School Management (DSM) guidance was reviewed in 2006, and again in 2012, taking account of the changing economic and financial climate for both Local Authorities and the Scottish Government.   In June 2017 the Scottish Government consulted on changes to DSM as part of the wider "Fair Funding to Achieve Excellence and Equity in Education" consultation.

1.2   As a result, updated guidance has been issued to build and improve on the DSM Guidelines of 2012 and, critically, reflect and integrate with the Education Reform Programme and priorities emerging from the Scottish Government and COSLA Education Reform Joint Agreement of June 2018.

1.3   The new guidelines were issued by Scottish Ministers under section 13 of the Standards in School's etc. Act 2000 (the 2000 Act).   The guidance was issued to Local Authorities in relation to their functions under Section 8[3] of the 2000 Act in relation to delegation schemes.

1.4   Full implementation of these guidelines was originally expected by April 2021. However, due to the outbreak of Covid 19 the implementation date was extended to April 2022. Local authorities are expected to update their individual scheme to take into account the new guidelines.

2.0   DETAIL

2.1   It was agreed at the first meeting of the Education Transformation Board that the revision of Argyll and Bute Council's (the Council's) Scheme of Devolved School Management would be included as one of the projects taken forward by the board.

2.2   A project team was established to review and update the Council's DSM Scheme in accordance with the updated Scottish Government guidelines. The project team included stakeholders from Education and Finance.

2.3   The project team first reviewed the existing scheme against the new guidelines, using the framework document published by the Scottish Government and the updated DSM principles.

2.4   The updated DSM principles aim to build on and enhance the foundations and principles of the 2012 guidance, they are:

- Subsidiarity and Empowerment.
- Collaboration.
- Accountability and Responsibility.
- Clarity and Equity.

These principles reflect the National Improvement Framework aims of excellence through raising attainment and achieving equity. The principles also fully endorse those proposed in the Fair Funding consultation:

- support excellence and equity - ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed;
- be fair - placing the needs of all children and young people at the centre;
- be simple, transparent and predictable – ensuing the costs of delivering education can be easily understood and explained and that schools are able to manage and plan ahead with certainty; and
- deliver value for money – ensuring that every penny spent is used effectively

2.5   A fully revised Devolved School Management Scheme has been written and is currently in draft form. The updated scheme has been benchmarked against two other Local Authority schemes published in draft.

2.6   The draft document has circulated to the following groups for comment:

- Education Management Team;
- Education Budget Working Group;
- Headteachers; and the
- Joint Services Committee.

2.7   Training material has been produced in line with the updated guidance and will be delivered to Headteachers, aspiring leaders and other interested stakeholders when the updated guidance is published.

3.0 CONCLUSION

3.1   The committee is asked to note the progress made in relation to the revised Scheme of Devolved School Management in line with new legislation.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1   Policy

4.2   Financial

4.3   Legal

4.4   HR

4.5   Fairer Scotland Duty:

4.5.1   Equalities - protected characteristics

4.5.2   Socio-economic Duty

4.5.3   Islands

4.6.   Risk

4.7   Customer Service

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Education Policy Lead

12 May 2021

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL   **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

EDUCATION SERVICE   **10 JUNE 2021**

LEARNING ESTATES STRATEGY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 A project Group was established to look at a Learning Estate Strategy at the end of 2018. Members of the Project Group were pulled from all stakeholders within the Council and members contributed to the layout and content of the draft document that has been prepared for approval.

1.2 It was agreed at the first meeting of the Education Transformation Board that the Learning Estate Strategy would be incorporated as one of the projects being taken forward by the Board.

2.0 DETAIL

2.1 A full Learning Estates Strategy (LES) has been prepared which provides an overview of the current school estate and outlines the future priorities of the Service which is crucial for the future Education of every child within Argyll and Bute.

2.2 The Learning Estate Strategy will support the Education Service to realise the ambitions of equity and excellence for all by supporting the physical conditions for wellbeing and learning across learning estates to support sustainable and inclusive economic growth. The Strategy will set out the principles and priorities to drive the development of the learning estates across Argyll and Bute which aligns with the National Learning Estate Agenda.

