

**NORTHERN ALLIANCE REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE –  
PROGRESS AND IMPACT REPORT AND PHASE 4 REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT  
PLAN**

---

**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to share the progress and impact report for the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborative and set out the Phase 4 Regional Improvement Plan for the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborative.
- 1.2 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee notes:
- a) The progress and impact of the Northern Alliance as outlined in the Progress & Impact Report 2021-22 (Appendix 1) and;
  - b) The Phase 4 Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan (Appendix 2)

**NORTHERN ALLIANCE REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE –  
PROGRESS AND IMPACT REPORT AND PHASE 4 REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT  
PLAN**

---

**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The Northern Alliance is a Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) comprising of eight local authorities, spanning across the North and West of Scotland: Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Eilean Siar (Western Isles), Highland, Moray, Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands. The RIC has a shared vision to improve the educational outcomes and and life chance of our children and young people through collaboration for improvement.
- 2.2 Now at the end of Phase 3 of the Regional Improvement Plan, the Northern Alliance local authorities remain committed to improving outcomes and closing the attainment gap across our wide and varied communities through working together and adding value to local authority activity.
- 2.3 The Northern Alliance continues to strive to achieve Workstream priorities which remain aligned to the National Improvement Framework (NIF) Priorities and have been developed collaboratively with local authority practitioners and national partners.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee notes:
- a) The progress and impact of the Northern Alliance as outlined in the Progress & Impact Report 2021-22 (Appendix 1) and;
  - b) The Phase 4 Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan (Appendix 2)

## 4.0 DETAIL

### Regional Improvement Plan Phase 3: Progress and Impact

- 4.1 The Northern Alliance **Progress & Impact Report 2021-22** can be found at **Appendix 1** to this report and it sets out the work which has been achieved over the final year of the Phase 3 Northern Alliance Plan.
- 4.2 Throughout the pandemic and specifically over the past year, colleagues across the RIC have continued to work hard to develop meaningful and active collaboration which can truly make a difference to practitioners in their day-to-day work and which ultimately supports us all in improving outcomes for children and young people. Much of this has been achieved through our improvement strategy, which is known as the CCITI model (Connect, Collaborate, Innovation and Ideas, Try Out and Test and Improvement).
- 4.3 Throughout the life-span of the Phase 3 Plan the RIC has also focused on increasing its reach and impact, mainly through the ongoing promotion of digital engagement and this has resulted in over 1,667 collaborative engagements involving over 18,000 professionals from across the eight local authorities and involving colleagues from Education Scotland. In addition, the RIC has 57 active Teams operating with almost 3,000 memberships and the Northern Alliance newsletter has in excess of 4,500 subscribers. Given our geography as a RIC, communication remains of significant importance and we will continue to all we can to improve our reach to support as many practitioners and schools as we can to add value to the support already provided at a local authority level.

### Regional Improvement Plan Phase 4

- 4.4 2022-23 marked the final year of the current regional improvement planning cycle and since January 2022, the RIC has undertaken its most significant engagement exercise to date with schools across the Northern Alliance as it has developed the Phase 4 Plan and priorities. This involved us undertaking 22 live engagement sessions, involving 460 practitioners, resulting in over 1400 contributions which were used in shaping the Phase 4 Plan.
- 4.5 As a RIC we remain committed to our vision of developing a culture of collaboration, sharing of expertise and creating local networks to improve the educational and life changes of our children and young people. The Phase 4 Plan (2022 – 2025) has been developed in line with Michael Fullan's Right Drivers for Whole System Success:
- Wellbeing and Learning (Feeling well and learning well)
  - Social Intelligence (How we work and learn together)
  - Equality Investments (How we break down barriers to wellbeing and learning)
  - Systemness (Working together to improve our system)
- 4.6 Full detail of all improvement activity for each workstream priority can be found in the **Regional Improvement Plan: Phase 4 (Appendix 2)**

4.7 The tenure of the current Regional Improvement Lead comes to an end in December 2022 and Laurence Findlay, Director of Education and Children's Services, Aberdeenshire Council, will hand the role over to James Wylie, Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing in Orkney Islands Council who will take on the role for a one year period until December 2023.

## 5 CONCLUSION

5.1 The planning and reporting processes of the Regional Improvement Plan is designed to produce robust, consistent and transparent data of the work of the Regional Improvement Collaborative, to improve understanding of what works and, ultimately, drive forward improvements that will improve outcomes for the children and young people across the Regional Improvement Collaborative.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 **Policy:** The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 places a duty on Education Authorities to provide children and young people with school education and (in terms of raising standards) requires Authorities to endeavor to secure improvement in the quality of that school education.

6.2 **Financial:** None

6.3 **Legal:** None

6.4 **HR:** None

6.5 **Fairer Scotland Duty:**

6.5.1 Equalities – None

6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – None

6.5.3 Islands – None

6.6 Climate Change - None

6.7 **Risk:** Reputational risk to the Education Service if the plan is not delivered effectively

6.8 **Customer Service:** This report provides elected Members with an overview of Regional Improvement Collaborative Performance and Improvement

Douglas Hendry – Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly - Policy Lead for Education

Date: 8 November 2022

**For further information contact:**

Jennifer Crocket - Chief Education Officer/ Head of Education – Wellbeing, Inclusion and Achievement [Jennifer.crocket@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:Jennifer.crocket@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

Wendy Brownlie - Head of Education – Performance and Improvement  
[wendy.brownlie@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.brownlie@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

**List of Appendices -**

Appendix 1 Progress & Impact Report 2022-23

Appendix 2 The Phase 4 Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan