

**ASN REVIEW PROGRESS**

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**1. SUMMARY**

1.1 The aim of this review is to ensure that a service is in place which effectively and efficiently meets the needs of all learners within the GIRFEC agenda. At the centre of the review is a focus on sustainability and capacity building to ensure that the needs of children and young people are met consistently over time. The council has a responsibility to discharge its obligations in relation to education legislation and seeks to do this to a high standard.

A draft budget for session 2012/2013 has been prepared and submitted to finance. This draft budget identifies potential areas for savings.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 The options appraisal exercise should be fully completed by the end of February 2012 and considered by the review group. This optional appraisal will then be presented to the transformation board.

**3. DETAIL**

3.1 The Project Initiation Document and a baseline report were produced in advance of the review group meetings in consultation with the finance department.

The scope of the review included the following areas:

- Additional support needs assistants
- Pupil support teachers
- Staff supporting particular needs for example hearing impairment
- Education support officers
- Area principal teachers
- Authority funded learning centre staff
- Resource budgets
- Travel budgets
- General asn budgets
- Externally purchased support providers for example music therapy
- Day and residential placements
- Educational Psychology Services

The consideration of these areas included structural and process issues for example, the allocation of support assistants to schools.

The review group was made up of a range of stakeholders from within the education service and other relevant parties. The group was co-chaired by Alan Shields, Quality Improvement Manager Pupil Support and Roslyn Redpath, Principal Educational Psychologist. This group met over four full day sessions on the 22 August 2011, 15 September 2011, 16 September 2011 and 21 September 2011.

### **Issues discussed at meetings of the review group**

- Strengths, challenges and questions / issues to be addressed
- Issues arising from baseline report
- Prioritising issues to be resolved for additional support needs
- Presentation of ASN / Psychological Service budget lines
- Analysis of current day and residential specialist placements outwith Argyll and Bute
- Reasons for initial referral to psychological service session 2010 / 11 data analysis
- Group discussion of issues arising from information above
- Consideration of learning centre operation across Argyll and Bute
- Identification of vulnerable groups and then consideration of  
What are we already doing in relation to each group?  
Is there a gap in relation to
  - what we need to do?
  - what we would like to do?
- Consideration of the Parklands paper
- Finance
- Cover arrangements
- Generation of proposals with budget implications
- Consideration of Educational Support Officer secondment and Hearing Impairment issues
- What information do we need now?

## **4. CONCLUSION**

4.1 Significant time was spent with the group reflecting how the needs of the full range of children and young people with additional support needs can best be met through effective and efficient service delivery.

Valuable support and advice was provided by the financial services team. The level of necessary savings was discussed and consideration given to how this could be achieved with as little impact on front line services as possible. As a result of significant early intervention from school staff, support staff and council officers the number of children and young people placed in specialist resources outwith Argyll and Bute has significantly reduced over the last 4 years. It can be very difficult to

predict the needs of this vulnerable group, however, analysis suggests that the required savings may be able to be made from this underspend.

The group was made aware that a proportion of this underspend may require to be used to support the adult services provision in relation to additional support needs. This has now been resolved and a proportion of the underspend for this session will not be required for adult services provision.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 *Policy:* None

5.2 *Financial:* Savings as per draft budget.

5.3 *Legal:* None

5.4 *Personnel:* Savings are not based on compulsory reduction in number of posts, although some post holders may be interested in VR.

5.5 *Equal Opportunities:* This review should strengthen the existing positive delivery of services to vulnerable groups.