2.3 Our learning estate will support the three key National education and skills priorities which are:

- Getting it right for every child
- Curriculum for Excellence
- Developing the Young Workforce

2.4 The National Learning Estate Strategy (Connecting people, Places and Learning) sets out ten guiding principles:

1. Learning environments should support and facilitate excellent joined up learning and teaching to meet the needs of all learners;
2. Learning environments should support the wellbeing of all learners, meet varying needs to support inclusion and support transitions for all learners;
3. The learning estate should be well-managed and maintained, making the best of existing resources, maximising occupancy and representing and delivering best value;
4. The condition and suitability of learning environments should support and enhance their function;
5. Learning environments should serve the wider community and where appropriate be integrated with the delivery of other public services in line with the place principle;
6. Learning environments should be greener, more sustainable, allow safe and accessible routes and be digitally enabled;
7. Outdoor learning and the use of outdoor learning environments should be maximised;
8. Good consultation about learning environments, direct engagement with learners and communities about their needs and experiences, and an involvement in decision making processes should lead to better outcomes for all;
9. Collaboration across the learning estate, and collaboration with partners in localities, should support maximising its full potential;
10. Investment in Scotland's learning estate should contribute towards improving learning outcomes and support sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Guided by the above National principles, the LES for Argyll and Bute lays down 5 guiding principles which align to those National strategies and have been developed through collaborative working across all Services of the Council and support from Northern Alliance colleagues. The 5 guiding principles and aspirations for the LES are as follows:

1. Learning environments in all schools should have a suitability grading of A or B
2. High Quality Outdoor learning for 2-18 to be A or B standard for suitability
3. Young People within Argyll and Bute are educated within a fully accessible learning establishment of A or B Grading for suitability
4. Argyll and Bute will maximise the use of the learning estate to benefit the wider community
5. Future developments within our learning estate will create low carbon and digitally enabled schools and campuses

2.5 The LES sets out the background of the current position of the Education estate including the number of establishments, school rolls and occupancy rates, the most up to date condition and suitability surveys of all schools.

2.6 Outlined within the strategy document is also an outline of the aspirations surrounding Outdoor Learning, Digital Learning and the carbon footprint targets of the Council.

2.7   How we use our Learning Estate in the future has to change to include wider partnership involvement so that the whole community can benefit from having schools at the heart of the community and within the LES it is outlined how partnership working will be developed and how community use of schools will be strengthened.

2.8   As part of the development of this LES a new methodology has been put in place to project future rolls of schools within the Authority for up to 10 years which will be crucial to support decisions for future developments or renovations.

2.9   One of the guiding principles approved for the LES is that Young People within Argyll and Bute are educated within a fully accessible learning establishment of A or B Grading for suitability. This ensures that all young people are able to attend a school within their local area that is fully accessible for their individual needs.

2.10   It was a priority of the project board when we were developing a LES that all the statutory processes relating to school premises were incorporated in the document and for that reason the following are all contained within the new strategy:
- Closing a school
- Mothballing a school
- Re-zoning a school catchment area

        This will ensure clarity of the processes moving forward when required.

2.11   The 3 year capital investment programme for Education is outlined within the LES to ensure that the immediate priorities for the Service are captured.

2.12   Future Priorities will be outlined within a separate appendix to the document being worked up currently and will be available when a presentation is made to Committee in August.

3.0   CONCLUSION

3.1   The committee is asked to note the ongoing work in relation to the Learning Estate Strategy and note that a full presentation will be made to the August Community Services Committee.

4.0   IMPLICATIONS

4.1   Policy - The Learning Estate Strategy links direction to the Council's business outcomes BO107 (The support and lifestyle needs of our children, young people, and their families are met), BO108 All out children and young people are supported to realise their potential, BO109 All our adults are support to realise their potential, BO115 We are efficient and cost effective and BO117

We encourage creativity and innovation to ensure our workforce is fit for the future.

This LEC will ensure that we have a learning estate to support excellence and equity for all our young people within Argyll and Bute.

Our LEC will provide a framework for future investment in our schools that complies with the National Learning Estate Strategy.

4.2   Financial – Investment in the Learning Estate is dependent on capital funding from the Council and all available parties that the Council can engage with which may include: Scotland's schools for the Future, Scottish Government Learning Estate Investment Programme, Other Public Sector Organisations

4.3   Legal – The School Premises (General Requirements and Standards)(Scotland) regulations 1967 were reviewed and update in 2018. The Learning Estate Strategy will ensure that Argyll and Bute adhere to the legal requirements laid out within the regulations

4.4   HR - none

4.5   Fairer Scotland Duty: None

4.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – One of the principles laid out within the LES is that Young People within Argyll and Bute are educated within a fully accessible learning establishment of A or B – this will ensure equity for all children and young people.

4.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – none

4.5.3 Islands – none

4.6.   Risk – none

4.7   Customer Service – Full engagement will take place in relation to any changes within the LES

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Education Policy Lead

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DIGITAL LITERACY

1.0   INTRODUCTION

1.1   The purpose of this report is to inform and update members on the key purpose and objectives of Transformation Work stream 7 – digital literacy.

