

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Education and Families Committee

approval noting

Ref AM/GM

Date 24/11/20

(PO 35.1) Reconfiguring Intensive ASN Systems and Services

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Executive Summary

This report updates elected members on the progress in implementing the approved recommendations arising from the extensive ASN review, agreed by the Education and Families Committee in September 2019, and includes commentary of the multi-partner approach taken to doing this. It enacts the previous committee decision taken relating to intensive education services in the Review of Intensive Social Services for Children and Families in September 2020. It, furthermore, builds on lessons learned in supporting vulnerable young people in the COVID-19 emergency response and recovery periods and the mitigating actions that will be required at the next stage. In particular, the report outlines:

- The strategic reconfiguration of the intensive ASN systems and services to support children and young people with intensive social and emotional needs
- A number of actions to improve the ASN estate, out of existing facilities, as previously established in the Plan for North Lanarkshire Council in March 2019.

Revision of ASN provision is a key programme of work within the revised Plan for North Lanarkshire (March 2020).

Recommendations

The Education and Families Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Note the contents of the report;
- (2) Agree to consult on the proposed changes to locations for ASN schools;
- (3) Agree to consult on the proposed establishment of the We Aspire College;
- (4) Agree to consult on the proposed changes to school management arrangements;
- (5) Note the establishment of 80 Modern Apprenticeship posts for the Integrated Cluster Wellbeing teams; and,
- (6) Approve a further report to come to Education and Families Committee in May 2021 following conclusion of the consultation process.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base

- Ambition statement (22) Facilitate a North Lanarkshire wide approach to asset rationalisation, including with communities and partners
- Ambition statement (9) Invest in early interventions, positive transitions, and preventative approaches to improve outcomes for children and young people

1. Background

- 1.1 In September 2019, the Education and Families Committee approved a review of Additional Support Needs services which established twelve key recommendations for action. Two key recommendations are cited here, which underpin the intentions of the strategic recommendations in this paper.

Recommendation 8: 'Partnership working will be strengthened in a revised Support Around the School model, which will enable greater empowerment of staff to meet the needs of young people and enable a greater connection between needs and the partnership response to them. A more holistic approach to supporting families will underpin this.'

Recommendation 11: 'A clear plan for the future of the ASN estate, which creates Cluster ASN Hubs and specialist provision around the envisaged campus model of the future will be established as part of the Community Investment Fund and developed as part of the ongoing work to prioritise community hub investment proposals.'

- 1.2 These recommendations and the strategic direction of this report align directly with the policy established in the Plan for North Lanarkshire to ensure that children and young people are catered for within high quality facilities and that ASN provision is at the heart of the Town and Community Hub model as illustrated in Graphic 1 below.

Graphic 1 Town & Community Hubs - Plan for North Lanarkshire

- 1.3

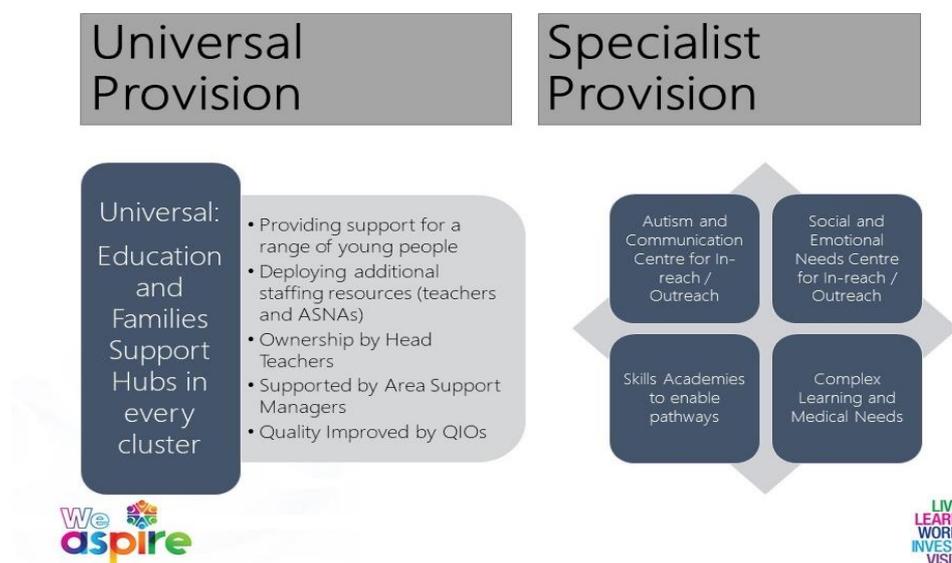


Cognisance must also be given to a number of inter-dependencies and recent policy developments, which whilst not exhaustive include:

- The Empowering Clusters strategy
- Implementation of Shared and Executive Headships
- Rationalisation of the estate as part of the planned Community Investment Fund.

