



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Cunninghame House,
Irvine.

19 February 2015

Cabinet

You are requested to attend a Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council to be held in the Council Chambers, Ground Floor, Cunninghame House, Irvine on **TUESDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2015** at **2.30 p.m.** to consider the undernoted business.

Yours faithfully

Elma Murray

Chief Executive

1. Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to give notice of any declaration of interest in respect of items of business on the agenda.

2. Minutes (Page 7)

The accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2015 will be confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (copy enclosed).

3. Questions

In terms of Standing Order No. 12 submit

(a) a question by Councillor Reid to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Support in the following terms:-

"Can the cabinet member advise on the success of the advisory panels, how often each has met and the key subjects of interest where these meetings have formulated policy changes in the council?"

PRESENTATION

4. Customer Service Strategy Update February 2015 (Page 13)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the progress to date in relation to the Customer Service strategy (copy enclosed).

GENERAL BUSINESS FOR DECISION

Reports by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

5. .Scot Internet Domain Registration (Page 45)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the proposed use of the new '.scot' internet domain registration (copy enclosed).

Reports by the Executive Director (Economy & Communities)

6. Local Development Plan: Strategic Road Improvements (Page 49)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on the mechanisms to ensure that the impact on the strategic road network from new development arising from the Local Development Plan is monitored and where necessary mitigated (copy enclosed).

7. European Structural and Investment Fund Programmes in Scotland 2014-20 (Page 65)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on progress in the development of European Union Structural and Investment Fund Programmes in Scotland 2014-20, and their potential to bring benefit to North Ayrshire (copy enclosed).

GENERAL BUSINESS FOR INFORMATION

8. Strategic Review of Educational Services (Page 79)

Submit report by the Chief Executive on the Interim Report of the Strategic Review of Educational Services (copy enclosed).

9. Planning Performance Framework (Page 187)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on feedback from Scottish Government on the Planning Performance Framework 3 and seek approval for an action programme as indicated within Appendix 2 (copy enclosed).

10. Non Standard Lending (Page 205)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) in relation to the officers review of the recommendations made by the Council's short-life non standard lending working group (copy enclosed).

MINUTES

11. Minutes of the Physical Environment Advisory Panel (Page 213)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Place) the minute of the Physical Environment Advisory Panel held on 26 January 2015 (copy enclosed).

12. Urgent Items

Any other item which the Chair considers to be urgent.

Cabinet

Sederunt:

Elected Members

Willie Gibson (Chair)
Alan Hill (Vice-Chair)
Marie Burns
John Bruce
Anthea Dickson
Tony Gurney
Ruth Maguire

Chair:

Attending:

Apologies:

Meeting Ended:

Cabinet
10 February 2015

Irvine, 10 February 2015 - At a meeting of Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

Present

Willie Gibson, Alan Hill, Marie Burns, Anthea Dickson, Tony Gurney and Ruth Maguire; Very Reverend Matthew Canon McManus and Mr Mark Fraser (Church Representatives) (Agenda Items 1 - 5) and John Shekleton and Courtney Gemmell (Youth Representatives) (Agenda Items 1 - 10).

Also Present

Ian Clarkson (Agenda Items 1 - 8.4).

In Attendance

E. Murray, Chief Executive; L. Friel, Executive Director and A. Blakely, IT Manager (Finance and Corporate Support); J. Butcher, Executive Director, S. Quinn, Head of Service (Schools) and L. Cook, Education Development Co-ordinator (Education and Youth Employment); C. Hatton, Executive Director (Place); K. Yeomans, Executive Director, A. Sutton, Head of Service (Connected Communities) and J. McHarg, Community Engagement Manager (Economy and Communities); N. Shearer, Team Manager (Legal), R. Moore, Communications Officer (Media and Internal Communications) and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's).

Chair

Councillor Gibson in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

John Bruce and Elizabeth Highton.

1. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed John Shekleton and Courtney Gemmell (Youth Representatives) to their first Cabinet meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 16 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

3. Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2015 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

4. School Leaver Destination Return 2013/14

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education and Skills) which provided information on (a) the destination of young people who left school between 1 August 2013 and 31 July 2014; (b) a range of supports and resources in place to improve outcomes for young people; and (c) changes to the way the annual statistics will be produced.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

- the national measurement in respect of employment, which includes Modern Apprentices; and
- a review of the methodology used by Skills Development Scotland to produce the annual school leave destination statistics.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the information set out in the School Leaver Destination Return; and (b) support the continued focus of schools and Education and Youth Employment on improving outcomes for young people.

5. Self Evaluation and Quality Assurance Procedures in North Ayrshire Schools

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Education & Youth Employment) on the revised self evaluation and quality assurance procedures that will deliver a sustainable model and meet the aims of Education Scotland's (HMI) priority of ensuring schools are able to evaluate their own performance against national and other relevant benchmarks.

Noted.

6. ICT Strategy for Educational Establishments Update February 2015

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on (a) the development of an Education ICT Strategy to ensure the development and use of ICT is embedded within the curriculum; (b) the key recommendations of the Strategy; and (c) the Action Plan detailing progress of the actions and next steps required to implement the Strategy.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to:-

- the introduction of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) within schools and the provision of devices by schools to those who require a device;
- the identification of security risks associated with BYOD and work that will be done to mitigate these risks;
- a contract that is in place to dispose of outdated ICT equipment; and
- outdated equipment that can continue to be use, outwith the network, on a stand alone basis.

Noted.

7. Empty Homes Strategy: Empty Homes Loan Fund

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) which provided information on (a) funding of £200,000 secured from the Empty Homes Loan Fund; and (b) alternative methods explored by the Scottish Government for utilising money from the Fund.

The Cabinet agreed that income secured from the Scottish Government's Empty Homes Loan Fund may also be used for (i) the purpose of offering loans to owners to allow them to sell their properties on the open market; and (ii) purchasing empty homes, which were previously subject to right to buy, and which will then become part of the overall Council housing stock.

8. Kirktonhall, West Kilbride

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on (a) the progress made by the Kirktonhall Creative Media Group toward the preparation of a business plan; (b) funding information that is expected by the end of financial year 2014/15; and (c) a report that will be presented once funding information has been received on the future use of the building.

The Cabinet agreed to approve continuation of the preferred bidder status for Kirktonhall Creative Media Group until a decision has been made by the external funders (Historic Scotland and Heritage Lottery Fund) in respect of future funding, expected by the end of the financial year 2014/5, at which time a determination on the future for Kirktonhall can be made.

9. Community Asset Transfer

9.1 Community Asset Transfer Application: Irvine Bay Gymnastics Club, Blacklands Hall, Kilwinning

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on the application by Irvine Bay Gymnastics Club to have the lease of Blacklands Hall, Kilwinning transferred to them within the terms of the Council's Community Asset Transfer arrangements.

The Cabinet agreed to approve in principle the transfer of the Blacklands Hall with associated grounds, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of Stage 4 of the North Ayrshire Council asset transfer process to agree the terms and conditions of lease or prospective purchase.

9.2 Community Asset Transfer Application: ANCHO, Redburn Community Centre

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on ANCHO's application to have the lease of Redburn Community Centre, Dickson Drive, Irvine transferred to the organisation within the terms of the Council's Community Asset Transfer arrangements.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to consultation that will take place with stakeholders, including Elected Members, as part of Stage 4 of the community asset transfer process.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve in principle the transfer of the Redburn Community Centre to ANCHO, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of Stage 4 of the North Ayrshire Council asset transfer process to agree the terms and conditions of lease or prospective purchase; and (b) authorise Legal Services to petition Kilmarnock Sheriff Court for authority to grant the lease.

9.3 Community Asset Transfer Application: Coastwatch (Scotland) Irvine, Irvine Pilot House (Boyd's Patented Tower, Grade B Listed Building)

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on the application by Coastwatch (Scotland), Irvine to have the lease of the Irvine Pilot House transferred to them within the terms of the Council's Community Asset Transfer arrangements.

The Cabinet agreed to approve in principle the transfer of the Pilot House with associated grounds, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of Stage 4 of the North Ayrshire Council asset transfer process to agree the terms and conditions of lease or prospective purchase.

9.4 Community Asset Transfer Application: North Ayrshire Staff Association, Littlestane Hall, Irvine

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on the North Ayrshire Staff Association application to have the lease of Littlestane Hall, transferred to them within the terms of the Council's Community Asset Transfer arrangements.

The Cabinet agreed to approve in principle the transfer of the Littlestane Hall, Irvine with associated grounds, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of Stage 4 of the North Ayrshire Council asset transfer process to agree the terms and conditions of lease or prospective purchase.

10. ICT Strategy Update February 2015

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on (a) the key areas of progress to date in relation to the ICT Strategy; and (b) the Action Plan detailing the progress of the actions and next steps required to implement the Strategy.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to:-

- work that is underway for a Scottish Wide Area Network (SWAN) to host value added services in the Cloud; and
- monitoring of progress and availability of SWAN to deliver shared resources and secure cloud hosting.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note progress to date; and (b) receive 6 monthly progress reports.

The meeting ended at 3.35 p.m.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 4

24 February 2015

Cabinet

Subject: **Customer Service Strategy Update February 2015**

Purpose: To provide Cabinet with an update on progress to date in relation to the Customer Service strategy.

Recommendation: That the Cabinet agrees to (a) note progress; (b) receive reports on progress every 6 months.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council agreed the Customer Service Strategy in March 2012 and since then significant progress has been made. The objective of this paper is to provide an update on progress, performance and outline future plans.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 The Customer Service Strategy has implemented improvements in technology, customer service standards, staff development, and customer engagement with clear evidence of continuous improvement. Key areas of progress are outlined below:
- New Council website delivered focusing on top task approach making information easier to access. Centralised ownership of the website within Customer Services to enable implementation and continuous improvement. The website received a 4 star rating from SOCITM putting the website in the top 20 Local Authority websites in the UK, providing external validation of the standard of work completed. Results for 2014/15 are due in March.
 - Implemented the new Customer Services organisational structure including merging with the Registration service and the creation of a Business Improvement Team, delivering savings and reinvesting to improve service delivery.
 - At the early stages of introducing the Customer Charter Council wide.
 - Reviewed customer satisfaction and introduced a new set of measures to support the Customer Charter. Satisfaction levels have significantly improved in the last year from 91% to 98%.

- Established a structured approach to customer consultation using customer insight information to involve the right customers at the most appropriate time. This has taken the format of surveys and customer focus groups to discuss and test upcoming changes. Further developments will include utilising social media to reach a wider audience.
- Established a solid performance framework for service delivery and development of highly skilled and motivated staff. Customer Service aims for all managers to have completed the Customer Service Professional Diploma by 2016.
- Introduced new two-stage Complaint Handling Procedure which has significantly improved the way the Council handles complaints, implement improvements and reduce future demand. The average time taken to handle a complaint is 3 days.
- Conducted a review of telephone numbers (including 0845, 0800 & geographic numbers) across the Council. Introduced a new single geographic number to make it easier and cheaper for the customer to contact the Council alongside savings to the council itself.
- Implementation of a Customer Account supporting a wide range of Council services online including Report it, special uplifts, extract requests and view my Council Tax. More than 10,000 customers have signed up for an account with 2,000 having advanced access to view their Council Tax account. The number of account holders continues to grow by approximately 5% each month.
- Delivery of single point of contact at Bridgegate Customer Service Centre in Irvine. The centre handles on average 500 enquiries per day with customers waiting on average less than 5 minutes.
- Delivery of the Scottish Welfare Fund calls via the Contact Centre.

