

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Education and Families Committee

approval noting

Ref DB/AG

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We aspire – Planning for Education and Families

From Alison Gordon and Derek Brown, Joint Interim Executive
Directors, Education and Families
Email GordonAI@northlan.gov.uk
BrownD@northlan.gov.uk **Telephone** 01698 302534

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of improvement planning being progressed for the newly established Education and Families Directorate. It creates the context in which a programme of work for the new Directorate will be brought forward through the Policy and Strategy Committee in February 2019, as part of the wider We Aspire planning for North Lanarkshire.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Education and Families Committee note the contents of this report.

Supporting Documents

**Council business
plan to 2020**

1. Background

- 1.1 Members will recall *We aspire - Shared Ambition for North Lanarkshire* was approved at Policy and Resources Committee in September 2018.
- 1.2 This outlines a vision for the future direction of the council in terms of a shared ambition for inclusive growth and prosperity for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire.
- 1.3 The report also outlined the way ahead in terms of *We aspire* that North Lanarkshire is **the** place to *Live, Learn, Work, Invest, and Visit* - a place where there is a shared ambition for inclusive growth and prosperity for all. It defines all of our work across communities, stakeholders and partners.

- 1.4 The report led to approval of a series of refinements in Phase One in terms of the senior management structure of the council and direct reports to the Chief Executive.
 - 1.5 The report also noted that Phase Two, to be undertaken during 2019/20, would aim to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the realignment of services, including open and transparent consideration of new service and partnership models, while maximising shared community outcomes.
 - 1.6 This report allows for Elected Member oversight and governance. It outlines a prospective direction of travel. It includes a range of planned improvements structured under a number of key priorities, to enable members to have confidence in the approach being taken.
 - 1.7 The report is narrative in nature and designed to allow elected members to offer advice and comment on the broad approach being evolved. Specific decisions related to the associated work plan will be placed before the Policy and Strategy Committee in May 2019.
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2. Programmes of Work

- 2.1 The new Education and Families Directorate involves the following core services:
 - **Education Services**
 - **Children's Services Social Work**
 - **Criminal Justice**
- 2.2 Each of these has previously been located in other structures, therefore there is a process of disaggregation to work through (Education from Youth and Communities and Children's Services Social and Work and Criminal Justice from the Health and Social Care Partnership).
- 2.3 A fundamental ambition driving the establishment of the new Directorate is a clear strategic focus to enable more effective collaboration. This involves creating ownership of the transformational practice that will improve systems and teamwork on behalf of children and families, and ultimately to improve outcomes significantly.
- 2.4 To that end, Early Planning sessions for senior leaders across the new Directorate focused on building a shared understanding on:
 - **Implementing the change we require**
 - **Mapping our new Directorate's business (Universal, Additional and Intensive Services)**
 - **Overview of strategic planning: Vision and Values, Key Systems and Processes, Outputs and Outcomes**
 - **Establishing integrated locality delivery models**
 - **Agreeing our core purpose**
- 2.5 This work has been mapped to National Improvement Framework priorities to ensure Health and Wellbeing, Attainment, Employability, Equity are planned for at school and local authority level. Underpinning all of this is the focus North Lanarkshire Council and its Education and Families Directorate on Vulnerable Groups, an aligned priority.

- 2.6 Under National Improvement Framework and We Aspire themes, a number of work streams have been established within this outline plan which are addressed in this section of the report. Importantly, there is clear leadership of each of these areas by identified Heads of Service, highlighting the importance of accountability by senior officers for the delivery of these priorities.
- 2.7 This work is being done in the context of the national Empowerment agenda. So National Improvement Strategy Groups, led by Head Teachers and Subject Networks, led by practitioners have key roles in this work.
- 2.8 As part of We Aspire, Education and Families is required to contribute to the overall plan for the radical redesign of public services in North Lanarkshire, which references a specific resource context, and as part of which the following principles will shape the future planning for the Directorate:
- An explicit focus on improving outcomes for children and families, as part of the wider planning to improve outcomes as part of We Aspire
 - An increased focus on improving levels of empowerment placed upon on teachers and head teachers, including for financial management and governance
 - A particular emphasis on creating leaders who can oversee delivery of integrated services, including multidisciplinary teams and community leadership models
 - An expectation that increased digitisation will drive future improvements in efficiency and effectiveness, including reduced administrative personnel
 - An approach to ensuring budgets will increasingly be more closely aligned with other services to meet local priorities
 - A focus on early intervention and prevention to drive future service provision, as well as the principle of, where possible, keeping families together and providing for young people within their communities.