1.2   The purpose of this project is to increase the use of digital technologies to enhance learning and teaching in Argyll and Bute schools, develop practitioners' digital skills and improve education provision, opportunities and outcomes for learners. By realising these goals, the project seeks to bring about positive transformational change for learners, practitioners and education settings across Argyll and Bute.

1.3   A key factor in the project is progressing Argyll and Bute's implementation of "anytime, anywhere" learning in order to: offer equity of educational provision for learners regardless of place or context, expand and enhance curriculum choice, and remove barriers to learning. As a result of these factors, the project aspires to bring about improvement to children and young people's education, life chances and outcomes.

1.4   The project will develop the digital skills and confidence of practitioners, facilitating the creation of sustainable opportunities for high-quality linked learning across all schools in Argyll and Bute.

1.5   Online curriculum capability will be enhanced by developing means of sharing lessons, programmes of work, and learning and teaching resources across Argyll and Bute.

1.6   An essential component of the project will be facilitating the provision of a flexible, fast and reliable network infrastructure that meets the needs of educators and learners in providing "anytime, anywhere" learning.

2.0 DETAIL

2.1 Glow update

Glow is a national virtual learning environment offered by the Scottish Government to support the delivery of learning and teaching. The chart below illustrates Glow usage from February 2020 to March 2021, measured by the number of unique staff and pupils users each month during this period. These numbers indicate the number of individual users who accessed Glow per month (as opposed to the number of total logins, where an individual could be counted more than once).

As the chart shows, the number of individuals using Glow has increased significantly since February 2020 (just prior to the beginning of the home learning period); compared to Glow engagement in February 2020, March 2021's statistics illustrate a 189% increase in staff users and a 194% increase in pupil users; in both cases, this is almost triple the usage.
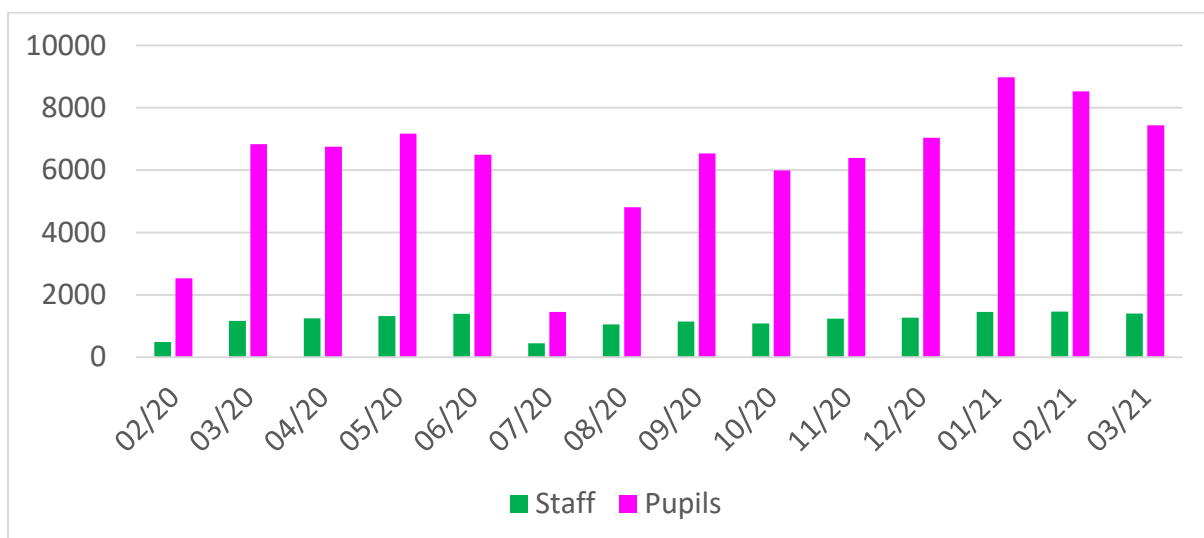
Another useful indicator of Glow usage is the number of user sessions per month for G Suite (online collaboration tools provided by Google). Peak usage for this application was in January 2021, where there was a 941% increase in G Suite usage, with nearly half a million sessions. The large numbers seen in January 2021 relate to the period where pupils were learning from home, and the tools within Glow were used to support the delivery of learning and teaching.

2.2 The Digital Learning Team has been organising and offering webinars to support education staff with online learning and teaching since March 2020. These have since supported more than 800 staff (and over 1000 when including webinars co-ordinated with partners). In January 2021 alone, the team directly supported 100 staff online via three digital skills webinars focussing on delivering remote learning and teaching, covering beginner-level introductions to Glow and Google Classroom as well as more advanced techniques such as creating virtual classrooms with avatars. The team continues to offer webinars across a range of subjects and to a range of staff.