2.2 Channel Optimisation

- 2.2.1 A Channel Shift Approach is in place to promote and encourage customers to use more cost effective and convenient channels. Customer insight information is being used to understand which customers are most likely to use self service channels and how best to engage with these customers allowing resources to be targeted more effectively.

2.2.2 A Channel Shift Board is in place to monitor channel shift, identify which promotional activities are most effective and plan future campaigns. In the last year, this has been particularly successful in relation to Free School Meals and Clothing Grants with more than 51% of customers renewing online. This has reduced avoidable contact by 20%, call volumes by 40% with 92% of customers stating that they were delighted with the service offered.

2.3 Plans for 2015/16

2.3.1 Telephone

An investment of £300,000 is being made to replace the contact centre technology. The new technology which will be in place from April 2015 will provide the following benefits:

- Reduced queuing times for customers
- Reduced enquiry handling times
- Improved data integrity
- Reduced complaints and increased customer satisfaction
- Improved deployment of resources through system integration

Operational Reviews

Call handling has improved during 2014/5, however further operational reviews will help to sustain the improvement ensuring that wait times for customers are reduced. Operational reviews are underway for Contact Centre resourcing and Building Services. A Lean Six Sigma approach will be taken to identify improvements and track benefits. A similar approach delivered excellent benefits for the Waste service with a reduction in repeat calls by 7% and increasing satisfaction levels by 15% over a 6 month period.

Reprioritisation of Resources

Service delivery will be reconfigured to reprioritise resources to support digital contacts including email, web chat and social media. The demand for digital services is growing and the introduction of Universal Credit which is only provided digitally will further increase demand for support in accessing these services. To deliver this, we need to change the way that we deliver services to our customers. This refocussing of resources during 2015/16, will offer standard office opening hours for non-emergency calls of 9.00am-4.45pm. Emergency calls will continue to be handled 24/7.

2.3.2 Self Service

The priority for 2015/16 is to expand the number of services available online and to increase usage of these.

The following processes will be available online during 2015/16

- Ebilling for Council Tax
- Council Tax intelligent forms
- View rent statements
- School payments
- Report a repair
- Waste requests (Bins, assisted pull outs, tip permits)
- Grass cutting scheme
- Employee processes

With excellent feedback being received from staff and customers on the web chat pilot, the implementation of new technology will embed this within the contact centre. Web chat will support customers accessing services on the website to increase the number of and improvement to customer journeys.

2.3.3 Face to Face Access

Flexible opening hours

The multi-skilling of staff in the Kilbirnie Library has been successful and the subsequent reconfiguration of staff within Registrations will enable the service to respond to customer feedback, offering Saturday and later evening appointments.

Saltcoats Town Hall

Planning is underway for the implementation of a similar model to the Bridgegate Service Centre in the Three Towns from the Saltcoats Town Hall.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 That the Cabinet agrees to (a) note progress; (b) receive reports on progress every 6 months.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

- 4.1 The strategy can be delivered from within the existing capital and revenue budget.

Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 It is expected that the Channel Shift approach will reduce staffing within Customer Service and that this will be achieved through natural turnover.

Equality Implications

- 4.3 At the start of each project, an Equality Impact Assessment and Privacy Impact Assessment are completed for every project and approach action taken.

Implications for Key Priorities

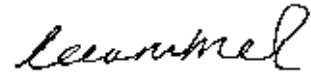
- 4.4 The Customer Service strategy plays a key role in the Council's Good to Great journey delivering modern, fit for purpose services designed around customer demand.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 Customer surveys are carried out at the beginning of each project to establish a baseline with a further survey after delivery to identify improvements. A customer focus group which meets quarterly gives customers the opportunity to test new online services before they go live.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Cabinet is being asked to note progress to December 2014 and receive a further report in 6 months.



LAURA FRIEL
Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference :

For further information please contact Esther Gunn, Customer Services Manager on 01294 323960

Background Papers

Customer Service Strategy



NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY REVIEW

VERSION: 1.0

Author:	Esther Gunn-Stewart
Title:	Senior Manager Customer Service
Date:	6 th January 2015

Document control

Document History:

Version	Comments
V0.1	Documented and reviewed by Esther Gunn and Sheila Paisley
V1.0	Circulated to Elected Members at Cabinet

Table of Contents

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. CUSTOMER VISION AND PRINCIPLES	4
3. CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY	5
4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES	6
5. CITIZENS AND CHANNELS	7
5.1 OVERARCHING CHANNEL STRATEGY	7
5.2 TELEPHONE APPROACH	7
5.3 WEB & MOBILE APPROACH	8
5.4 FACE-TO-FACE ACCESS	9
5.5 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION	11
5.6 CHANNEL SHIFT STRATEGY	11
5.7 FAILURE DEMAND	13
6. EMPLOYEE AND ORGANISATION	14
7. THE INTERNAL CUSTOMER	14
APPENDIX 1 – CUSTOMER SERVICES PROJECTS	15
APPENDIX 2 – CUSTOMER SERVICES PERFORMANCE	16
APPENDIX 3 – CUSTOMER CHARTER	19
APPENDIX 4 – CHANNEL SHIFT APPROACH	19

1. INTRODUCTION

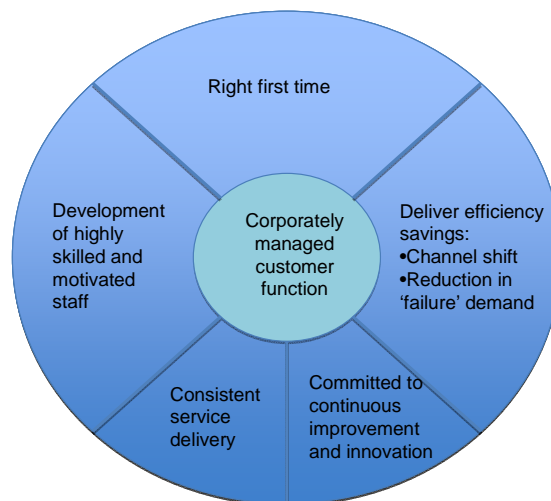
The Council agreed the Customer Service Strategy in March 2012 and since then significant progress has been made. The objective of this paper is to provide an update on progress, performance and outline future plans.

Strategic fit - the Customer Services Strategy supports the following:

1. *Operating more efficiently and effectively (Council Plan)*
2. *Striving for continuous improvement (Council Plan)*
3. *Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local peoples' needs (SOA).*

2. CUSTOMER VISION AND PRINCIPLES

"North Ayrshire Council will provide cost effective access to high quality customer services for all who live, work and visit North Ayrshire. We will be recognised as a leader in customer service provision, continuously reviewing and improving what we do"



Underpinned by a robust performance management approach

3. CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY

Progress to Date

The Customer Service Strategy has implemented improvements in technology, customer service standards, staff development, and customer engagement with clear evidence of continuous improvement. Key areas of progress are outlined below:

- New Council website delivered focusing on top task approach making information easier to access. Centralised ownership of the website within Customer Services to enable implementation and continuous improvement. The website received a 4 star rating from SOCITM putting the website in the top 20 Local Authority websites in the UK, providing external validation of the standard of work completed.
- Implemented the new Customer Services organisational structure including merging with the Registration service and the creation of a Business Improvement Team.
- At the early stages of introducing the Customer Charter Council wide
- Reviewed customer satisfaction and introduced a new set of measures to support the Customer Charter
- Provide a solid performance framework for service delivery and development of highly skilled and motivated staff. Customer Service aims to have all managers complete the Customer Service Professional Diploma by 2016
- Introduced new two-stage Complaint Handling Procedure which has significantly improved the way the Council handles complaints
- Conducted a review of telephone numbers (including 0845, 0800 & geographic numbers) across the Council. Introduced a new single geographic number to make it easier and cheaper to contact the Council
- Produced a Channel Shift approach to drive customers to more cost effective channels
- Implementation of a Customer Account supporting a wide range of Council services online including Report it, special uplifts, extract requests and view my Council Tax.
- Delivery of single point of contact at Bridgegate Customer Service Centre in Irvine
- Implementation of the Welfare Fund calls to the Contact Centre.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The key guiding principles of this strategy and the Customer Service projects are outlined below:

Right First Time

- Put customers at the centre of our processes
- Simplify and standardise processes to enable a consistent delivery of service across the Council
- Proactive customer relationship management
- Providing a high quality service, minimising repeat contacts and using existing information to provide the best and most responsive service possible.

Corporately Managed Customer Function

- Corporate front office, with one identity
- One stop approach by moving more services to the front office
- Front office to promote ownership and case resolution
- Providing a transparent and simple complaints process
- Adopting corporate standards of customer service.

Deliver Efficiency Savings – Channel Shift & Reduction in ‘Failure’ Demand

- Choice of access channels
- Over 80% first time resolution with minimal avoidable contact
- Self Service for those who can
- Promoting channel migration to most cost effective channels where appropriate
- Reduction of duplication of effort and maximising the use of existing information.

Development of Highly Skilled and Motivated Staff

- Appropriately trained and motivated staff e.g. staff development opportunities through Customer Service Professional accreditation.

Consistent Service Delivery

- Better use of information, knowledge and customer intelligence
- Publicised service standards
- Joining up Services in a way that makes sense to people
- Increasing co location and shared services with our partners.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

- Effective performance management including reducing failure demand
- Regular customer engagement.

For a list of projects linked to Customer Services principles see appendix 1.

5. CITIZENS AND CHANNELS

Customers' expectations and needs have changed. People are taking more control over what services they want and how they are delivered. More and more people are using the internet to purchase goods and services and this has already had a profound impact on the high street.

The Internet has increased choice and driven down price with customer expectation being that they can access services 24 hours a day from the comfort of their own home. This means that, if we are to keep pace with changing expectations, we must better understand how our customers want to interact with us. We must plan and deliver our services in ways that make sense and are convenient to them and also cost effective for the Council.

5.1 Overarching Channel Strategy

North Ayrshire Council will make access to its services available through appropriate and cost effective contact channels designed with the needs and preferences of its individual customers and Council taxpayers in mind.

North Ayrshire Council will seek to encourage greater usage of the most effective contact methods, by creating a series of deliberate and targeted channel shifts.

5.2 Telephone Approach

Aim

To minimise the number of contact numbers published, to provide fast access to an expert officer and to reduce the amount of low value calls that our residents have to make.

Update

- New single, geographic, memorable number introduced in June 2013. The rationalisation of the numbers into a single number made it cheaper for customers to contact the Council, in particular those using a mobile. The introduction of a single supplier to manage telephone numbers delivered a saving of £10,000
- Introduced two new services to the contact centre, the Scottish Welfare Fund and Registrations in April and June 2013.
- An investment of £300,000 is being made to replace the contact centre technology. The new technology which will be in place from April 2015 will provide the following benefits:
 - Reduced queuing times for customers
 - Reduced enquiry handling times
 - Improved data integrity
 - Reduced complaints and increased customer satisfaction
 - Improved deployment of resources through system integration

Performance

- Call answering: call answering performance was impacted by the introduction of the

Scottish Welfare Fund coinciding with increased demand for a number of existing services. We would not have been able to predict the volumes of calls and applications in relation to the Scottish Welfare Fund which resulted in the service initially being under resourced. Additional resource was provided and gradual improvement in performance was demonstrated through to December. The change to the waste collection schedules in Q4 this year resulted in a 200% increase from January through to March and this caused increased wait times and reduced the percentage of calls answered across every service. During 2014/15 call handling performance has improved with 90% of calls now being answered first time, however it is important that this improvement is sustainable. An operational review of the contact centre, how it is staffed and the management of off-line time is underway to identify any improvements.