3. **Priorities and Areas of Focus**

3.1 This section establishes the core narrative that shapes the approach being taken to developing priorities and areas of specific focus. The areas of priority focus are:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Attainment and achievement
- Developing the Young Workforce
- Promoting Equity
- Vulnerable Groups

3.2 **Health and Wellbeing**

In recent engagements with representative groups of young people by senior officers, mental health was highlighted as their most important issue. It places a requirement on the new Directorate to address this, as part of wider planning for wellbeing. Importantly, a coherent approach to promoting health and wellbeing is outlined in this section.

3.2.1 Full roll out of 1140 Hours expansion

Wellbeing needs to be addressed from early childhood. The national programme, agreed with Scottish Government for North Lanarkshire Council, to provide a full entitlement of 1140 hours of early learning and child care for all 3 – 4 year olds, per year. As well as for some aged two pupils, based on deprivation factors. As part of this approach we need to establish an effective partnership with Funded Providers.

Giving young people the best start in life is a crucial means of breaking the cycle of disadvantage. A plan for 0 – 2 year old provision for those most disadvantaged will be brought forward. It will prioritise those who need the most help to succeed, integrating practice with that developed through the Scottish Attainment Challenge. Specific programmes of learning and capacity building for parents and staff will be incorporated.

3.2.2 Improved GIRFEC planning for young people

To ensure effective planning for young people takes place across the Directorate and is shared effectively by all staff, an upgrade of GIRFEC systems will be progressed, as part of a wider review of planning for health and wellbeing of all young people.

The wider approach to encouraging and promoting effective provision for family learning and support will be progressed, so as to ensure that the conditions in which young people learn and grow are addressed by programmes of learning and support, as structured through planning. This work will be done in conjunction with the Integrated Children's Services Improvement Plan.

3.2.3 Implementation of the Mental Health and Well Being Strategy for Young People

In line with the Mental Health Strategy being developed across the partnership, North Lanarkshire Education and families plans to implement a progressive strategy to enable significant developments in programmes to address the mental health and well-being of young people, delivered through a range of curricular and support approaches.

This will involve training for staff in approaches to supporting young people in identifying and addressing mental health issues, integrating counselling services with practice in Education and Families. It will address the needs of parents and carers. Lastly, it will focus on building the capacity of young people to support one another.

3.3 Attainment

3.3.1 There is a requirement to improve attainment, as part of the national drive to deliver Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education. This is predicated on recommendations to Scottish Government regarding the importance of building systems to raise the bar for everyone whilst closing the poverty related attainment gap. These will include:

3.3.2 Raising Attainment Strategy

Head teachers and senior officers will develop an approach to improve attainment based on improved support. There is also a specific focus on improving teacher understanding of standards and a strategy for improving learning. A NIF Strategy Group oversees this, led by a head teacher, supported by a Continuous Improvement Officer. A core group of Head Teachers oversees the What's the Story? Data system.

The approach will involve a greater emphasis on improving classroom practice and pupil ownership of learning. Networks of secondary subject networks and primary literacy and numeracy champions will be progressed in order to support the increased confidence of teachers. All of this is done with regard to the Empowerment agenda. As part of this, issues relating to improving uptake and outcomes from Gaelic Medium Education will be progressed.

3.3.3 Self-evaluation Towards improvement strategy

This work will bring a greater coherence and efficacy to our systems for self-evaluation. This will be based on an increased shared ownership of national standards by teachers, head teachers and social work colleagues. It will involve a greater engagement with colleagues across the West Partnership. It will also involve sharing of good practice and learning lessons from experiences in preparing for inspections.

There will be a strong focus on evaluative writing as part of this approach, and a more forensic approach to Validated Self Evaluation, as well as more coordinated support mechanisms to enable practitioners to improve practice effectively and promptly.

3.3.4 Review of ASN Provision

A major review of Additional Support Needs provision is being progressed to revise the approach taken to meeting the additional support for learning needs of young people. This will overhaul our service provision, including our strategic approach, our systems and processes and our ASN sector estate, which is an area of priority focus.

There is a Member-Officer Working Group overseeing this work. It is being serviced by an Improving Relationships Task Group. This group will service the Member Officer Group. It will look at Workforce Development, Policy and Practice, Future Delivery Models and Capacity Building. It will make a case for future ASN estate upgrade.

3.4 Developing the Young Workforce

Developing the Young Workforce is a national strategy, established in December 2014, based on the Wood Commission Report, *Education Working for All*. It is a core curricular element and figures in all inspections in schools. It is a key component of the National Improvement Framework and a key educational and economic driver for improvement. This piece of work links with a wider Council approach to employability.

3.4.1 Review of Curricular Progression

To ensure all young people achieve positive outcomes from education, it is important to enable pathways and packages of learning and support. A review of curricular progression, leading to improved practice will be brought forward, referencing partnerships and pathways, for instance with Further and Higher Education. Gaelic Medium Education will also be encompassed in this work.

