

EDUCATION REFRESH STRATEGY

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the paper is to advise Elected Members of the proposed refresh of the Education Vision and Strategy – *Our Children, Their Future*. This document has been prepared by Education to allow the Service to effectively respond to the changing national and local policy contexts and, in doing so, ensure that the proposed refresh of the Education Vision and Strategy reflects the future delivery of an Education Service which supports our children, young people and communities to achieve the best possible outcomes and educate all of our learners. For strategy to support our learners, teachers and other stakeholders ‘for an uncertain and unpredictable future’ it is essential ‘to enable children and young people to build their own future with confidence, meaning and kindness’. The current strategy sets out:

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

This current document was prepared by Education, supported by an initial reference group and consultation with stakeholders.

1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- 2.1 Note the proposal to refresh the Education Vision and Strategy to align with the changing national and local policy contexts;
- 2.2 Note the proposed consultation and timescales to gather all stakeholder views, and
- 2.3 Agree that a further report is presented to the Committee following consultation.

EDUCATION REFRESH STRATEGY

2.0 INTRODUCTION

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3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

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4.0 DETAIL

4.1 Since the launch of the Education Vision and Strategy – *Our Children, Their Future* – we have seen many changes in the Education landscape, both locally and nationally. We have been through a global pandemic and consultations, and reviews of Education have been held, including the National Discussion on Scottish Education which involved all stakeholders being asked the question ‘What kind of education will be needed by children and young people in Scotland in the future and how do we make that a reality?’

We continue to develop and make improvements for a truly excellent Education system to reach the national ambition of making Scotland the best place in the world for a child to grow up, and the message is even clearer in Argyll and Bute. These are *Our Children* and this is *Their Future* and **we want Argyll and Bute to be the best place in Scotland to grow up** and for young people and families to remain in this area.

With the many changes and recommendations for Education, it is important that we reflect and act on these within Argyll and Bute to ensure our policies work effectively as a single system that delivers an equality of educational opportunity and improves attainment for all. This starts from the work we do with families before a child is born all the way through to securing positive destinations for our young people at the end of their school careers.

The refreshed strategy will clearly identify the Education vision, which is embedded throughout the current *Our Children, Their Future*, taking into account the changes within Education and recommendations from the recently published reports, along with the high-level objectives to deliver this vision with associated priority actions.

The refreshed strategy will include objectives and priorities and will be supported by a plan that sets out the specific actions we will take to deliver our vision. We will report on our progress annually.

4.2 Policy Context:

The National Outcomes for Scotland include:

- Our children have the **best start in life** and are ready to succeed.
- Young people are equipped through their education to become **successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.**
- We have tackled the **significant inequalities** in Scottish society.
- We have **improved the life chances** for children, young people and families at risk.

4.2.1 The National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education and the underpinning Education (Scotland) Act 2016 seek to draw a number of these areas together at a national level and helpfully clarifies the vision as delivering excellence through attainment and achieving equity.

4.2.2 The key priorities of the National Improvement Framework:

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education.
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.
- Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

The national vision and priorities and the policy documents and reports will support in the refresh of the Education Vision and Strategy – *Our Children, Their Future*.

With the recent publication of *All Learners in Scotland Matter: Our National Discussion* and the *Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment*, it is an important time to review Argyll and Bute's current Education Vision and Strategy in order that we ensure the best possible outcomes for our children and young people now and in the future.

The **National Discussion** gathered views and opinions to establish a renewed vision for Scottish Education and a call to action to realise this vision.

- The vision statement has children and young people at the heart of Scottish Education placing importance on collaboration, all learners supported in inclusive environments and high quality learning and teaching experiences with the key values of an ambitious, inclusive and supportive Education system.
- The call to action focuses on 4 key areas: Learners, a learning system, digital futures and human-centred educational improvement.

It's Our Future: *Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment* again has children and young people at the heart of Education. The report recognises that in the future we will need to ensure 'that every learner leaves education with a sense of achievement, linked to a positive future pathway.'

This continues to be a time of significant change for Education and Children's Services. The pace of change, the drive to improve services, recent and on-going global events and the impact on 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.

The national vision and key priorities support us in improving outcomes for children in Argyll and Bute and help us to deliver on the Argyll and Bute Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) with the Scottish Government through our Community Planning Partnership.

4.3 Local context:

Education is delivered in a range of settings, including

- Child minding;
- Early Learning and Child Care;
- Primary and Secondary schools including the delivery of Gaelic Medium Education;
- One special school;
- Youth learning services, and
- Partnerships with local colleges.

4.4 The Education Vision, Values and Key Objectives:

The refreshed strategy will set out how Education will deliver the aspiration to ensure that Argyll and Bute is the best place in Scotland for our children to grow up, now and in the future, with a vision that reflects the national and local context and ensures that the importance we attach to Education in Argyll and Bute is simple in message and recognised by everyone.

Our current vision is underpinned by a core set of values: **respect, openness and fairness**. This vision is delivered for all of our children, young people and communities through 6 key objectives. It states, we will:

- **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 sustain positive destinations and achieve success in life;**
- **Strengthen partnership working and community engagement, and**
- **Strengthen leadership at all levels.**

Each of the key objectives has a range of priority actions, to assist in the delivery of the objective. **See Appendix 1.**

5.0 OUTLINE OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 5.1 To support the refresh, a letter to all Education stakeholders will be issued in September advising them of the intention to review and refresh the current Education Vision and Strategy, noting that appropriate opportunities will be

provided to ensure that their views, comments and suggestions are taken into consideration when compiling the refreshed document.

To support this commitment, a full consultation is planned to take place in November with a focus on the refresh of the current Education Vision and Strategy with children and young people, staff, parents, Education partners and communities.

Through September and October, a range of stakeholders will support in the design of the consultation. This will include Head Teachers, practitioners, members of the Parents Advisory Group (PAG), members of the Pupil Voice Group (PVG) and other identified relevant partners. At the September PAG meeting, members will support in the construction of the parental consultation. In September, views will be gathered from the PVG for the design of a wider pupil survey. During November, Heads of establishments will lead in gathering the views of stakeholders, including through their Parent and Pupil Councils and through their links with their communities. Guidance and resources required for establishments will be distributed to support the gathering of stakeholder views.

Following the conclusion of the consultation, a final refresh of the strategy will be presented to Community Services Committee for consideration and approval.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The refreshed Strategy presents an opportunity for Education to effectively respond to the changing national and local policy contexts to ensure the future delivery of an Education Service which supports our children, young people and communities to achieve the best possible outcomes.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Policy – The refreshed strategy will present an opportunity for Education to effectively respond to the changing policy context at both national and local levels. The strategy makes an effective contribution to SOA outcomes 3 and 4.
- 7.2 Financial – None
- 7.3 Legal – None
- 7.4 HR – None
- 7.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
- 7.5.1 Equalities – The strategy takes account of the statutory duties on local authorities to plan reducing educational inequalities of outcome.

7.5.2 Socio-economic - None

7.5.3 Islands - None

7.6 Climate Change – None

7.7 Risk – None

7.8 Customer Service – None

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Current Education Vision and Strategy, Our Children Their Future