- **Customer Satisfaction:** A new process for gathering information on customer satisfaction was introduced providing more detailed information on improvement actions. Customer satisfaction improved throughout 2013/14 and was above 90% in Q4. A new measure for 2014/15 was introduced measuring the percentage of customers delighted with the service provided.
- **Operational Reviews:** A review of customer contact in relation to Waste services has significantly improved the service being provided, an increase in customers being delighted with the service from 60% to 75% and a 10% decrease in avoidable contact.

Key Priorities for Future

- **Operational Reviews**

Operational reviews are planned for Building Services and Council Tax and Benefits. A Lean Six Sigma approach will be taken to identify improvements and track benefits.

- **Change to opening hours**

Service delivery will be reconfigured to reprioritise resources to handle digital contacts including email, web chat and social media. The demand for digital services is growing and the introduction of Universal Credit which is only provided digitally will further increase demand for support in accessing these services. This means that we need to change the way that we deliver services to our customers. During 2015/16, we will offer standard office opening hours for non-emergency calls of 9.00am-4.45pm. This will allow resource to be diverted to provide support accessing digital services for those customers who need it. Emergency calls will continue to be handled 24/7.

5.3 Web & Mobile Approach

Aims

To provide a single, comprehensive, easy to access and up to date website which is focused around customer demand that allows anyone to transact and interact with the Council 24/7.

To use the emerging mobile phone technology in a tactical manner to provide better access to information for targeted user groups, to reduce costs, increase speed of communication or reduce direct contact.

Update

The new website based around customer top tasks was delivered in April 2013 and has been continuously developed since then. The 4 star rating from SOCITM, putting the website in the top 20 Local Authority websites in the UK, provides external validation of the standard of work completed. Development work on the website has been ongoing and the results of the 2014 assessment by SOCITM will be published early March.

Performance

- The volume of visits to the website has increased 33% to 522,000 since 2011/12.
- There is an average of 120 requests to change the website from staff per month with 97% of these being completed on time.
- The performance from the SOCITM pop up surveys shows a reduction in the percentage of customers completing their tasks. However, a recent survey of 200 website users confirmed high levels of satisfaction with 86% stating that they would recommend the site to a friend. The team are investigating the results from the SOCITM survey, this is based on a very small sample size and does not correlate with other customer feedback.
- In October, the new online Customer Account, The Hub was launched and it now has more than 10,000 users registered. Services available online include report it, special uplifts, free school meals and clothing grants, view Council Tax, extract requests and change of address.
- A web chat pilot is underway with excellent feedback being received from both staff and customers.
- An Elected Member Portal was launched in October 2014 with 30% of all Elected Member requests being received online.

Key Priorities for Future

- Review Socitm feedback on 2014/15 star rating, due in March.
- Promotion of on-line services to improve take up
- Council Tax ebilling pilot
- Expansion of online services (view rent, report a repair, Council Tax and Benefit forms)

5.4 Face-to-Face Access

Aim

To maintain our Face-to-Face services, but to provide these services in more appropriate and cost effective locations by fully trained expert officers.

Update

The Bridgegate Customer Service Centre opened in May 2013 for Housing and Social Services with Council Tax and Benefits moving in early January 2014. The frontline service of Municipal Bank was merged with Customer Service in April 2014. Customer volumes are high, typically between 400-500 customers per day.

Multi-skilling of staff in the Kilbirnie Library has enabled the service to retain an office within the Garnock Valley whilst delivering savings of £15,000. The reconfiguration of staff is also allowing Saturday and later evening appointments to be made available from 2015/16.

Performance

Additional recruitment, reconfiguration of staff and multiskilling has significantly improved the customer experience through reduced queue times. Since September 2014, queue times

have consistently been below 5 minutes.

Key Priorities for Future

- **Saltcoats Town Hall**

Planning is underway for the implementation of a similar model for service delivery in the Three Towns from the Saltcoats Town Hall.

5.5 Written Communication

Aim

Reducing the amount of post and paper communication by better use of electronic channels will deliver faster, better, greener services at less cost.

Update

Analysis of Council Tax and Benefits forms has been completed and work is underway to deliver a range of intelligent forms for the high volume requests.

Performance

Consistent performance information is not currently available for handling written communication but this is expected to be available with the introduction of the new Customer Charter for 2014/15. A copy of the Customer Charter is attached as appendix 3.

5.6 Channel Shift Strategy

Channel Shift is the process by which organisations seek to encourage customers to access, or interact with, services via channels which are more cost effective to deliver than those which they normally choose. This can be more beneficial or appropriate for the customer too e.g. web access allows 24 hour provision.

Deliberate channel shift is the design and marketing of effective and efficient channels because they are the most appropriate channels for the type of contact, customer and organisation in question. Channel shift forms one part of an overall channel strategy, and implemented well it can lower costs, build reputation, empower the citizen, improve the overall service proposition and enable the Council to make best use of resources freeing up staff to support more vulnerable customers. Shifting customers to particular channels involves behaviour change on the citizen's part, but once they are aware of the channels available, they will use the one that works best for them. A copy of the Channel Shift Approach is attached as appendix 4.

Update

The Channel Shift Project Board meets monthly and a programme of promotion for online services is in place. The current plan utilises existing customer insight data and low cost methods of promoting the existing online services. The initiative is still in its very early stages but initial proof of concept exercises delivered the following results:

- Promotion of Council Tax online account
Emails were sent to 6,000 customers who were registered for online services but had not registered to view their Council Tax account. This resulted in an increase from 600 to 1400 customers. The number of unique page views increased from 130 per

month to in excess of 200. Since the launch of The Hub, this has increased to 2200 customers. These customers will be used to pilot the new ebilling process for Council Tax.

- **Report It**
A campaign to promote 'Report It' online was run through payslip inserts, Twitter and recorded messages on the phones. A further 700 downloads of the smartphone app on both Android and iPhone took the total number of downloads to in excess of 2,000. From a benchmark figure from January 2013, the number of Report It jobs reported over the phone has dropped 30% with online reports increasing.

Whilst both of these examples are based on relatively small volumes, the evidence is encouraging that if easy to use, well promoted processes are available online, customers will use them and this will reduce demand on the frontline.

- **Free School Meals and Clothing Grants**
A new process for renewing requests for free school meals and clothing grants was implemented in 2014/15 offering an online renewal for the first time. Through providing a simple, well promoted process, 51% of customers chose to renew online. These customers were kept up to date with regular emails significantly reducing calls to the contact centre. A post implementation review indicated that 92% of customers were delighted with the service offered.
- During 2014/15 the following online services were delivered:
 - Special uplifts
 - Missed Bins
 - Report & pay for a bin
 - Change of Address
 - School Clothing Grants/Free School Meals
 - Extract request for Birth/Death/Marriage certificate
 - Report a repair
 - Grass cutting
 - Track a request

Key Priorities for the Future

Development of Transactional Services

During 2015/16, it is expected that the following transactions will be available online:

- Tip Permits
- Assisted Pull-outs
- Social Services forms
- School Clothing Grants/Free School Meals (further development)
- View Rent online
- Report a repair (further development)
- School meal balances
- Intelligent forms for Council Tax and Benefits.

These will all be supported by promotional campaigns, analysis of successful journeys and web chat to assist those customers who are struggling with the process.

5.7 Failure Demand

A new reporting system within Lagan can now provide detailed information on why customers are contacting the Council to help to identify and improve failure demand.

Update

- A customer charter is in place for 2014/15 with the Customer Service Forum managing the gathering and reporting of information. Annual reports for each service will be available from May 2015.
- The new complaint handling procedure has been implemented across all services with the exception of Social Services. Significant improvements in complaint handling have been evidenced with the vast majority of complaints now being handled at the frontline. The average time taken to deal with a frontline complaint is 3 days.
- The SPSO have indicated it is highly likely Social Services will align with the 2 Stage Complaint procedures in 2016. Preliminary discussions have taken place with Social Services to pilot the 2 Stage process in a small number of teams to gauge the impact on frontline complaints being logged and actioned.

6. EMPLOYEE AND ORGANISATION

Customer Service is championing the Customer Service Professional qualification across the Council. Internally, Customer Service aims to have all managers complete the Customer Service Professional Diploma by 2016, 8 staff are currently working towards this qualification and it is anticipated that they will have completed this by end March 2015. A further 6 employees are working towards the certificate level.

A recent Customer Service Professional Learning Event was attended by more than 40 Managers from across the Council and has resulted in 8 employees from Education and Chief Executives committing to completing the CSPQ. Further activities to promote and support this qualification across the Council are planned for 2015/16.

To deliver against the ambitious plans for the next 2-3 years, it will be necessary to reconfigure the service to meet changing demands. As indicated earlier in the document, this is likely to mean redirecting resources from the more traditional service channels to support new and emerging channels.

7. THE INTERNAL CUSTOMER

The Customer Charter which has been introduced for external customers will be used to measure performance for internal customers, ensuring a proportionate approach to measurement and monitoring. HR & OD are piloting the implementation of the Charter and the introduction of the supporting Customer Satisfaction measures for internal customers.

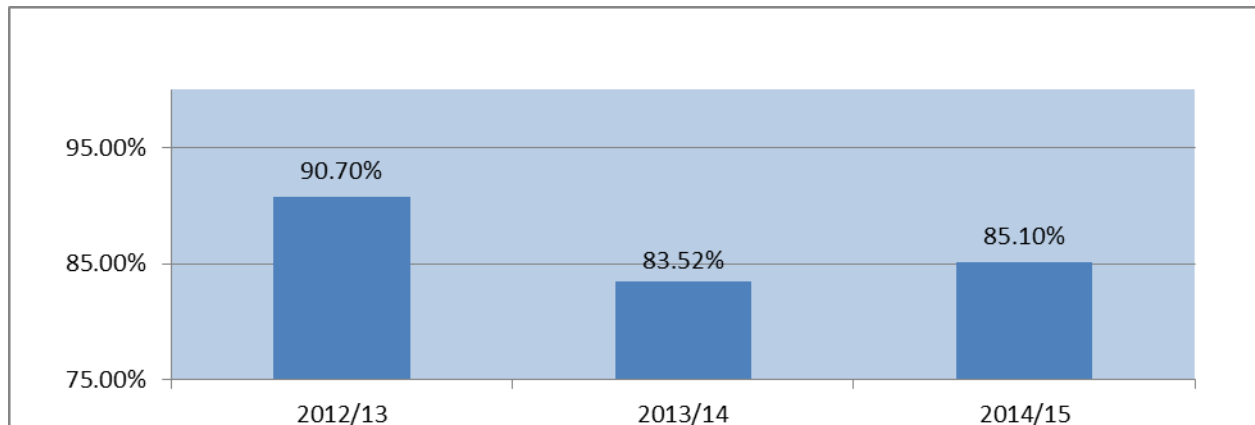
Following the success of the website development, Customer Service is leading on the redevelopment and design of the staff intranet (Navigate) A similar approach of stakeholder engagement and top tasks design is underway.