This work will be progressed through NIF groups and will ensure a linkage between aspects of curricular innovation, as well as scaling up some excellent practice incubated in SAC and PEF. Through SAC, a **Pedagogy Team** is being established to enable improvements in curricular progression to be spread throughout the system.

3.4.2 Implementation of DYW Strategy

North Lanarkshire is establishing a comprehensive approach to support schools in implementing a DYW Strategy, based on organising principles:

- Universal: the offering for all young people (Enterprising Learning)
- Additional: the offering for particular young people who need support to achieve (Pathways to Employment and Work Related Learning)
- Intensive: the offering to most at risk young people (Mentoring for the Most Vulnerable and the Family Firm)

It is important that the needs of young people and also of the area, in relation to future employment drive this provision. Part of this work will be a STEM Strategy for North Lanarkshire schools, as part of the pan Lanarkshire approach.

3.4.3 Implementation of NLC Digital Consortium

To progress a more learner centred curriculum, based on national best practice, Education and Families will develop an e-learning model to enable young people to learn through digital classrooms. This is to enable remote access to learning and more effective deployment of resources across schools. Virtual Learning Environment platforms will be established to enable improved access.

3.5 Equity

The Delivery Plan for Excellence and Equity highlights the importance of identifying, addressing and closing the poverty related attainment gap. This is part of the wider economic planning for inclusive growth built into We Aspire.

3.5.1 Roll out of Scottish Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity Fund plan

There will be an increased focus on research and evidence based practice and a more explicit outcomes focus. The emerging innovations which have been successful will be effectively shared across the system, as North Lanarkshire Education and Families learns from its experiences and future sustainable systems are evolved.

The governance for these programmes, which had different origins and funding approaches built into them, should increasingly align, within Directorate Planning, referencing the principles of teacher and head teacher Empowerment.

This work has to be based on lessons emerging nationally and within the West Partnership and to focus on a sustainable future landscape beyond SAC and PEF.

3.5.2 Implementation of Anti-poverty Strategies

In response to the recent Fairness Commission report in North Lanarkshire, there will be a comprehensive approach to building our programmes for promoting Equity. These will include the roll out of anti-poverty approaches, including pedagogical practice and support programmes to address Food Poverty.

Evidence based planning will govern the development of these programmes, including a more forensic approach to measuring success in a quantifiable way. The approach will embrace partnership resources.

Working with partners we will work also to improve our data to support the new duties to report on, develop local action plans and measure progress on child poverty targets, In developing new models of support for vulnerable groups we will take cognisance of recent comparative research linking poverty and inequalities with significantly enhanced rates of statutory child welfare interventions (Nuffield Foundation).

3.5.3 North Lanarkshire Research Lab

A Research Based Practice Model for North Lanarkshire is to be developed in order to enable a more effective support for schools in developing their curricular and support offering for young people. This will help to align future programmes and projects within an overarching *What Works* approach.

A literature review will be conducted and a comprehensive overview of Research Based Practice, along with an effective suite of training and development resources will be developed. It will create a rationale for future planned programmes of improvement and establish mechanisms for measuring success (benchmarking achievements). It will shape future developments in practitioner and collaborative enquiry.

3.6 Vulnerable Groups

One of the major advantages of there being an integrated service provision involving Education and Families is to integrate planning for those who are most vulnerable, from young people who are on the edges of the care system, to those who are looked after, formally, to those people who have convictions, or who suffer from the impact of domestic abuse. The opportunity to integrate planning for such vulnerable groups, and to see the relationship between such intensive services and the universal services provided through the Directorate is a critical one. The following work streams will address these issues.

3.6.1 Improved Family Support Systems

As part of our work with CELCIS on reconfiguration of services for young people on the edges of care, the Transforming Pathways pilot in the North area of North Lanarkshire is a critical means by which we can establish more effective systems of prevention and enhance support for young people and families identified as experiencing challenges. This work has identified risks for children in the upper stages of primary and is focused on improving support packages and pathways, based on multi-agency teamwork.

The proposition is to roll out such systems in due course as part of the Area Model of support around the child. This will require effective programme coordination. The opportunity to develop a business case for support via the Robertson Trust to facilitate this change will be part of this process.

3.6.2 Improving outcomes for looked after children and young people at risk

A number of linked programmes aimed at improving outcomes for Care Experienced children and young people are being brought forward. This includes the Virtual School, which will look at education planning for this group, building the capacity for improved engagement with education, providing greater monitoring of educational journeys, more effective data about progress and more effective advocacy and mentoring support, as part of a package of supports to enable more powerful pathways.