2.3   The Digital Learning Team has supported identification of suitable video conferencing equipment for Hermitage Academy, Campbeltown Grammar School and Tobermory High School, and this has been costed at £21,528.59 for the three schools combined. This is in addition to the videoconferencing solutions already present in Oban High School and Tiree High School. The video conferencing equipment will support learning and teaching by affording the schools with more flexibility in learning delivery, including home learning and enhancing curriculum choice.

2.4   Following a £447,007.00 grant for digital inclusion from the Scottish Government, the Digital Learning Team co-ordinated the allocation and distribution of 1356 devices (Chromebooks and iPads, totalling a capital spend of £393,090.72) for learners with no, or insufficient, access to a suitable device for learning, and 254 connectivity solutions with 12 months of unlimited data (totalling a revenue spend of £53,945.00) for learners with no, or insufficient, access to the Internet. Protective cases and remote management software licensing for iPads were also arranged by the team. In addition to these devices and connectivity solutions, learners were also supported with devices lent to them for home learning by schools.

2.5   Following identification of schools that have insufficient bandwidth for aspects of learning delivery, it has been agreed that bandwidth speeds at 10 schools will be improved. The initial installation cost is £43,983.81, creating a new revenue increase of £19,471.58 and a subsequent total revenue of £42,161.54.

School	Current Speed	Current Revenue	New Speed (100mb bearer)	Install	New Revenue	Revenue Increase
Dalintober PS	8	2424.96	30	4219.16	3921.86	1496.9
Colgrain PS	8	2424.96	30	4530.18	4223.83	1798.87
St. Joseph's PS	8	1932.6	30	4530.18	4223.83	2291.23
Parklands School	8	2424.96	30	4530.18	4223.83	1798.87
John Logie Baird PS	8	2424.96	30	4530.18	4223.83	1798.87
Hermitage PS	12	2505	30	4530.18	4223.83	1718.83
Ardrishaig PS	8	1840.56	30	4530.18	4223.83	2383.27
Cardross PS	8	1932.6	30	4145.25	5052.98	3120.38
Castlehill PS	8	2424.96	30	4219.16	3921.86	1496.9
Park PS	8	2354.4	30	4219.16	3921.86	1567.46
		22689.96		43983.81	42161.54	19471.58

2.6   In order to ensure that the Council's education network infrastructure can continue to support effective learning delivery, it was agreed that an external consultancy would take place to evaluate the network and identify improvements. A procurement exercise was carried out, and a well-established company was subsequently appointed; the projected cost of the consultancy is £16,256.62.

CONCLUSION

3.1   The work to increase the use of digital technologies to enhance learning and teaching across Argyll and Bute Schools has been a success.

3.2   The project has develop the digital skills and confidence of practitioners, facilitating the creation of sustainable opportunities for high-quality linked learning across all schools in Argyll and Bute. Teacher engagement with digital learning has also been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.3   The focus on this area of transformation will continue and evaluation of progress to date suggests clear next steps:

3.4   A review will be undertaken to identify if other schools would benefit from increased investment in videoconferencing equipment to enhance curriculum choice for senior phase learners.

3.5   We will review bandwidth availability to identify schools who may also benefit from increased investment to support greater use of online tools for learning and teaching (such as Glow).

3.6   We will ensure that the school network continues to support effective learning delivery that remains current with constant technological evolution - in order to continuously provide our learners with a flexible and modern education experience. This will be achieved by the Education network consultancy evaluation which may identify costs associated with the Council's education network infrastructure.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1   Policy: None

4.2   Financial: VC equipment has been installed in a number of schools to   support shared Networked courses. Education network infrastructure consultancy. Costs will be incurred through the purchase of further digital devices to ensure digital equity.

4.3   Legal:

4.4   HR:

4.5   Fairer: Scotland Duty: Providing equity and inclusion to meet the needs   of all young people.

4.5.1   Equalities: Protected characteristics: All legislative requirements will be met.

4.5.2   Socio-economic Duty: Reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage are central to this area of transformation work.

4.5.3 Islands: The work stream recognises issues relating to island bandwidth speed availability.

4.6. Risk:

4.7 Customer Service: Continued support will be provided by Lead Education Officer.

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Education Policy Lead

For further information contact: Gary Clark - Digital Lead - gary.clark@argyll-bute.gov.uk

CURRICULUM AND LEARNING

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform and update members on the purpose and objectives of Transformation Workstream 8 – Curriculum and Learning.