APPENDIX 1 – CUSTOMER SERVICES PROJECTS

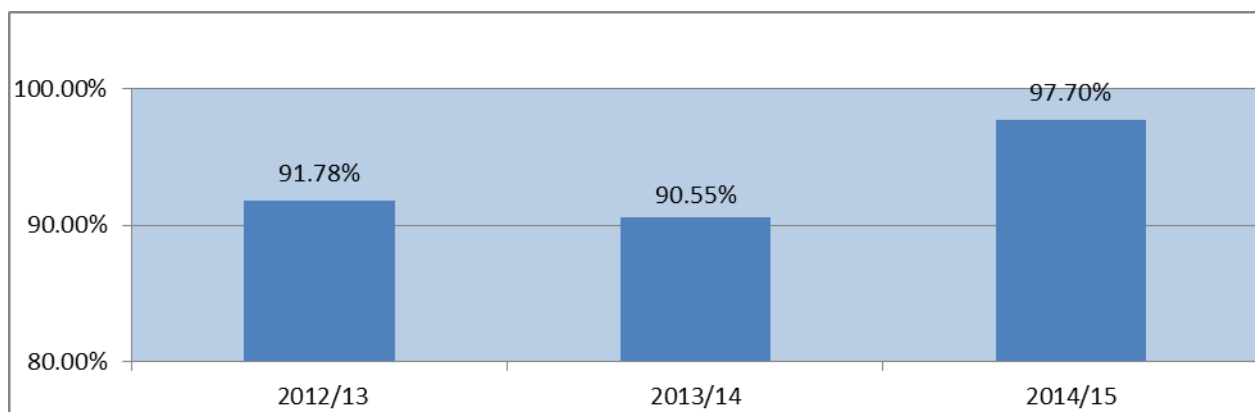
Projects	Indicative Timescales	Customer Services Principles
Implement an on-line facility for applying for School Clothing Grants / Free School Meals	Complete June 2014	Right First Time Deliver Efficiency Savings Continuous Improvement
Implement new Contact Centre technology	April 2015	Right First Time Deliver Efficiency Savings Continuous Improvement
The merge of the Kilbirnie Library with the Registration service	Complete July 2014	Corporately Managed Customer Function Deliver Efficiency Savings
Implement the Council's new online Account	Complete October 2014	Right First Time Deliver Efficiency Savings
Implement Webchat	Pilot August 2014	Right First Time Continuous Improvement
Implement changes to the Website resulting in the SOCITM 2014 results	Complete October 2014	Continuous Improvement
Integration of the Community & Culture website into the Council Website	Complete August 2014	Continuous Improvement
Implement Operational Reviews	On-going	Right First Time Deliver Efficiency Savings Continuous Improvement
Staff development opportunities through Customer Services Professional accreditation	On-going	Develop Highly Skilled and Motivated Staff
Lean Training Awareness	On-going	Develop Highly Skilled and Motivated Staff

APPENDIX 2 – CUSTOMER SERVICES PERFORMANCE

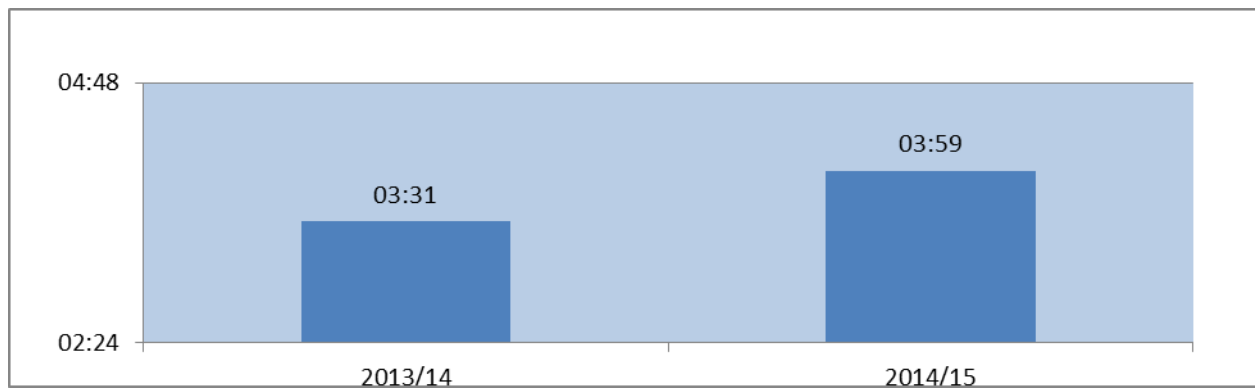
Calls Answered All Services



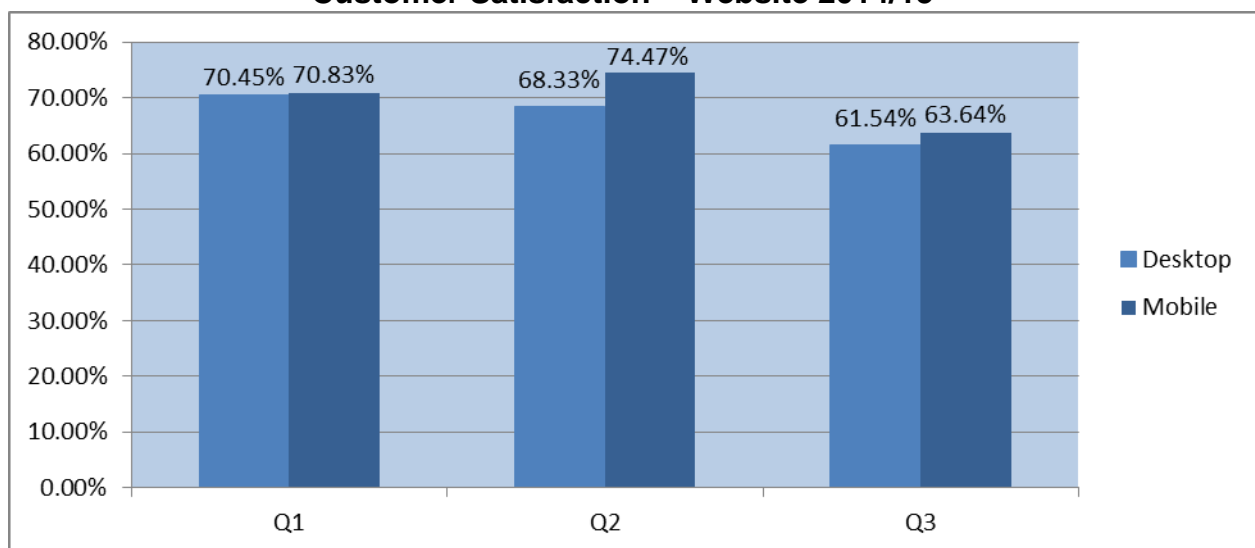
Customer Satisfaction within Customer Services



Average Wait Times within Local Offices



Customer Satisfaction – Website 2014/15



APPENDIX 3 – CUSTOMER SERVICES CHARTER



North Ayrshire Council Customer Charter

This charter sets out the standards of service you can expect from the Council.

Our Commitment to You

The Council aims to offer a service it can be proud of by providing high standards of service delivery which meet the needs of everyone within the community.

When a member of the public contacts the Council to request a service or information, the Council will aim to:

- Be polite, respectful and helpful
- Ensure all staff members can be identified by wearing a name badge or providing their name
- Observe privacy and confidentiality where appropriate
- Handle enquiries at first point of contact, where possible
- Provide offices which are accessible, clean and safe
- Answer calls within 30 seconds
- Respond to emails received via our website, contactus@north-ayrshire.gov.uk within 5 working days. Where the Council is unable to meet this, it will keep you up to date with progress
- See you within 10 minutes of arriving at one of our offices
- Provide a response to postal requests within 10 working days. Where the Council is unable to meet this, it will keep you up to date with progress
- Provide accurate and up to date information on the public website. Correct any inaccurate or out of date information within two working days of it being brought to our attention
- Advise you of when you can expect to receive the service you have requested
- In line with Council policy, consult with customers on any major changes which may impact on them
- Monitor, evaluate and publish our performance against the above standards
- Provide feedback on areas of improvement and changes

What we expect from you

- To treat our staff with respect.
- Keep appointments or advise in good time if you are unable to attend.
- Tell us about any change in circumstances, e.g. a change of address or name.

Equality & Diversity

North Ayrshire Council is committed to providing equal access to services for all our customers regardless of race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or transgender.

Information can be provided in different languages, larger print and Braille or other formats if requested.

Loop systems are provided in Council offices for hard of hearing customers.

Translation services can be arranged in any public Council office on request.

Performance Standards

The Council will publish customer service performance against the Customer Service Charter every six months. Each service has a service plan which outlines performance standards. Key Performance Indicators can be accessed through the Council's website or by requesting them directly from the service.

Partnership Working

On occasion, the Council may work in partnership with another organisation. Where a service is provided through a third party on behalf of the Council, the service will be delivered to the above standards. Where this is not possible, standards will be in place, which support the principles of the Council's Customer Charter.

How to Contact Us

You can contact us at the Council's Headquarters at Cunninghame House, Friars Croft, Irvine, KA12 8EE, telephone 01294 310000 or via our website,

www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/contact-us/contact-us.aspx

If you ask, we can give you a copy of this leaflet in other formats and in other languages.

If you have a complaint about our services:

- Please refer to our [complaint handling procedure](#)

APPENDIX 4 – CHANNEL SHIFT APPROACH



NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CHANNEL SHIFT APPROACH

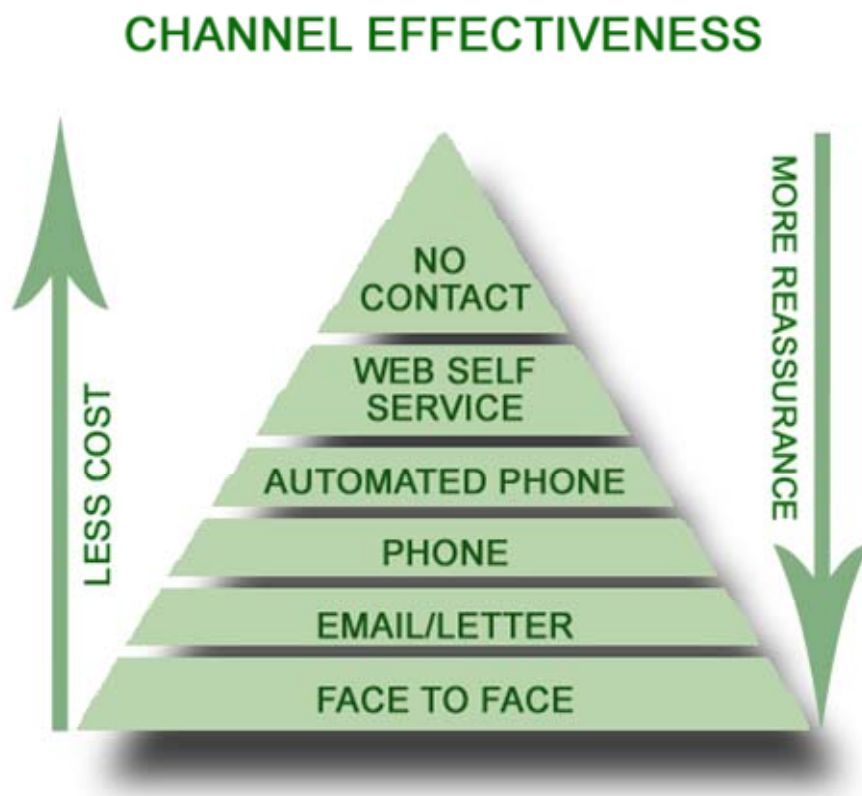
VERSION: 1.0

Author: Esther Gunn-Stewart
Title: Senior Manager Customer Service
Date: February 2014
Last printed:

1.0 Channel Shift

Channel Shift is the process by which organisations seek to encourage customers to access, or interact with, services via channels which are more cost effective to deliver than those which they normally choose. This can be more beneficial or appropriate for the customer too e.g. web access allows 24 hour provision.

Deliberate channel shift is the design and marketing of effective and efficient channels because they are the most appropriate channels for the type of contact, customer and organisation in question. Channel shift forms one part of an overall channel strategy, and implemented well it can lower costs, build reputation, empower the citizen, improve the overall service proposition and enable the Council to make best use of resources freeing up staff to support more vulnerable customers. Shifting customers to particular channels involves behaviour change on the citizen's part, but once they are aware of the channels available, they will use the one that works best for them.