In addition, there will be a specific focus on supports for the families of those who are Looked After at Home, or through Kinship Care arrangements. Alongside this we intend to reconfigure wider service support arrangements for kinship families, to establish a new continuing care service and to further develop the whole system approach for young people at risk of involvement in offending and anti-social behaviour,

3.6.3 Support for Adults

Growing awareness of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences has highlighted how high risk and intergenerational behaviours can affect the lives of individuals, their children and communities and lead to them experiencing risk and, poor outcomes.

One key element is ensuring there are effective pathways for people with convictions, with opportunities for meaningful engagement with the labour market and an economic future, The new Directorate will build on work already undertaken to enhance parenting support to this group and to better support the needs of young people with family involved in the justice system, through a new collaboration with 'Families Outside'.

Domestic Abuse is another area of specific focus and in line with the aspirations of Equally Safe we will continue to work to embed the Safe and Together Model and complete a planned review of commissioned Domestic Abuse Services.

The Solihull Approach is being embedded in practice across North Lanarkshire, providing practitioners with a deeper understanding of trauma, its impact on individuals and a theoretical framework to respond in a sensitive and attuned way. A particular early intervention focus is to identify and support families at risk in their parenting, promoting a secure parent/child relationship to break the generational cycle.

3.7 Education and Families Operating Model

The new Directorate, as part of the wider council / partnership, will establish new ways of working to make a difference to those we serve. We will build systems to improve practice in collaboration across services, to ensure integrated local provision.

3.7.1 Integrated Community Hubs / Campuses

Demonstration projects which embody the We Aspire vision for greater connectedness and integration of service provision will be brought forward. These projects will allow lessons to be learned regarding the relationship between mainstreams schools and ASN establishments; Early Learning and Childcare, Primary and Secondary provision; Skills Academies; CLD and Social Work.

Hubs will require new operating models to be established, which enable more effective support around the child, at individual pupil level; more effective systems of support to build up around secondary school clusters (resource following the child); and more effective strategic oversight and governance at Area level, supported by improved authority wide systems for managing transitions of young people to and from specialist provision where this is required, as well as more effective in-reach and outreach.

3.7.1 Integrated Working

In future, it is intended that a more integrated financial and operational set of models will also govern central team working. A process to establish this will be enacted once the aggregation process to establish the new Directorate is complete.

4. Equality and Diversity

4.1 Fairer Scotland

4.1.1 The intention underpinning The Fairer Scotland Duty is to reduce the inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage.

4.1.2 The guidance also asserts that socio-economic disadvantage can be experienced by (a) communities of place - people who are bound together because of where they reside, work or visit, and (b) communities of interest - groups of people who share an identity, experience, or one or more of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010.

4.1.3 The Fairer Scotland Duty is intended to reduce the inequalities of outcomes caused by socio-economic disadvantage. Inequalities of outcome mean any measurable differences between those who have experienced social-economic disadvantage and the rest of the population.

4.1.4 The statutory focus of The Fairer Scotland Duty is on strategic decision making and, as such, the proposals outlined in this report require to be considered under the Duty.

4.2 Equality Impact Assessment

4.2.1 Specific equality impact assessments will be undertaken, where appropriate, in line with council policy and The Fairer Scotland Duty assessment process noted above.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial impact

Financial impacts will be identified in the forthcoming report to the March 2019 Policy and Strategy Committee that will outline details on each of the Programmes of Work associated with the thematic areas of improvement highlighted in this report.

5.2 HR/Policy/Legislative impact

HR / policy / legislative impacts will be identified in the subsequent reports to the March 2019 Policy and Strategy Committee that will outline details on the Programmes of Work.

5.3 Environmental impact

Environmental impacts will be identified in the subsequent reports to the March 2019 Policy and Strategy Committee that will outline details on the Programmes of Work.

5.4 Risk impact

Risks will be identified as part of the process to develop the Programmes of Work and thereafter incorporated into each Service's risk register. This will be aligned to the council's corporate risk management arrangements, where relevant, to ensure that risk is managed at the appropriate level in the organisation and strategic assessments identify where risk can be tolerated.

6. Measures of success

- 6.1 Measures of success will be evidenced through progress being made against the agreed Programmes of Work that aim to deliver upon the ambition statements in *The Plan for North Lanarkshire*.

Evidence that these are having a positive impact on inclusive growth and prosperity for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire will realise the vision where *We aspire* that North Lanarkshire is **the** place to *Live, learn, Work, Invest, and Visit*.

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Derek Brown' and the signature on the right is 'Alison Gordon'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Derek Brown and Alison Gordon
Joint Interim Executive Director of Education and Families