

Educational Services Standing Sub Committee
30 August 2006

Irvine, 30 August 2006 - At a meeting of the Educational Services Standing Sub Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Jacqueline Browne, Jean Highgate, Peter McNamara, Donald Reid, John Reid, John Scott and Elaine Shaw.

In Attendance

J. Leckie, Head of Service, G. Johnstone, Quality Improvement Manager, A. McGonigle and G. Syme, Quality Improvement Officers, M. Craik, Principal Children's Services Officer, N. McCrone, Cultural Services Manager, A. Milson, Learning Manager - Quality Development and C. Sharp, Acting Country Parks Manager (Educational Services); M. McKeown and E. Fisher, Corporate and Democratic Support Officers (Chief Executive's).

Chair

Councillor Browne in the Chair

Apologies for Absence

Gordon Allison, Drew Duncan, Elisabeth Marshall.

1. Sporting Opportunities for Young People

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Educational Services) on the current arrangements in place to support sport development within North Ayrshire.

At its meeting on 23 May 2006, the Educational Services Committee agreed that a report on sports development should be submitted to a future meeting of the Standing Sub Committee. In recent years there has been a substantial expansion of formal sports development opportunities within North Ayrshire. Support for sport comes through three main avenues - Educational Services, North Ayrshire Leisure Limited (NALL) and sports clubs. The following areas were highlighted:-

Educational Services

All pupils aged 3-18 will receive 2 hours of physical education every week by 2007. The authority, in partnership with Sportscotland, has put in place the Active Schools Programme. The Council will invest £360,000 in the Programme over a 3 year period which will in turn attract almost £1m from Sportscotland in the same period. There are 7 full-time and 13 part-time Active Schools Co-ordinators. Each cluster of schools has a small team of co-ordinators who work closely with community sports clubs and who, each year, produce a plan to address the 10 targets set for the programme i.e.:-

- Increasing the range, number and regularity of sustainable extra-curricular opportunities

- Increasing activity levels in playgrounds
- Establishing/developing school-community links
- Developing opportunities for pupils to complete, display and celebrate their achievements
- Developing the number and expertise of volunteers working in schools
- Help to put in place facilities, equipment and resources to support physical activity
- Increasing the number of pupils walking or cycling to school
- Developing a range of opportunities for staff to be active
- Monitoring levels of activity in each school
- Informing and promoting physical activity in each school

North Ayrshire Leisure Limited

The services of the Sport Development Team of North Ayrshire Leisure Limited (NALL) are available to all schools in the authority. This is a professional support for which schools pay from their devolved budgets.

A McDonalds Programme has, for the last 4 years provided football coaching and games, and a new Programme will be delivered to schools over the next three years.

Swimming, gymnastics, basketball, badminton and hockey coaching is also available on a pay and play basis and competitive opportunities in athletics and cross country are popular with schools.

Community Club and Volunteer Input

Pathways to develop as performers and competitive opportunities are provided in a number of sports by local community clubs and volunteers. The needs of football are well serviced by the many teams in the community. However, teams change on a regular basis because of the lack of a supportive infrastructure.

Rugby and swimming clubs provide essential development, competitive and essential pathways. The key to the effectiveness of these sports relates directly to the organisational strength of the clubs, supported by National Governing Bodies and an organised systematic approach to involving young people in their sport at an early age.

Other sports served by local clubs offer some pathways for young people. These are limited by the number of coaches, expertise of coaches, number of volunteers and the availability of facilities.

Protocols are being put in place detailing what support sports clubs can expect from the Council.

The Sub Committee agreed (a) to note the sporting opportunities for children in North Ayrshire as set out in the report; and (b) to receive a future report comparing sports provision in North Ayrshire with other Councils in Scotland.

2. Service Performance Reports for 12 Months Ended 31 March 2006

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Educational Services) on the

performance of the main service areas within Educational Services in the 12 months to 31 March 2006.

The appendices to the report set out Service Performance Reports for School Education, Library and Information Services, Community Learning and Development, Cultural Services, Children's Outreach Services, and Country Parks. The report set out the performance highs and lows, and the immediate priorities for each of these Service areas.

The Sub Committee discussed each of the Performance Reports in turn and asked questions of the officers present.

The Sub Committee agreed (a) to note the performance of each of the Service areas in the 12 months to 31 March 2006; (b) that in future performance reports containing percentage figures should also include actual numbers where possible; and (c) that a report on the Valley Ark Group should be submitted to the next meeting.

3. Survey of Partnership Working in North Ayrshire Primary Schools

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Educational Services) on the result of the survey undertaken between January and March 2006 on partnership working in North Ayrshire Primary Schools.

North Ayrshire schools have initiated and developed a range of partnerships which support them in delivering a comprehensive curriculum as well as providing support for staff, young people and their families. Partnerships have developed through national initiatives e.g. Integrated Community Schools, Determined to Succeed. To be effective, they have to be delivered at local authority, cluster and school level.

The survey, which was conducted by the Council's Quality Improvement Officers, was undertaken in order to provide information on how well partnership working is being undertaken in the primary sector. The report on the outcome of the survey concludes that overall the partnerships in place are working well. There are sometimes barriers to effective working e.g. lack of knowledge, time constraints, unrealistic expectations etc., but these occur infrequently. In almost all cases staff in schools welcome the support they receive and value the relationships that have developed. In many cases initiatives that have been developed in one area have been extended to others. Pupils and their families receive valuable co-ordinated support and schools are able to extend their provision by working with other agencies to pool resources.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 3.55 pm.