- 1.4 Proposals outlined in this paper have been developed by Education and Families Managers including staff from the Early Learning & Childcare team, the Inclusion team, Assets and Procurement and Corporate Finance. Key considerations derived from these meetings have been incorporated into the models proposed, which include:
- Quality and condition of the fabric of school buildings
 - Financial implications associated with estate re-purposing and school relocation
 - Impact assessment and improvement planning for the ASN sector.
- 1.5 Importantly, the service has had some high quality external evaluations of schools through the national inspection programme overseen by Her Majesty’s Inspectors of Education (HMIE) in the past year. Buchanan High and Redburn School were rated as Good overall, with particular strengths demonstrated. A number of schools fell below Satisfactory ratings (Pentland School, Fallside School and Clydeview School). These latter establishments are all smaller, more isolated establishments with significant challenges in relation to buildings and staffing resources.
- 1.6 Within the overarching planning for Education and Families, there is a focus on providing universal, additional and intensive services, with the universal provided by schools, the additional supported by the Integrated Cluster Wellbeing Teams and Bases and the intensive through ASN schools and as appropriate, support from social work or other services as part of an integrated child’s plan. This latter category is also supported by additional services. It is the intensive elements that this paper focuses on. The graphic below, developed in the ASN Review shows this.

Graphic 2



- 1.7 The Service has adopted a formal project management governance structure to lead and monitor the delivery of the overarching ASN strategy which will encompass the achievement of the programme detailed herein.
- 1.8 The actions and recommendations outlined in this paper reflect (and are coherent with) decisions taken in North Lanarkshire Council’s budget setting process for 2020 – 2023.
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2. Report

2.1. This report establishes the methodology by which the service's redesign was envisioned by officers, in response to the Council's priorities. A core team of officers in Education and Families assessed a range of propositions to establish their viability, using a RAG status approach to highlight the most promising options for implementation.

2.2. The Methodology Used to Establish Specific Proposals

A number of factors were used to establish an approach to prioritising potential rationalisation activities. These are described in the following section.

2.2.1 Strategic fit with the priorities of the Plan for North Lanarkshire

Weighting was attached to the extent to which a proposal might enable the acceleration of the values inherent in the Community Investment Fund, which is designed to drive future priorities in relation to the planning of the future estate of North Lanarkshire Council. This includes a prioritisation matrix, which weights deprivation as the highest factor. Any proposal brought forward has to align with these priorities.

2.2.2 Alignment with the ASN Review: Achievability of Propositions

In the ASN Review there were a number of key recommendations which are being progressed through the actions outlined in this paper. These recommendations set a policy direction for North Lanarkshire Council. Indeed, Recommendation 11 of the ASN Review supports this approach (Section 1.2).

A key test of the propositions were related to the extent to which they aided the achievability of the policy intentions of the ASN Review.

2.2.3 Efficient Use of Resources and Affordability of Proposals

The historic ASN estate provision of North Lanarkshire has meant that there are a number of smaller, more isolated ASN schools which can be more susceptible to challenges in recruiting appropriate staff, and are less easy to naturally integrate with wider services, which can make them less sustainable. Consideration has been given to allowing these smaller establishments to become relocated into some of the more modern campus facilities which have been established, where there is capacity for them to be repurposed.

2.2.4 Location, Suitability and Condition of Buildings; and Value for Money

In each case the condition and suitability of the buildings was considered. This was particularly true in relation to our ASN estate, which requires significant investment, which may take some years to fully realise through the actions being brought forward through the Community Investment Fund.