2.0 Background

Customer Services and IT have been working closely together to develop a new website based around high volume enquiries.

Customers are most likely to use the Council website to get information and research from. SOCITM suggests that if priority is given to ensuring that these high volume enquiries are easy to navigate with good quality information, the customers will be more likely to use the site for a wider variety of transactions.

The new website went live in April 2013 and performance management information has shown some

improvement from the SOCITM pop up surveys. Take up from the surveys is low, approximately 70 surveys per month.

- Customer satisfaction is consistently around 70%. However, there has been a slight dip in performance in Quarter 3.
- The number of customers registered to use the online services has increased 30% since April and the number of customers registered to view their Council Tax bill has increased by 25%.

A number of compliments from customers have been received over the last 6 months. With on-going review and improvement, it is expected that these performance indicators will continue to increase. Benchmarking against two other 4 star Scottish Local Authority websites is favourable with NAC performing better in relation to both the mobile and desktop sites.

Work is being undertaken to review the effectiveness of the survey and agree how additional customer feedback can be gathered.

3.0 Customer Types

In planning an approach to channel shift, there are several customer groupings to be considered:

- Customers who are not aware of services available
- Customers who attempt to use the self-service channel but for some reason are unsuccessful
- Customers who will undertake certain types of enquiries online but for various reasons revert to more costly channels for transactional or more complex enquiries.
- Customers who do not have the ability to transact online
- Customers who do not have online access

4.0 Key Actions To Develop Channel Shift

The Customer Service strategy outlined a number of key actions to develop channel shift.

1. Joined up approach
Sign Post and where possible take a more joined up approach, based around people's lives and needs, not around the organisation's structure.
2. Investment
Continue to invest in the website and associated technology, developing CRM and where there is a case to do so, increase integration, reduce double keying into back office systems.
 - Development of a range of online services
 - Special uplifts
 - Extracts
 - Meals on wheels and aids and adapts
 - View school meal balance
 - Book a repair
 - View rent
 - Reduction of duplication
 - WDM integration
 - Telephony integration
 - Authority integration

Appendix 2 shows the current agreed development plan.

3. Promotion

Appendix 1 shows the planned promotional calendar.

The following are all options for promoting online services which will be free:

- Messages on phones
- Payslip insertions
- Contact centre promotion
- Email drop
- Tenancy matters magazine
- Staff talk

4. Reduce 'Failure Demand'¹ by having a single view of the customer and proactively removing waste from processes

- Analysis of existing service processes
Projects to review and analyse existing processes including Free School Meals and Council Tax has provided options for improvements.
- Introduction of Web Chat

5.0 Approach

Identify service or process for online development

- Consider volume of transactions, time taken to process transactions and the potential for channel shift. There is a lack of data currently available on the propensity of customers within the area to use self-service channels therefore there may be a requirement to conduct some data gathering or customer surveys depending on the project.

Develop and test online process

- Where possible the process for online should mirror the process within the contact centre.

Review the website

Ensure online option is promoted before other channels, place "call to action" information boxes on relevant landing pages.

Promote behaviour change

To encourage behaviour change, reduce repeat calls to the contact centre and build confidence with using the online service customers should be provided with an email link after their first enquiry. For example, if a customer books a special uplift online, they should be provided with an email link to check the progress or amend the booking.

Promote the online service

Use range of free and chargeable marketing events to promote the new service. Identify where on the promotional calendar the new service fits to ensure regular on-going promotion.

Support customers to use the online service

Through the use of web chat, offer the customer support and guidance to ensure higher rates of conversion.

Analyse the success of the new process.

- Number of page visits V number of completed transactions
- Number of partially completed forms
- Number of self-service transactions V number of telephone transactions

¹ 'Failure Demand is demand caused by a failure to do something or do something right first time for the customer'.

6.0 Incentivising Online Usage Pilot

The evidence of the first 6 months statistics of the usage of the new website demonstrates that providing a user friendly website is not enough to encourage customers to use the transactional functionality.

To drive behaviour change, Customer Service proposes to pilot incentivising customers to use particular online services and monitor the impact of this. When a prize was offered for completion of a survey, in excess of 700 responses were gathered. This is in comparison to around 70 surveys per month being completed without an incentive.

Examples of the type of incentive proposed are:

- Apply for free school meal/clothing grant online during June and be put into a prize draw for £50 voucher
- All customers who register to view their Council Tax bill during March will be put into a prize draw.

Incentives would be used sparingly and only in circumstances where it would not increase the demand for service. For example, incentives would not be offered on "Report It" type functionality as this could encourage people to report faults they would not previously have reported and put pressure on back office departments.

Appendix 1**Promotional Calendar**

Month	Service/Process	Method
January	Report a repair online School Placing request Extracts	Tenancy matters
February	Garden tidy	Tenancy matters, Phone messages
March	View Council Tax Bill	Council Tax bill inserts, Contact Centre promotion
April	Report It self service	Payslips, twitter, email
May	Free school meals/CG	Bag drop, text messages
June	Free school meals/CG	Letters
July	Special uplifts	Payslip insert, twitter, texting
August	Extracts School meal balance	Bag drop
Sept	Report It	As above
Oct	Get ready for winter	Tenancy matters
Nov	Report a repair online	Tenancy matters, engage with tenant groups
Dec	Christmas collections, Christmas tree disposal, emergency service	All

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 5

24 February 2015

Cabinet

Subject: .Scot Internet Domain Registration

Purpose: To seek Cabinet approval for the proposed use of the new '.scot' internet domain registration.

Recommendation: That Cabinet approve the proposed use of the new '.scot' internet domain registration.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The '.scot' internet domain was launched over the summer of 2014, with a number of public sector sites migrating to the new format.
- 1.2 Essentially, this change replaces the 'uk' element of internet addresses with 'scot'.
- 1.3 .scot is part of the European Cultural and Linguistic Internet Domains (ECLID) grouping, and has been designated as a 'community' (as opposed to a 'geographic' domain), because it has distinct linguistic and cultural dimensions.
- 1.4 This change is supported by the Scottish Government who wish to reinforce a 'community' domain format rather than a geographic type and also to bring a consistent approach across Scottish public sector bodies with improved accessibility, visibility and clarity.
- 1.5 A not for profit company called Dot Scot Registry has been awarded the right to own and operate 'scot'.
- 1.6 The cost is relatively low and anticipated to be approximately £25 per annum, per site registration.
- 1.7 A similar approach has been used for other locations, e.g. .Wales, .NYC, .Berlin, .London etc.

2. Current Position

2.1 North Ayrshire Council has already acted to register a number of '.scot' names to preserve the right of use. Following consultation with services, the following six domain names were registered:

- arranoutdoor.scot
- ers-north-ayrshire.scot
- northayrshire.scot
- north-ayrshire.scot
- northayrshireforbusiness.scot
- north-ayrshirehscp.scot

2.2 The Scottish Government has announced that it intends to undertake a forthcoming consultation exercise on the best approach to use of the new '.scot' domain within the public sector.

2.3 At the COSLA Leaders' meeting on 21 November 2014 the issue of wider local government support for the dot scot domain was discussed, in particular whether to:

- *"Add COSLA's support to a change to '.scot', based on the arguments presented by the Scottish Government, and recommend this position to Councils as they consider their own decisions on the matter"; or*
- *"To support the move in principle, work with the Scottish Government as they change and receive a further report on the benefits as they emerge, before making a final decision".*

2.4 The decision at COSLA was to take no action at this point and leave this as a matter for Councils to determine locally.

3. Proposals

3.1 Cabinet is asked to confirm support for the move to '.scot' in principle and that a migration plan should be brought back to Cabinet to approve in future, following the forthcoming consultation exercise results and fuller consideration of the benefits as they emerge.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

4.1 The financial implications from this report are already provisioned within appropriate revenue budgets.

Human Resource Implications

4.2 None

Legal Implications

4.3 None

Equality Implications

4.4 None

Environmental and Sustainability Implications

4.5 None

Implications for Key Priorities

4.6 None

Community Benefit Implications

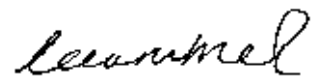
4.7 None

5. Consultations

5.1 The Scottish Government intends to undertake a wider consultation exercise on this issue and the results of that consultation will be updated to Cabinet.

6. Conclusion

6.1 The introduction of '.scot' provides an opportunity for public sector bodies to consider and assess whether they wish to change the current way that domain names are used.



LAURA FRIEL
Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference :

For further information please contact Gavin Macgregor, Head of Customer, People & Corporate Support on ext. 4651.

Background Papers

None

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 6

24 February 2015

Cabinet

Subject: **Local Development Plan: Strategic Road Improvements**

Purpose: To seek agreement from Cabinet on the mechanisms to ensure that the impact on the strategic road network from new development arising from the Local Development Plan is monitored and where necessary mitigated.

Recommendation: That the Committee (i) approves the Irvine Bay Transport Model Protocol at Appendix 1; and (ii) approves delegation to the Executive Director (Economy & Communities) to sign the Minute of Agreement between North Ayrshire Council and Transport Scotland.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The North Ayrshire Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted 20 May 2014, providing a framework for significant levels of development (including housing and commercial development) over the next ten years. Up to £3.5M worth of investment in transport improvements could be required to facilitate and accommodate this growth, if all proposals were to come forward.
- 1.2 Extensive transport modelling work was undertaken in conjunction with Transport Scotland as part of the LDP preparation. This work identified key points on Irvine Bay's strategic road network where road interventions may be necessary to mitigate the cumulative transport effects of development provided for by the LDP. The onus is on Local Authorities to set out specific mechanisms to deliver the improvements.
- 1.3 The potential transport improvements include, among others, additional carriageway provision at the A78(T)/A738(T) Pennyburn Roundabout, and the signalisation of Stanecastle Roundabout, Warrix and Eglinton Interchanges. The additional carriageway provision is likely to be the highest priority improvement, costing around £2M and improving a major trunk road junction.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 In June 2013, the LDP Committee approved draft 'Supplementary Guidance: Developer Contributions (Strategic Transport)' for public consultation, which ran from July 2013 to September 2013. The main proposal within the guidance was for a 'roof tax' of £1,750 per new housing plot granted planning permission to be paid to a central fund which would be used to pay for necessary improvements to the trunk road network. The outcome of the consultation included several representations from housebuilders expressing concern that it would not be advantageous to levy the roof tax while difficult market conditions still persist in North Ayrshire and that doing so may discourage investment in new private housing.
- 2.2 In response, Officers secured in principle agreement with Transport Scotland that the Council will fund any necessary trunk road improvements, having made £2M available within the ten year capital programme for this purpose. Any improvements beyond this amount would be expected to be funded by the Council on a case by case basis, subject to demonstrable need. Officers are considering options as how these additional improvements will be funded if the works are required- this could include future capital funding bids to the Council's Capital Programme. Transport Scotland is not concerned with the mechanism of how the improvements will be paid for, only that there is a robust mechanism in place to ensure that improvements are delivered and that there is no significant adverse impact on the performance of the trunk road network.

3. Proposals

Protocol

- 3.1 Updates to the transport modelling work will be required to ensure the Council has up-to-date traffic/land-use forecasts to accurately predict when a particular improvement should be provided. The chosen trigger for undertaking updates will depend on how development proceeds. It is expected, however, that updates will be at least every five years based on current development trends. The basic work required for each update includes traffic surveys, forecasting and scenario testing, and would cost in the region of £25,000 at current prices and can be funded from existing revenue budgets.
- 3.2 The Irvine Bay Transport Model Protocol at Appendix 1 has been prepared setting out for applicants, in detail, the process for managing model updates and implementation of the improvements.