1.2 The key purpose of this workstream is to further Argyll and Bute's implementation of "anytime, anywhere" learning in order to:

- offer equity of education provision for learners;
- expand and enhance curriculum choice;
- remove barriers to learning and;
- articulate our "digital by default" theme.

1.3 To meet the challenges of delivering excellence and equity for all learners regardless of place and context our focus has initially been within the Senior Phase, taking account of the independent review of Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence, led by the OECD.

1.4 Key areas of focus of this workstream have centered upon:

- Curriculum design;
- Local flexibility;
- Depth and breadth of learning in the Senior Phase;
- The transition from the Broad General Education (BGE) into Senior Phase;
- Vocational and academic learning and awards;
- Roles and responsibilities;
- Building the online curriculum capability through developing means of digitally sharing lessons and learning across Argyll and Bute Council;
- Developing the skills and confidence of educators in the effective use of digital technology to support learning and teaching;
- Sharing best practice across our schools;
- Ensuring that digital learning embraces the principles of high quality learning, teaching and assessment;
- Ensuring Digital Equity for all learners, irrespective of place and context.

2.0 DETAIL

2.1 The project team has focused on the development of a common timetable within the Senior Phase curriculum to ensure equity of a "Senior Phase offer" to Argyll and Bute's young people regardless of place or context. Central to the Senior Phase offer is the incorporation of the courses offer delivered by Argyll College within the common timetable for the Senior Phase.

2.2 Two clusters have been formed each made up of five Secondary Schools. Cluster 1 incorporates Campbeltown Grammar School, Oban High School, Tiree High School, Tobermory High School and Rothesay Joint Campus. Cluster 2 incorporates Dunoon Grammar School, Hermitage Academy, Lochgilphead Joint Campus, Islay High School and Tarbert Academy.

2.3 In Cluster 1, the commonality of timetable means that young people can access courses from any of these schools regardless of the school they attend. Courses have been carefully considered to ensure those on offer can be taught successfully via the Virtual Conferencing medium.

2.4 In Cluster 1 a different school will coordinate learning for each individual course, with onsite staff delivering the virtual conferencing lessons to pupils in their own and other schools.

2.5 In Cluster 2, as part of the phasing in of the commonality of timetable, all schools have matched two blocks of learning per week, during which a different school will coordinate learning for each individual course.

2.6 Additionally where timetables overlap between Cluster 1 and Cluster 2, there is further scope for young people to access a wider range of school-based and college courses across our ten secondary schools.

2.7 Bespoke college courses have remained in place. As in previous years, each school individually makes arrangements with the Argyll College Schools Links Officer on which courses best suit the needs of their school. Additionally, a large number of Networked courses have been offered by the College to each cluster and in some cases across clusters. This widens access further, giving greater choice for young people across Argyll and Bute in their learning pathways and reducing the likelihood of courses not running due to small numbers.

2.8 The commonality of timetable approaches outlined above will ensure individual learners' needs are met through enhanced curriculum and learning opportunities and better equity of access to broader opportunities. In particular it will bring increased personalisation and choice within learner pathways, more options in terms of subjects and levels, wider access to College courses and will ensure that the Senior Phase Learning offer is available to all young people, regardless of place or context.

2.9 To enable the digital delivery of learning and increased personalisation and choice for our young people within the Senior Phase, Argyll and Bute Council has funded the technology required to facilitate the virtual delivery of qualifications and wider achievement courses eg additional video conferencing facilities.

2.10 The commonality of timetable will improve educational outcomes for the young people of Argyll and Bute by supporting learners to access more bespoke senior phase learning options and pathways. This will lead to improved attainment and positive destinations for school leavers, and enhanced transitions to post-school life and learning.

2.11 The skills and confidence of educators in the appropriate and effective use of digital technology to support learning and teaching continue to be developed. A rolling programme of after-school training in the use of Google Classroom, Google Meet and Microsoft Teams has been offered by the authority's Digital Learning Team. These sessions will continue on a regular basis. Training on the use of the live communication function of these platforms was also provided for all staff on INSET Days in November 2020.

2.12 Regular, high-quality direct communication between teachers and pupils was a recognised element of provision during the period of home learning, and has benefitted learner engagement and progress. Quality assurance of home learning was implemented through a survey issued to all schools to gather data on the types of home learning being provided for pupils, and the levels of direct communication with and feedback to pupils which were being offered.

2.13 Formal engagement by Education Management and schools with Education Scotland further established understanding and awareness of the high-quality practice expected in home learning provision. Sixteen schools across the authority engaged with Education Scotland in their programme of consultation with schools to establish the profile of home learning across the country.