2.2.5 Educational Benefits Statement

Through the planned proposals it is expected that a number of educational benefits will be achieved on behalf of children and young people with the requirement for intensive services to meet their additional support needs. These points were clearly established in the findings of the ASN Review and include:

- Empowerment of practitioners and local ownership of resources to meet needs

- Improved access to high quality facilities
- Strengthened leadership and management of learning for those with significant additional needs
- Strengthened practice in planning to meet the needs of learners
- Strengthened practice in pedagogy and learning and teaching
- Clearer pathways to mainstream for those who can access such provision
- Strengthened integrated planning with partners.

These will vary according to the precise nature of facilities in question.

2.3 Proposal to Create a We Aspire College for North Lanarkshire

It is proposed to create an integrated We Aspire College for SEBN related services in North Lanarkshire Council. This will incorporate a number of existing schools, services and facilities within an overarching operation, under the leadership of an Executive Head Teacher, with overall responsibility for improving outcomes.

2.3.1 This will provide opportunities for children and young people to work within, between and beyond a range of establishments and services. It will facilitate increased collaboration to make more effective use of existing expertise and establish a leadership model which supports achievement of the best possible outcomes.

2.3.2 This model will also provide for Depute Heads with a strategic focus including the following areas, all reporting to the Executive Head Teacher:

- School Programmes Lead
- Vocational Education Lead
- Bespoke Programmes Lead

A key feature of this work will be Inclusion and Equity and officers will work in close partnership with the Virtual School Lead, Digital School Lead and Equity and Improvement Lead Officers.

2.3.3 There is a current, permanent, shared headship arrangement in place for three ASN schools: Willowbank, Fallside and Portland. In addition, education support provided within the Community Alternatives Service to those young people receiving intensive social work, is also managed through the current shared headship arrangement. On a temporary basis, Pentland has been added to this portfolio. Last year, following statutory consultation, Willowbank was moved to St Margaret's High School campus. Willowbank is different in nature from Fallside and Portland, which tend to focus on SEBN issues. Willowbank pupils tend to be more vulnerable and have complex emotional needs.

2.3.4 It is therefore proposed to move Willowbank into the campus management arrangements of St. Margaret's, separating it from the other schools in the shared headship. This is to build on and strengthen existing arrangements. Specifically it will enable a more flexible interchange of knowledge and activity between the two schools and a more integrated approach to providing access to mainstream educational provision for the young people concerned. The previous experience of St Margaret's having shared a campus with St Dominic's Primary means that there is significant experience in St Margaret's of shared campus arrangements.

2.3.5 As part of this plan, it is also proposed to align Pentland with Portland and Fallside on a permanent basis, as part of the We Aspire College, to provide school-based programmes

of education and support for young people between the ages of 5-18. Importantly, the role of the service should be to both enable the semi-permanent and indeed permanent education of children in intensive arrangements, but where possible, promote a pathway back to mainstream for those who are capable of it and a pathway beyond to employment and training.

Education provision within the Community Alternative setting will also continue to be linked with this portfolio, enhancing the ability to provide tailored support to those young people experiencing a range of adversities who may benefit from an alternative setting. Inclusion of this service as part of the We Aspire College will also strengthen opportunities and pathways for these young people and better connect provision to the wider service fulfilling a key recommendation of the Review of Intensive Social Work Services which reported to Education and Families Committee in September 2020.

2.3.6 It is expected that the main base for the We Aspire College will be located in Coltness High School in an area of the school that had been initially identified for a Support Unit. Additionally off-site provision for SEBN services will be provided for children in the north area in the Cumbernauld Theatre space and in the central area in Townhead Community Centre. This will be specifically for primary aged children in the main, but will enable flexible ways of providing education on a short term basis, as part of agreed packages of support for older young people by arrangement. It should be noted that there is already existing work progressing to establish ASN senior phase provision as part of the campus plan for the Cumbernauld Theatre and Cinema complex on the Cumbernauld Academy site. This is to involve Redburn and Glencryan jointly in a venture under the working title of Glenburn College. This is separate to the planning for the We Aspire College at this stage, but will be linked as the projects progress.

2.3.7 It is furthermore proposed that there be an alignment of all vocational education activity within the purview of the We Aspire College. This is to enable a pathway to employment and training for all young people who experience social and emotional behavioural challenges. This will include the alignment of the following services:

- Skills Academy
- The 7 Day Centre

The 7 Day Centre is currently part of social work intensive services and offers a programme to small cohorts of young people who have disengaged from school and whose circumstances place them at risk of residential care. This proposal will give effect to the recommendation of the Review of Social Work Intensive Services recommended that this service be retained but enhanced through much stronger integration with other educational programmes and qualification pathways.