Minute of Agreement

- 3.3 Transport Scotland, as trunk road authority, requires legal assurances from North Ayrshire Council that it will deliver trunk road improvements to ensure that there is no significant net detriment to the performance of the trunk road network. This document places certain obligations on the Council and Transport Scotland with regard to the undertaking of the improvements. A key benefit of the agreement is that Transport Scotland has agreed that it will not withhold its approval, or attach any planning conditions to its approval, of any planning permission for development that requires the improvements (as these will be undertaken by the Council). This avoids potential for significant delay in the delivery of new development across Irvine Bay, and also ensures that the obligations for significant transport improvements do not fall to any single developer. Furthermore it provides a level of certainty to the development industry. It should be noted that the Minute of Agreement only encompasses the specified transport improvements within the agreement, and does not obligate the Council to provide any improvements beyond those specified.
- 3.4 Failure to sign the Minute of Agreement could mean Transport Scotland imposing planning conditions obligating developers to undertake the improvements even though the Council has committed to deliver these itself. Should the Council decline to impose such conditions, there is a potential risk that planning applications could be 'called in' by Scottish Ministers for their determination, creating uncertainty and delay for development.
- 3.5 In conclusion, the Cabinet is requested to:
- (i) approve the Irvine Bay Transport Model Protocol at Appendix 1 for managing implementation of the improvements; and
 - (ii) delegate signature of the Minute of Agreement between North Ayrshire Council and Transport Scotland to the Executive Director (Economy & Communities).

4. Implications

Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Council has set aside £2M for Pennyburn Roundabout in the ten year capital programme and will fund the remaining improvements, £1.5M, on a case-by-case basis, subject to demonstrable need. The Council's Capital Plan is being refreshed in order to demonstrate investment over a ten year period. Officers are considering options as to how these additional improvements will be funded if the works are required- this could include future capital funding bids to the Council's Capital Programme.

Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are none arising from this report.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 In signing the Minute of Agreement (MoA), the Council will legally as well as financially commit itself to delivering the improvements as and when necessary. There is, however, scope to revoke the MoA by negotiation between the parties should circumstances change. Alternatively, planning permission could be refused or conditions imposed to any consent to ensure that the MoA is not breached.

Equality Implications

- 4.4 There are none arising from this report.

Environmental Implications

- 4.5 There are none arising from this report.

Implications for Key Priorities

- 4.6 In removing a significant impediment to development by delivering essential transport infrastructure, the Council should encourage more housebuilding activity in North Ayrshire, supporting jobs, ongoing regeneration and boosting economic growth in the process. The improvements support Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2017 outcomes, specifically "Job density in North Ayrshire increases" and "Connections to neighbouring areas, the West of Scotland, Scotland, the UK and internationally are improved."

5. Consultations

- 5.1 The trunk road improvements have been identified in agreement with Transport Scotland. Transport Scotland welcomes the Council's approach to delivering the improvements as an exemplar of 'good practice' for other planning authorities to follow. Officers have worked in partnership with Legal Services and Transport Scotland on the heads of terms of the Minute of Agreement.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The protocol and Minute of Agreement provide the required certainty for Transport Scotland and prospective applicants that a process is in place to programme and deliver essential transport infrastructure to support future development. In providing such infrastructure, the Council removes a significant risk to development and enhances North Ayrshire's competitive advantage for attracting new investment.



KAREN YEOMANS
Executive Director (Economy and Communities)

Reference :

For further information please contact Andrew McNair, Planning Officer (Strategic Planning & Infrastructure) on 01294 324769

Background Papers

North Ayrshire Local Development Plan, May 2014

Draft Supplementary Guidance: Developer Contributions (Strategic Transport), July 2013.

DRAFT

Appendix 1

Irvine Bay Transport Model Protocol

February 2015



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1.0 About this document	1
1.1 Introduction	
1.2 Purpose & Status of Protocol	
1.3 Defining Strategic Road Network	
2.0 Modelling the LDP's transport impacts	2
2.1 Transport Modelling Work	
2.2 Strategic Road Improvements	
2.3 Identifying the critical point for an improvement(s)	
3.0 Keeping track of development	5
3.1 Transport Assessments	
3.2 Planning Conditions	
3.3 Notification of Initiation or Completion of Development	
3.4 Housing Land Audit	
3.5 Consultation	
4.0 Agreement between Transport Scotland & North Ayrshire Council	7
4.1 Minute of Agreement	
5.0 Contact us	7
6.1 Our Contact Details	

1. About this document

1.1 Introduction

The North Ayrshire Local Development Plan (LDP) is an important statutory document, setting out policies and proposals for the development and use of land in North Ayrshire. Adopted on 20 May 2014, the LDP translates North Ayrshire Council's aspirations for regeneration and sustainable economic growth into a settlement strategy, allocating land for new uses to attract new people, business investment and employment to the area. New development can bring positive transformational change, creating new homes, job opportunities, prosperity and better places for people. Development, however, can give rise to a need to travel and can, therefore, place additional demand on existing roads.

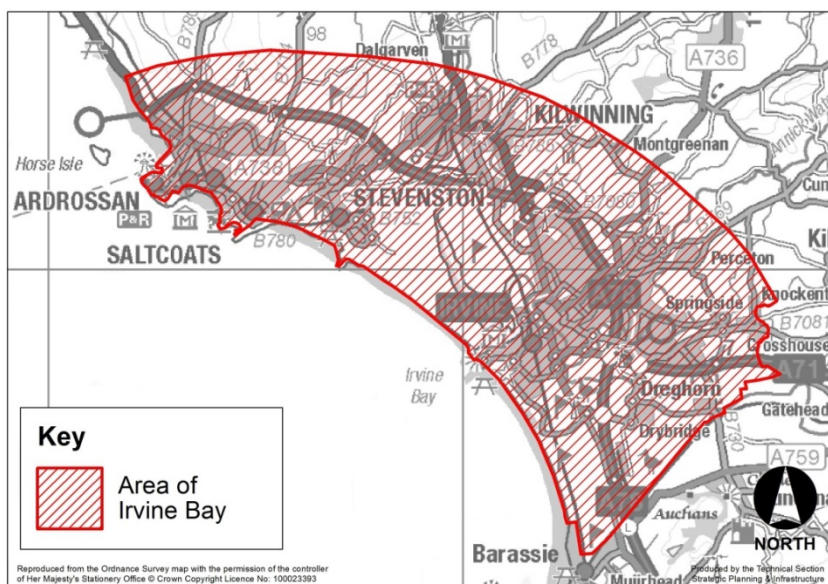
The main purpose of the strategic road network is to enable safe and efficient movement of traffic across North Ayrshire, which is critical in supporting a level of connectivity that ensures communities and businesses can take advantage of economic opportunities within and outwith the area. Some £3.5 million strategic road improvements might be needed within Irvine Bay to support the development, provided for by the LDP, and to achieve no significant detriment in overall network performance either individually or cumulatively by that development.

It is the Council's intention to fund and deliver all the improvements, subject to demonstrable need. In other words, the costs of the improvements will not be met by developer contributions, removing a significant cost constraint to development. The Council is confident that its commitment to delivering this essential road infrastructure will encourage more house-building activity in North Ayrshire, supporting jobs, ongoing regeneration and boosting the local economy in the process.

1.2 Purpose and Status of Protocol

The protocol applies to planning applications for new development and/or change of use within Irvine Bay (see Map 1, below) which are likely to result in a significant material increase in the volume of traffic on the strategic road network. It is designed for the purposes of achieving a consistent approach to determining planning applications and securing the timely delivery of the improvements, as and when needed. The protocol should be read in conjunction with the LDP and relevant supplementary guidance.

Map 1 showing the extent of Irvine Bay



1.3 Defining Strategic Road Network

For the sake of clarity, in this protocol, the strategic road network encompasses trunk roads, which are roads managed and maintained by Transport Scotland, and major local roads, which are managed and maintained by North Ayrshire Council, as local roads authority. The definitive list of strategic roads to which the Council seeks to deliver improvements is set out on Page 3, Table 2.

2. Modelling the LDP's transport impacts

2.1 Transport Modelling Work

A review of transportation infrastructure provision was undertaken by North Ayrshire Council at an early stage to determine the infrastructure implications of future housing land release as set out in the draft LDP. As part of this work, a transport model was undertaken to assess the cumulative transport impacts of the likely levels of future development on the strategic road network.

In simple terms, the model is a mathematical representation of the road network, which forecasts future impacts (e.g. increased traffic congestion) brought about by projected changes in traffic growth and land-use. The model consists of two components:

- **A high level assessment model (or SATURN)**, which is a software-based model, assessing the cumulative impacts of traffic growth and new development on the strategic road network at a sub-regional level (i.e. Irvine Bay); and
- **A detailed model (or PARAMICS micro-simulation)**, which examines the detailed cumulative impacts of traffic growth and new development at particular junctions within Irvine Bay and considers how these impacts would affect vehicles moving and interacting on the network in real time.

The model predicts conservatively the impacts of non-residential and residential development at LDP allocations. Forecast scenarios are available for 2011-2025 and the AM and PM peak periods of 0800 – 0900 hrs and 1630 – 1730 hrs.

The approach for the production of the scenarios is detailed within 'North Ayrshire Local Development Plan Testing: Model Development and Local Development Plan Scenario Testing with Revised Projections'. A copy of this document is available on request.

Table 1: Locations modelled

Locations modelled	Level of modelling
Irvine Bay, North Ayrshire	SATURN
Kilwinning/A78(T)	PARAMICS
Warrix Interchange, Irvine	PARAMICS
Stanecastle Roundabout, Irvine	PARAMICS
Kilwinning Road, Irvine	PARAMICS

2.2 Strategic Road Improvements

The forecast scenarios identified key points on the strategic road network where improvements may be necessary to mitigate the cumulative transport impacts and ensure no significant detriment in overall network performance. In agreement with Transport Scotland, as trunk road authority, North Ayrshire Council identified the location and nature of the strategic road improvements (Table 2, below). Based on May 2013 prices, the total budget costs for all improvements are estimated to be £3.5 million pounds.

Table 2: Strategic Road Improvements

Road Junction	Nature of improvement
Pennyburn Roundabout [A78(T)/A738(T)]*	Enlarged, signalised roundabout with slip from the A78(T)* to the A738 Kilwinning Road towards Stevenston.
Whitehirst Park/Pennyburn Road, Kilwinning (A738)(T)*	Removal of staggered junction to form a single roundabout with left slip from the Whitehirst Park and Pennyburn Road entries.
Eglinton Interchange, Irvine [A78(T)/A737(T)]*	Signalisation of all four arms and provision of a two lane section northbound from Redburn Roundabout to Eglinton.
Redburn Roundabout, Irvine (A737)*	Partial signalisation, involving both the A737 entries. The other two entries remain priority operation.
Warrix Interchange, Irvine [A71/A78(T)]*	Full signalisation and a dedicated slip from the A78 to A71 east bound, minor widening work to the circulating carriageway.
Stanecastle Roundabout, Irvine (A736)*	Partial signalisation involving the A736 Long Drive, A769 Middleton Road and B7080 entries; the other entries remain priority operation.
Kilwinning town centre [A738(T)/A737 route corridor(T)]*	Installation of SCOOT** at traffic signal controlled junctions of Dalry Road, Lauchlan Way and James Watt College.
Eglinton Park/Irvine Road, Kilwinning (A737)*	Signalisation of junction (completed 2013)
Kilwinning Road, Irvine (A737 route corridor) at Castlepark Road, Sandy Road and Fleming Terrace*	Installation of SCOOT at traffic signal controlled junctions along route.