2.14 The Alternative Certification Model put in place by the Scottish Qualifications Agency as a result of COVID-19 has developed secondary teachers' skills and capabilities in working with colleagues via digital platforms to agree standards in assessment, and in the moderation of assessment tools and pupil attainment evidence. The further development of such skills, and their extension to the primary sector is an ongoing priority.

2.15 Collaboration with the Digital Literacy Project Group has been central to the further distribution of digital devices to pupils to ensure digital equity. All 1338 Chromebooks and iPads allocated to Argyll and Bute Council through the Scottish Government Digital Inclusion Programme were delivered to schools for distribution to pupils with identified need. A further 220 SIM cards and 235 mini routers were distributed to pupils' families across the authority where connectivity issues prevented effective engagement with home learning.

2.16 In partnership with the Digital Literacy Project Group, a further audit of devices still required to ensure digital equity across the authority has been implemented, and as a result, a further 265 iPads and 365 Chromebooks have been purchased for distribution to school and/or families. Data has been gathered to ensure the distribution to school and families accurately reflects need in the context of digital equity. This ensures that Argyll and Bute Council will accurately target its allocation of the further £45m funding announced by the Depute First Minister to ensure pupils are equipped to engage fully with online learning.

2.17 Models of strong practice in the broadening of curricular pathways and opportunities for learners through virtual conferencing and digital streaming have been identified in the authority and will inform ongoing planning and training. There has been investment in digital conferencing technology in a total of five secondary schools, and the procurement of resources for the remaining schools is in progress.

2.18 A Working Group has been established to take forward the workstream priorities relating to digital learning. The work and progress of the group will be reported to the Transformation Board via regular Highlight Reports.

3.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The work to develop commonality of timetable across Argyll and Bute Secondary Schools has been successful in enhancing equity of educational provision for learners and improved personalisation of learning pathways in the Senior Phase. It has led to expanded curriculum choice and has begun to remove the barriers to learning pathways associated with rural locations and limitations in subject availability.

3.2 The focus on this area of transformation will continue and evaluation of progress to date suggests the following clear next steps:

i. We will explore how further alignment between schools can be achieved, including through continuing development of commonality of timetables and the further consideration of a standardised school day across all Secondary Schools in Argyll and Bute.

ii. Views will be collected from staff, pupils, parents and partners to evaluate the success of alignment once the first term in the new courses has been completed.

iii. The COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences for education have had the effect of accelerating teacher engagement with digital learning and the authority's drive to ensure digital equity for all children and young people. Progress towards the target outcomes of the workstream as they relate to Digital Learning and Digital Equity has been considerable, and next steps to overtake priorities will be focused through the Digital Learning Working Group.

iv. Professional learning for teachers will be provided to build further skill and confidence in providing high quality digital learning experiences for children in school and for children and their families at home.

v. The online networks established through the SQA Alternative Certification Model will be developed to allow effective curriculum development and

moderation to occur within and between schools to include the Broad General Education.

vi. Work will continue to ensure digital equity for all pupils across Argyll and Bute, driven by accurate data on the needs of pupils and schools.

vii. The equipping of schools with virtual conferencing technology and the training of staff in its use will be progressed to facilitate the broadening of choice in curriculum pathways for pupils across the authority's schools.

3.3 It is recommended that members note the improvements, agree that this area of transformation continue and approve next steps to ensure full implementation of the common senior phase timetable for school session 2022/2023.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1	Policy	None
4.2	Financial	Costs will be incurred through the purchase of further digital devices and connectivity solutions to ensure digital equity. VC equipment has been installed in a number of schools to support shared Networked courses. There may be further equipment costs as networked courses develop further. A change to all school day times would incur Transport and catering costs although projections suggest staffing costs would be reduced in the long term.
4.3	Legal	The statutory duties of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and all previous relevant acts will be met.
4.4	HR	None
4.5	Fairer Scotland Duty	Providing equity and inclusion to meet the needs of all young people.
4.5.1	Equalities – protected Characteristics	All legislative requirements will be met.
4.5.2	Socio-economic Duty	Reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage are central to this area of transformation work.
4.5.3	Islands	No differentiated impact.

		Ongoing scrutiny and robust evaluations will monitor outcomes and impact on young people and staff.
4.7	Customer Service	Continued support will be provided by Lead Education Officer.

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Education Policy Lead

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EARLY YEARS REVIEW OF CENTRAL TEAM

1.0   INTRODUCTION

1.1   To build on the successful implementation of 1140hrs of Early Learning and Childcare by ensuring the central Early Years Team structure is effective in supporting all local authority settings, partner settings and childminders to deliver high quality Early Learning and Childcare.