The benefit of this change will be to streamline management, avoid duplication and ensure that more effective pathways and packages of support are deployed for all young people involved.

2.3.8 It is also expected that there can be a rationalisation of assets in this work, with a focus on building around the existing Skills Academy and strengthening vocational provision and bespoke programmes within existing school (and future town and community) campuses.

2.3.9 All of the elements of the We Aspire College will benefit from the integrated approach to service and support planning which underlies the wider new operating model within Education and Families, ensuring support is delivered holistically in partnership with children, young people and their families. To support this we will also seek to maximise

opportunities for involvement in service and support planning (in line with the *Voice* strand of *The Promise*).

2.4 Relocation of Existing Establishments within Alternative/Higher Quality Facilities

In line with the policy established in the Plan for North Lanarkshire to ensure that young people are catered for within high quality facilities, it is also proposed that consultation takes place to strengthen the provision experienced by pupils in Clydeview and Mavisbank Schools. Each of these propositions is outlined in what follows.

2.4.1 Reconfiguration of Mavisbank School

It is recommended that Mavisbank School primary aged children are relocated to Drumpark Primary School, as part of a planned development of the lower mezzanine level of the school. This will facilitate more appropriate provision for primary aged children with complex needs within the Central locality. This will also allow for increased capacity in the existing Mavisbank site for secondary aged children who have significant, complex needs, who cannot be catered for in local authority provision at present.

This proposal is linked to the planned priority (expressed in the ASN Review) to repatriate young people to North Lanarkshire provision, from out of authority care. To enable this, it will be important to build bespoke packages of care and support, involving social work, educational psychology and health professionals working together to remove barriers to participation and learning. There will be some modification of facilities required within the Drumpark / Greenhill site to enable this.

2.4.2 Creation of Shared Headship between Firpark Primary and Clydeview School

There have been a number of reports written by HMIE and the Care Inspectorate in recent years relating to Clydeview School, which provides for children with complex needs in the south area of North Lanarkshire Council. In recent times, there has been pressure on staffing and resources. It has proven difficult to recruit and retain staff and there remain issues relating to a number of aspects of continuous improvement.

It is therefore proposed that Clydeview be moved to the Cathedral Campus, taking over the existing Daisy Park Centre and become part of a shared headship arrangement with Fir Park Primary.

This will strengthen leadership, provide greater depth and breadth of staffing and improve the offering to primary aged children with MLD and complex needs within the South locality.

2.4.3 Reconfiguration of the St. Margaret's Campus

As per section 2.5, the intention is to operate with an Executive Headship in St. Margaret's High School, with the alignment of the management structure of Willowbank and St. Margaret's to reflect this strategic intention.

2.5 Project Planning

The work relating to this area will be overseen by a Programme Board, in accordance with North Lanarkshire's Project Management protocols, for the Reconfiguration of Intensive ASN Systems and Services. This will be serviced by a Senior Reporting Officer (SRO) and Reporting Officer (RO) and project team, which will ensure all aspects of the programme

plan, including statutory consultation are accomplished successfully and timeously, in relation to the planned critical path for developments.

2.5.1 The work will also adhere to the principles that govern the establishment of Shared and Executive Headships as outlined in the Education and Families Committee Report of May 2020, Developing Executive Headships. These principles include: Community Case; Improvement Case; Leadership Case; Business Case and Service Change Case. In the case of each of these proposals there is a clear business case an improvement case and a service change case, outlined in the relevant sections.

2.5.2 Empowering Head Teachers Leadership Model

The ASN review established that in the future intensive ASN services would be based around four key organisers. These being:

- SEBN
- Autism, Language, Communication (Child Development)
- Complex needs (including medical)
- Curricular Pathways

It is intended to appoint an Executive Head from our existing Head Teacher pool to lead on each of these areas. The first of these is covered in section 2.3 (We Aspire College).

It is expected that initially, such roles would be strategic and a leadership development opportunity for some of our head teacher group. However, over time it is anticipated that these organisers will be used to shape the ASN service offerings within future town and community hubs. There is an expectation that trade unions will be consulted on this development through the normal negotiating machinery. Normal job sizing protocols will apply.