**(T) indicates the junction is part of a trunk road which is managed and maintained by Transport Scotland as trunk roads authority. The absence of a (T) indicates the junction is part of a road managed and maintained by North Ayrshire Council, as local roads authority.*

*** SCOOT (or Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique) is a tool for managing and controlling traffic signals in urban areas. It is an adaptive system that responds automatically to fluctuations in traffic flow through the use of on-street detectors embedded in the road.*

2.3 Identifying the critical point for an improvement(s)

The critical point is the point at which particular improvements would be required to address the cumulative transport impacts of the development, provided for by the LDP, and to mitigate these impacts to a level acceptable to Transport Scotland and North Ayrshire Council. In order to establish the critical point, North Ayrshire Council will undertake updates to the transport model on a five yearly basis or when jointly deemed necessary by North Ayrshire Council and Transport Scotland.

Importantly, this approach avoids the Council and developers having to undertake several re-runs of the model at significant expense. Development by its nature is highly variable, comprising different uses and occurring at different times, scales and locations. Frequent re-runs, therefore, would likely provide unreliable, short-term projections against which to programme long term delivery of the improvements.

3. Keeping track of development

The following mechanisms will assist in the monitoring of the cumulative transport impacts of development as well as help programme updates to the model, and the delivery of the improvement(s).

3.1 Transport Assessments

Scottish Planning Policy and Policy PI 1 of the LDP require a transport assessment to be produced for development proposals, which would likely generate a significant increase in the number of trips. The development thresholds requiring a transport assessment are set out in Table 3, below. These thresholds are taken from the Scottish Government's 2005 guidance: "Transport Assessment and Implementation: A Guide". However, there may be developments below these thresholds, which might have potential for significant trip generation to and from the strategic road network.

The need for, and level of, transport assessment in relation to proposed development will be determined in consultation between the applicant, the Council and, if necessary, Transport Scotland. Transport Assessments, approved by North Ayrshire Council, will inform the frequency and scope of the updates to the model.

Table 3: Development thresholds requiring a transport assessment.

Land Use	Parameter	Threshold for Transport Assessment
Food retail	GFA*	> 1,000sqm
Non-food retail	GFA	> 1,000sqm
Cinemas and conference facilities	GFA	> 1,000sqm
Leisure facilities	GFA	> 1,000sqm
Business	GFA	> 2,500sqm
Industry	GFA	> 5,000sqm
Distribution and warehousing	GFA	> 10,000sqm
Hospitals	GFA	> 2,500sqm
Higher and further education	GFA	> 2,500sqm
Stadia	Seats	> 1,500
Housing	Dwellings	> 100

* GFA stands for gross floor area.

3.2 Planning Conditions

The following planning condition may be attached to the planning permission (either full or in principle), and amended as appropriate, requiring the developer to provide details on the phasing of development:

“Prior to the commencement of the development or as part of the first application for approval of matters specified in conditions, a detailed phasing plan shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by North Ayrshire Council, as local planning authority. The phasing plan shall specify the proposed phases of the development, including indicative timescales for the commencement and completion of each phase.”

Reason: To enable North Ayrshire Council, as local roads authority, to programme delivery of road improvements, addressing the cumulative transport impacts of the hereby approved development on the strategic road network.

3.3 Notification of Initiation or Completion of Development

Notification provides another means for the Council to monitor development as its progresses. Sections 27A – C of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require applicants to give notification to the Council of the initiation and completion of development as soon as practicable. Planning permission for a phased development will include a condition requiring a person after each phase is completed to give notice of that completion to Council. Such a notice is usually attached to the decision notice of the permission and should be completed and returned to North Ayrshire Council as soon as practicable.

3.4 Housing Land Audit

The Housing Land Audit is prepared by the Council on an annual basis to determine the extent and status of housing sites in North Ayrshire. It provides detailed information on current housing sites, allowing the Council to forecast the completion rates of new homes and model the associated transport impacts. The audit provides useful data, which can be used to appraise and guide the delivery of the improvements.

3.5 Consultation

Consultation with the Council, Transport Scotland and the applicant will inform whether transport assessments are required to assess the impact of development on the trunk road, and whether additional modelling work is required.

In accordance with Schedule 5(5) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008, the Council is required to consult Transport Scotland before granting any development near to a trunk road. This extends to developments that are likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic entering or leaving the trunk road.

The process for consultation with Transport Scotland is detailed in its Development Management Guidance, available at:

http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/system/files/documents/reports/Development_management_guidance_0.pdf

4 Agreement between Transport Scotland & North Ayrshire Council

4.1 Minute of Agreement

North Ayrshire Council has signed a Minute of Agreement with Transport Scotland confirming that the improvements will be delivered by North Ayrshire Council. The purpose of the agreement is threefold:

- To set out areas for collaboration and co-operation between the two stakeholders with respect to the delivery of the improvements;
- To give certainty to Scottish Ministers that the cumulative transport impacts of the LDP on the trunk road network will be acceptably resolved by the Council as and when necessary; and
- To give the Council the assurance that Transport Scotland will not withhold its approval, or attach any planning conditions to its approval, of any planning applications, requiring a particular improvement(s).

By being party to this agreement, the Council supports delivery of a more effective and efficient planning system. It is recognised that planning conditions can add to the costs and administrative burdens of development. The agreement avoids the imposition of unnecessary planning conditions, relative to the improvements, and related infrastructure costs for development.

5 Contact Us

5.1 Our Contact Details

North Ayrshire Council strongly encourages pre-application discussions to enable, as far as possible, the potential issues associated with a proposal to be identified and resolved at an early stage. Such discussions can greatly benefit both developers and the Council, improving certainty as well as saving time and costs in the planning process.

Council Contact details are provided below, if you wish to obtain further advice about this protocol or to arrange pre-application discussions:

By phone: 01294 324300

By email: LDP@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

In person or by post: Strategic Planning & Infrastructure, Economic Growth Services, North Ayrshire Council, Cunninghame House, Irvine, KA12 8EE

If you wish to view copies of the adopted North Ayrshire Local Development Plan and its Supplementary Guidance, please visit: www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/localplans

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 7

24 February 2015

Cabinet

Subject: **European Structural and Investment Fund
Programmes in Scotland 2014-20**

Purpose: To advise Cabinet of progress in the development of European Union Structural and Investment Fund Programmes in Scotland 2014-20, and their potential to bring benefit to North Ayrshire.

Recommendation: Cabinet is asked to:

(a) Note progress in the development and approval of frameworks governing access to EU funding programmes in Scotland 2014-20;

(b) Note the implications of this for North Ayrshire; and,

(c) Instruct officers to develop funding applications as outlined in paragraphs 2.12 - 2.18 and to report on progress thereafter.

1. Introduction

1.1 North Ayrshire Council secured over £7m of European Union (EU) funding in the 2007-13 programme period. Sources included:

- European Social Fund (ESF): the main EU fund for supporting employment in the Member States
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF): key fund for supporting economic regeneration and safeguarding jobs
- EU rural development funds (LEADER).

- 1.2 For the next funding period from 2014-20, the European Commission has sought to improve coordination by integrating the funds into single European Structural and Investment Funds frameworks (ESIF) for each Member State. For the 2014-20 programme, North Ayrshire have achieved £6.5m which is an excellent result given the changes by Scottish Government to the dispersal of the funds.

A Partnership Agreement governing ESIF use in the United Kingdom, which included a specific Scottish Chapter, was approved by the European Commission in October 2014. This paved the way for Scottish Government to submit Scottish ERDF and ESF Operational Programmes (OPs). These were approved on 11 and 19 December 2014 respectively.

- 1.3 Following the approval of these OPs, the first call for ERDF and ESF funding applications was issued by Scottish Government in December. Progress on LEADER will be the subject of a separate report to Cabinet.

2. Current Position

Content of the 2014-20 Operational Programmes

- 2.1 The new EU programmes are quite different from previous ones. The European Commission has made clear that the focus for the funds in the UK must be: building business competitiveness and innovation; tackling those with low level or no skills; and making the economy environmentally friendly and resource efficient.
- 2.2 The Scottish programmes have been over three years in development and throughout this time, North Ayrshire Council has actively engaged with the European Commission, Scottish and UK governments to seek to ensure that the new programmes reflect our local socio-economic needs and objectives.
- 2.3 All EU funds must now focus on a limited number of Thematic Objectives. The new Scottish OPs propose the allocation of funds to these objectives as shown in Table 1 below. Whilst the OPs will apply across Scotland, the European Commission has specified that the Highlands & Islands should receive a higher pro-rata level of investment in recognition of the region's economic statistics and its status as a Transition area. Funds will also be given to South West Scotland to support additional Youth Employment activity in recognition of local labour market statistics.

TABLE 1 –DRAFT ALLOCATION OF FUNDS BY THEMATIC OBJECTIVE

EU THEMATIC OBJECTIVE	PROPOSED ERDF/ESF ALLOCATION Highlands & Islands	PROPOSED ERDF/ESF ALLOCATION Rest of Scotland
Research, Development and Innovation	£15m ERDF	£73m ERDF
ICT (Highlands and Islands only)	£20m ERDF	£0m
Business Competitiveness	£26m ERDF	£87m ERDF
Low Carbon Economy	£20m ERDF	£83m ERDF
Environment/Resource Efficiency	£5m ERDF	£39m ERDF
Promoting Employment	£20m ESF	£99m ESF
Social Inclusion/Anti Poverty	£19m ESF	£51m ESF
Skills/Lifelong Learning	£23m ESF	£73m ESF
Youth Employment (South West Scotland)	£0m	£36m ESF
Programme Management	£4m ERDF/ESF	£11m ERDF/ESF
TOTAL	£152m	£552m

Figures shown in OPs for EU funding allocations are given in Euros. Above Table uses November 2014 exchange rate: €1= £0.7872

Means of Programme Disbursement

- 2.4 The Scottish Government has proposed a new model for programme delivery for a limited number of Strategic Interventions (SIs) to meet the above objectives. The SIs being proposed are listed in Appendix 1.
- 2.5 Many of the SIs will be delivered by a combination of Scottish Enterprise, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, etc. Scottish local authorities are being invited to take on Lead Partner roles for four of the Strategic Interventions:
- Employability Pipelines
 - Poverty and Social Inclusion
 - Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)
 - Business Competitiveness

There may also be potential for involvement and attracting funding from other SIs as a Delivery Agent.

- 2.6 In July 2014, CoSLA Leaders agreed a position on legal responsibility to take forward the delivery of these interventions. This comprises the agreement of national templates covering funding, responsibilities and required outcomes. This is then married to a locally defined selection of core national interventions and elective eligible activities to address local needs.

- 2.7 In September 2014, CoSLA Leaders agreed a methodology for calculating indicative funding allocations for two of the SIs, as shown in Table 2 below. These figures are not final allocations but have been approved by Scottish Government as a basis for developing proposals and preparing funding applications.

TABLE 2 – INDICATIVE FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS TO NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Scottish Strategic Intervention	Indicative ESF funding allocation to North Ayrshire Council for 2015-2020
Employability Pipelines	£3.63m
Poverty and Social Inclusion	£0.74m
Total	£4.37m

- 2.8 In February 2015 Scottish Government advised eligible Councils of their indicative funding allocation for the Youth Employment Initiative, with the North Ayrshire Council figure shown in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3 – INDICATIVE YEI FINANCIAL ALLOCATION TO NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Scottish Strategic Intervention	Indicative ESF funding allocation to North Ayrshire Council for 2015-2018
Youth Employment Initiative	£2.13m

The financial allocation process to be adopted in respect of the local authority element of the Business Competitiveness SI has yet to be clarified.