1.2   To ensure that the central Early Years Team can effectively support and challenge all settings delivering 1140hrs to meet the statutory requirements of the National Standards.

1.3   Work effectively with colleagues in the HSCP to support children's development from birth to early level.

2.0   DETAIL

2.1   A project team was put together chaired by the Acting Head of Service Teaching and Learning. Membership of the group includes representation from the Early Year Central Team, Teaching and non-Teaching Professional Associations, Headteachers from each locality with ELCs, Partner Provider Manager, Partner Child Minder, a Lead Early Years Officer from Shetland, Health, Social work, Legal a HR. The project team has met on three occasions from February.

2.2   The project team laid out the current structure and responsibilities of Early Years Team posts and relationships between posts to support all partners to participate in an evaluation of the suitability of the structure post 1140hrs.

2.3   The range of legislative requirements and core support that the Early Years Team must support was identified and from this a digital questionnaire created to gather the views of all partners of what currently works well and what functions may need to be changed or reviewed.

2.4   The questionnaire was distributed at the start of May to all Health Visitors,

Social Work Child and Families leads, Partnership settings, Local Authority settings and Child Minders and has 49 responses which are now being collated and analysed.

2.5 A subsequent questionnaire was created to gather the views of the Early Years Central Team members, this was based on the partner questionnaire and designed to gather the teams view on what works well and what could be improved with specific regards to statutory functions. This questionnaire closes on 14 May.

2.6 The project team intends to use the analysis of responses to review the current structure and roles to ensure they support statutory requirements and offer effective support and challenge.

2.7 Consultation with settings and the central early years team will be undertaken with regards to the redefined structure and roles with the intention to move towards implementation from September 2021, concluding March 2023.

3.0 CONCLUSION
It is recommended that the committee:

3.1 Endorses the work undertaken by the Early Years transformation workstream to review the work structure and roles of the Early Years Team.

3.2 Agree that the workstream should continue with the planned actions and that a further update will come to the Community Services Committee in December 2021.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Policy

This work will assist the Education Service to implement the relevant sections contained within the Children and Young People Act (Scotland) and deliver on the requirements of the new National Standards.

4.2 Financial

Funding from Scottish Government is adequate in maintaining current staffing levels but will be required to be reviewed when the next settlement is confirmed.

4.3 Legal

This work will assist the Education Service to implement the relevant sections contained within the Children and Young People Act (Scotland) and deliver on the requirements of the new National Standards.

4.4 HR

There may be a requirement to change remits but there will be no redundancies.

4.5   Fairer Scotland Duty

There are no potential issues around this.

4.6   Equalities - protected characteristics

This work aims to respond to the challenge of reducing inequality and improving outcomes for children and their families within the diverse geographical and social context of Argyll and Bute.

4.7   Socio-economic Duty

Early Years and Childcare must be free at the point of entry. All children in ELC will receive a free healthy and nutritious meal from August 2021

4.8   Islands

This work will ensure equity of support across our island communities.

4.9   Risk

A number of risks exist with workforce recruitment and development.

4.10   Customer Service

Maintaining an effective ELC service brings benefits to families.

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education
Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Education Policy Lead

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL   **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

EDUCATION SERVICE   **10 JUNE 2021**

ASYMMETRIC WEEK

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1   The purpose of this report is to update the Community Services Committee of the progress made by the project team considering the educational benefits and opportunities for best value in introducing an asymmetric week structure across schools in Argyll and Bute.

1.2   An asymmetric school week includes various start and finish times with some longer days and some shorter days. The most common asymmetric school week structure comprises four longer days and a short half day, but other patterns are also used. The overall number of hours learners are in school is the same.

1.3   Overall, the evidence base on asymmetric school week models is limited. While there is some anecdotal information about the potential advantages and disadvantages, there is little systematic research on the impact.

2.0 DETAIL

2.1   A project team was established in December 2020 comprising of nine team members from Education, Legal, Finance and Transport and a team lead from Education.

2.2   The project team lead collaborated with the leads from the School Leadership Structures team and the Curriculum and Learning team due to the connectivity between the three projects.

2.3   The project team lead engaged with other local authorities, who have implemented this approach either partially (across one sector or in some schools within one sector) or wholly (across all primary and secondary schools) to share practice and to understand potential educational benefits and opportunities for best value.

2.4 The project team developed six options for asymmetric week structures for both primary and secondary sectors. Consultation on the six options was undertaken with focus groups of primary and secondary HTs respectively.

Potential Educational Benefits and Challenges

2.5 A potential educational benefit of introducing an asymmetric week structure in primary schools was noted as its potential to increase opportunities for collaboration and joint planning with other primary schools and at cross sectoral level, thus supporting transition planning.