2.5.3 Strengthening the Career Pathway for Learning Assistants

The Update Report on the implementation of the ASN Review for the Education and Families Committee of May 2020 established that there would be thirty Enhanced Learning Assistants (NLC7) established to lead the workforce development programme for the SANA cohort.

It is now proposed to strengthen the career pathway by recruiting eighty Modern Apprentices (NLC3) who will be deployed to the Integrated Cluster Wellbeing teams and will be trained by the NLC7 group. This will be an important step in creating the career pathway for the future Learning Assistant (NLC4) posts, which are currently being consulted on with trade unions.

2.5.4 Use of Community Facilities

There are three CLNL managed centres mentioned within the report (Coltness CC, Townhead CC and Daisy Park CC) none of which are being considered for closure or service cessation at present.

Work is being done to determine mitigation of any adverse impact on those using the facilities (wider access to school spaces may be possible in the evenings for example, or use of other facilities in the locality where available).

As regards to Cumbernauld Theatre, work is being done to consider the overall use/operating model for this facility for off-site senior phase learning.

Work will now be done between Education and Families and Enterprise and Communities to:

- Assess the impact on community use;
- Assess the budget implications i.e., any impact on CLNL (and NLC after 1st April 2021) income streams;
- Engage effectively/co-producing the approach with communities/users; and
- Sigh the CLNL Board on the proposals and impact as required.

3. Equality and Diversity

3.1 Fairer Scotland Duty

These proposals have been progressed in line with the policy intention of Fairer Scotland.

3.2 Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and will underpin planning for these proposals, since a number of the young people involved are considered as being from a protected group, due to disability.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Impact

Through a range of management actions, the proposals outlined in this paper will contribute to the overall efficiencies sought through relocation and rezoning schools, as approved in the Budget Planning process in February 2020. The overall target for that programme of activity is £0.675m for 2021 – 2022. The specific proposals outlined above would contribute £0.321m per annum. The final savings value will be dependent on the outcome of job evaluation and the job sizing toolkit for retained posts.

The proposals outlined in this paper are underpinned by the assumption that Capital funding will be allocated in the next 5 year programme to support the building mergers/modifications outlined in the report. The Service is currently assessing the value of this capital investment with support from colleagues in Asset and Procurement Solutions. The bid process for the new 5 year programme has only recently begun with proposals due to be considered and approved at Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2021.

4.2 HR/Policy/Legislative Impact

Affected staff will be managed in accordance with the appropriate Workforce Change Policies and in consultation with the signatory trades unions. Considerations would include Compulsory Transfer, Premature/Early Retirement, Redundancy/ Redeployment.

The Service would be required to follow the requirements for consulting as set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Further stakeholder, community and parental consultation would be required in the event that the Service proceeds with any of the recommendations. An indicative timeline for the consultation process is outlined in Appendix 1.

4.3 Environmental Impact

The carbon footprint will reduce if the numbers of establishments operating was reduced and pupils were catered for in our newer and more energy efficient campuses.

4.4 Risk Impact

If schools were selected for re-zoning it would have a significant impact on the affected pupils / parents / staff.

However, the Service has extensive experience of successfully implementing new school builds, mergers and closures. This includes management of transition arrangements for pupils, updating transport requirements and staff/trade union communication and consultation.

Since a number of proposals involve building sharing with Roman Catholic schools, dialogue will require to take place with the appropriate church representatives.

A Programme Board has been established for the Implementation of the ASN Review.

5. Measures of success

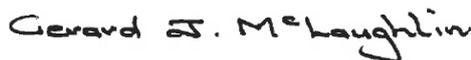
- 5.1 Stakeholder support for the options brought forward.
- 5.2 Successful implementation of planned proposals.
- 5.3 Greater alignment with the Plan for North Lanarkshire community hub model.
- 5.4 Improved quality of service and provision to effectively meet the needs of children, young people and families
- 5.5 Increased numbers of children and young people remaining within their local community.

6. Supporting documents

- 6.1 ASN Review
<https://mars.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/egenda/images/att92041.pdf>



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Appendix 1 Indicative Timeline for Reconfiguring Intensive ASN Systems and Services

Indicative Timeline for Reconfiguring Intensive ASN Systems and Services