2.6 Potential educational benefits of introducing an asymmetric week structure in secondary schools were noted as its potential to: achieve staffing efficiencies as the thirty-three period week which underpins the asymmetric week, supports timetabling of staff for maximum efficiency; promote greater cohesion and consistency by enabling schools to align timetables; enhance opportunities for schools to work collaboratively with local colleges; facilitate more opportunities for pupils to access work experience; and, if the four longer days and one shorter day model was adopted, allow young people residing in hostels to travel home earlier on a Friday.

2.7 In addition to sector specific educational benefits, a number of potential benefits across both primary and secondary sectors were also identified as: increased opportunities for shared extra-curricular programmes; additional opportunities for meetings between staff and other professionals; the potential to improve the quality of staff Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL); and the potential to support transition activities.

2.5 A number of potential educational challenges associated with introducing an asymmetric week model were also identified. These were noted as the potential implications for: school transport, particularly pertinent in the case of learners from rural communities, childcare, for both parents and school staff, and IT infrastructures.

2.6 In addition to the above-noted challenges it was also noted that introducing an asymmetric week may cause a level of concern, principally amongst parents and carers but also staff and the wider school community. An asymmetric week may also reduce opportunities for extra-curricular programmes after long school days and discriminate against those who are not able to stay after school e.g. due to long journeys or reliance on school transport.

2.7 Finally, whilst the model has the potential to improve the quality of staff CLPL. It is worth noting that teachers are not obliged to remain in school outside of their contracted teaching time meaning that CLPL opportunities on co-ordinated pupil free afternoons would have to be run on a voluntary basis.

Potential Financial Benefits and Challenges

2.8 A scoping exercise involving one school cluster was undertaken to establish the potential financial benefits and challenges of these options for a cluster of schools in Argyll and Bute.

2.9 In relation to catering a number of factors were considered as part of the scoping exercise. These included potential implications of the following: the uptake of school meals; staffing contracts; and income generation. In addition to these factors, the planned extension of provision of Free School Meals (FSM), catering for Early Years' learners and, the possible future provision of breakfast for primary pupils, had to be taken into account.

2.10 For the purposes of the scoping exercise, it was noted that whilst one asymmetric week model was cost neutral, others would potentially result in significant additional costs.

2.11 In relation to transport a number of factors were considered as part of the scoping exercise. These included the fact that a move to an asymmetric week structure would require the co-ordination of both the in-house and external transport fleets, the co-ordination of drop-off and collection times to minimise wait times for learners and, the co-ordination of bus connections with ferries, trains and planes, which is a significant factor due to the geographical nature of Argyll and Bute. In addition, it was noted there could be implications for staff contracts and potential disruption to public services (where these services are shared) in the form of variable timetables on different days of the week.

2.12 For the purposes of the scoping exercise, it was noted that the move to an asymmetric week was achievable but may result in increased cost, longer wait times for some learners and changes to staff contracts. The impact on bus connections with other modes of transport and the extent of disruption to public services would require further consideration.

3.0 CONCLUSION

3.1 A number of potential educational benefits and challenges were identified in relation to an asymmetric week for both the primary and secondary sectors.

3.2 It was concluded that there are very limited opportunities for best value in introducing an asymmetric week structure to primary schools in Argyll and Bute. There are some opportunities for best value in the secondary sector in the form of staffing efficiencies, however, these would not be instantly achievable and would be realised over a longer timescale.

3.3 It was concluded that any potential benefits of introducing an asymmetric week structure would have to be off set against the potential catering and transport costs and challenges associated with this.

3.4   Following consultation with secondary HTs, it was acknowledged that the common senior phase timetable, developed by the Curriculum and Learning team and due for implementation in five schools in August 2021, does not align with an asymmetric week structure (which is underpinned by a thirty-three period week). Creating the necessary alignment would involve an additional layer of parental consultation and may delay the introduction of the common phase senior timetable.

3.5   It was concluded that almost all of the educational benefits identified, could be realised through the introduction of a common phase senior timetable without using the asymmetric week structure as a driver.

3.6   It is recommended that asymmetric week structure is not introduced in Argyll and Bute schools at present but could be revisited in the future once the common senior phase timetable is established and embedded and its associated benefits confirmed and realised.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1   Policy - None

4.2   Financial - None

4.3   Legal - None

4.4   HR - None

4.5   Fairer Scotland Duty: - None

4.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics- None

4.5.2 Socio-economic Duty- None

4.5.3 Islands - None

4.6.   Risk- None

4.7   Customer Service- None

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education

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