Implications for North Ayrshire

- 2.9 National level dialogue has continued into 2015 on issues such as eligibility, funding and costing methodologies. Meanwhile Scottish Government has invited designated Lead Partners to submit Strategic Intervention applications (SIs), with two application deadline dates identified dependent on the start date for activity.
- For those SIs which are seeking a start date prior to 1 April 2015, applications have to be submitted by 23 January 2015.
 - For those SIs which are seeking a start date on or after 1 April 2015, applications are to be submitted by 9 March 2015..

A further call for applications is expected in summer 2015.

- 2.10 Whilst the indicative financial allocations figures are for the period up to 2020, at this stage Scottish Government is inviting local authorities to submit applications for support up to end 2017. To secure these EU funds, it will be necessary for the Council to commit match funding. For activity in the Highlands & Islands the EU intervention rate is 50% of total eligible costs. For the rest of Scotland, the EU can generally provide 40% of total eligible costs. An exception is the Youth Employment Initiative where Councils will be asked to commit a third of total eligible costs in match funding.

Proposed Activity in Maximising Benefit to North Ayrshire

- 2.11 Noting the potential to secure significant external funding to help deliver key local objectives, officers have proposed responses to the SIs where the Council has been invited to act as a Lead Partner as follows:

EMPLOYABILITY

- 2.12 For the Employability Pipeline SI, the potential to build on the Community Planning Partnership five stage pipeline approach developed during the 2007-13 programmes. This is a framework for supporting the effective delivery of a range of employability services, from supporting labour market engagement through to in work support. Noting the indicative ESF allocation figure to North Ayrshire of £3.63m, officers have been preparing to submit a bid for ESF from the new programmes to support local pipeline activity 2015-2017. Meanwhile, to ease the transition to the new programme, Scottish Government has allowed the extension of some local pipeline activity to end March 2015.

POVERTY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

- 2.13 Scottish Government is engaged in discussion with Big Lottery to explore the potential for financial support for a Poverty and Social inclusion SI. The outcome of these discussions will be awaited before responding to the invitation to submit local programmes for targeted financial and other poverty/social inclusion measures. This will enable more intensive support than is possible within the Employability pipelines. Meanwhile, noting the indicative ESF allocation figure to North Ayrshire of £0.74m, local discussion and preparations have started for a bid to support a programme of targeted local activity 2015-17. In line with the general feedback from the Scottish Government, this is concentrated on enhancing Stage 1 and Stage 2 pipeline activity.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE (YEI)

- 2.14 North Ayrshire Council received an extension to end March 2015 from Scottish Government for our existing successful Youth Employment Scotland programmes. There is potential to build on these efforts to tackle local youth unemployment with the new Youth Employment Initiative. The Youth Employment Initiative is specifically targeted at young people aged 16-29 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). Activity is to be strongly orientated to achieving four results: sustainable employment, self-employment, quality apprenticeship/training, and quality long term qualification. Spend must be committed by December 2015 and incurred by December 2018.
- 2.15 Scottish Government has invited both the Scottish Funding Council and local authorities to act as Lead Partners for the YEI. ESF and additional YEI monies are to be made available to local authorities in South West Scotland. Preparations have started for a bid to support a programme of targeted local support. This would see delivery via the Council, partnership arrangements with the Third Sector and through procurement of an external company.

BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

- 2.16 Scottish Government has invited organisations to act as Lead Partners for components of an integrated package of support to business. Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise have been invited to develop national/regional programmes of business support focussed on promoting growth. Local authorities have been invited to act as Lead Partners for Local Business Growth Accelerator programmes to support and encourage the growth of local companies. Scottish Government has indicated that around £31.4m ERDF will to be made available to Councils for the period up to 2020 to support this work, and is encouraging applicants to take account of Business Gateway geographies when developing a strategic, integrated programme of support for local business.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 National level dialogue on the development of the proposed Strategic Interventions has continued into 2015. It is proposed that North Ayrshire Council continues to engage in discussion with Scottish Government and other external partners to press for outcomes which best suit the needs of North Ayrshire business and communities. Officers will continue to participate in external and internal programme development discussions.

- 3.2 It is further proposed that Cabinet instruct officers to develop funding applications as outlined in paragraphs 2.12 - 2.16 and to report on progress thereafter.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Council will be required to commit match funding in order to draw down support from ESIF programmes. Indicative financial allocations totalling £4.37m have been received from Scottish Government to support up to six years of activity under the Employability and Social Inclusion programmes. This can cover 40% of the total eligible costs of these programmes, with the remaining 60% (£6.55m) to be committed by the Council. Details are awaited from Scottish Government on the likely allocation level for the Business Growth programme. With both ESF and YEI monies available to support the Youth Employment Initiative, the one third match funding commitment required from the Council is likely to be around £1.065m based on the indicative allocation of £2.13m received from Scottish Government for a programme of activity up to December 2018. As indicated above, there may potential for some match funding to be sourced from external sources such as Big Lottery and the Department for Work and Pensions. It should be noted that the currency used in EU Operational Programmes is the Euro and that the sterling conversions shown in this report are those that have been used by Scottish Government, based on exchange rates at the time of their correspondence.

Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are no human resource implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Equality Implications

- 4.4 There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report, though it should be noted that Equality Impact Assessments require to be undertaken as part of the development of Strategic Intervention funding applications.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 4.5 There are no environmental or sustainability implications arising from the recommendations in this report, though it should be noted that Environmental Impact Assessments require to be undertaken as part of the development of Strategic Intervention funding applications.

Implications for Key Priorities

- 4.6 There are no key priority implications arising from this report. The key priorities which would be affected by successful Strategic Intervention applications will be detailed in further reports to Cabinet.

Community Benefit Implications

- 4.7 There are no community benefit implications arising from this report. The benefits which would arise from successful Strategic Intervention applications will be detailed in further reports to Cabinet.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 Officers have consulted with partners such as the West of Scotland European Forum, Highlands & Islands European Partnership, Scottish Local Authority Economic Development network, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Industrial Communities Alliance, Scottish Government on the development of the new programmes. A short-term working group was established by the Board of North Ayrshire CPP Board in 2012 to help inform the Council's input to discussions. The Community Planning Partnership and Economic Development and Regeneration Boards will be updated on progress.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 European Structural Funds have made an important contribution over a number of years to the development and delivery of a range of economic and regeneration programmes and projects in North Ayrshire. North Ayrshire Council will continue to work with strategic and local partners to maximise the benefits to North Ayrshire from EU funds. There is the potential to use the new EU funding programmes to go further in key areas such as maximising support for local businesses, and building on the positive movement we have seen in reducing local youth unemployment in North Ayrshire.



KAREN YEOMANS
Executive Director (Economy and Communities)

Reference :

For further information please contact Linda Aird, European Officer on 01294 324387

Background Papers

European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-20: UK Partnership Agreement

European Social Fund Operational Programme for Scotland 2014-20

European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme for Scotland 2014-20

Appendix 1: Draft list of European Structural Fund Strategic Interventions proposed by Scottish Government

EU Thematic Objective	Scottish Strategic Intervention	Summary	Lead Contacts(s)	North Ayrshire interest
Skills/Lifelong Learning	Developing Scotland's Workforce	A package of additional skills, training and workforce development support to develop a highly skilled and competitive workforce.	Skills Development Scotland Scottish Funding Council	Additional funded student places as identified in Regional Skills Investment Plans.
Business Competitiveness	Business Competitiveness	Focus on support for growth or growth potential companies and on the key drivers of growth and competitiveness, including exporting, innovation and entrepreneurship, leadership development, efficiency and growing the digital economy.	Scottish Enterprise Highlands & Islands Enterprise Local Authorities	Pipeline approach to support for business comprising components led by enterprise agencies and component led by local authorities. For latter delivery to be organised at Business Gateway level.
Research, Development and Innovation	Innovation	Help for businesses to commercialise and capitalise on research, and to promote centres of excellence for that research.	Scottish Enterprise Highlands & Islands Enterprise	Innovation centres will be sectorally based.
Research, Development and Innovation	Smart Cities	Support for Scotland's cities to innovate using new technologies and accelerate the transformation of delivery of city services.	Enterprise & Cities Division, Scottish Government	
ICT (Highlands and Islands only)	Broadband Infrastructure	Next generation superfast broadband to Highlands and Islands	Digital Strategy & Programmes Division, Scottish Government	Support for delivery of H&I regional plan, includes NAC islands.

	Financial Engineering	Proposals for expansion of access to finance funding, both through Scottish investment Bank and Local Authority Loan Funds.	Innovation, Investment & Industries Division, Scottish Government	Potential to include non bank lending to SMEs (eg merged WoSLF, ESLF, etc) and for loan finance.
Low Carbon Economy	Sustainable Transport	Support for connectivity between different modes of green transport. Also pilot projects with reliable low carbon refuelling services.	Transport Scotland	SPT working with local authorities, including NAC, to monitor potential for involvement.
Low Carbon Economy	Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Fund	Support for the development of a strong pipeline of integrated projects for investment; understanding of all aspects of low-carbon deal chains for investors; and access to funding where no suitable financial models are available.	Low Carbon Investment and Public Sector Energy Efficiency, Scottish Government	Further detail awaited from lead partners.
Environment/ Resource Efficiency	Green Infrastructure	Supporting green infrastructure in towns and cities, eg utilising vacant and derelict land, increasing access to green recreation and health, access to nature.	Scottish Natural Heritage	SNH contacted local authorities for project proposals. NAC proposal under development.
Environment/ Resource Efficiency	Resource Efficient Circular Economy	Creation of a supply chain development programme, provision of resource efficient workspaces and expansion of resource efficiency services to additional key sectors.	Zero Waste Scotland	Further detail awaited from lead partners.
Promoting Employment	Employability Pipelines	Building on strategic employability pipeline which supports 5 stage transition from unemployment through to in-work support.	Local Authorities	Indicative financial allocation received from Scottish Government to support local employability pipeline, and NAC invited to submit application. Funding will also be

			Employability, Scottish Government	available for national third sector engagement.
Social Inclusion/Anti Poverty	Social Inclusion And Poverty Reduction	Development of financial inclusion support particularly for households in poverty. Support for the development community based solutions to social inclusion and poverty at a territorial level.	European Structural Funds Division, Scottish Government	Indicative financial allocation received from Scottish Government and NAC invited to submit application which offers targeted local support
Youth Employment (South West Scotland)	SW Scotland Youth Employment	A package of support for young unemployed in South West Scotland, including Employer Recruitment Incentive and additional college places.	Local Authorities Scottish Funding Council	Ayrshire authorities represented on group convened by Scottish Government to develop package.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 8

24 February 2015

Cabinet

Subject: **Strategic Review of Educational Services**

Purpose: To submit the Interim Report of the Strategic Review of Educational Services

Recommendation: That Cabinet notes the contents of this Interim Report and progress made towards the submission of the final report in November 2015.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In December 2013 Cabinet agreed to carry out a review of educational services in North Ayrshire. It was anticipated that the work of the review would be complete by end 2014 with the final report to Cabinet scheduled for early 2015.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 The work of the Review has been significantly enhanced by its partnerships with two research bodies: The Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change (Glasgow University) and the Dartington Social Research Centre (Improving Children's Outcomes). In addition, the Council is also working with the Scottish Government's Raising Attainment for All programme to use Improvement Methodology to measure small change projects taking place across our schools. This means that the review is benefitting from significant evidenced based research which will inform the final outcomes of the Review.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet notes the content of the Interim Report of the Strategic Review of Educational Services and agrees to receive the final report in November 2015.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Equality Implications

- 4.4 There are no equality implications arising from this report

Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 4.5 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Implications for Key Priorities

- 4.6 There are no implications for key priorities arising from this report.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 No consultations were required in relation to this report.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The attached Report is submitted to the Committee for information.



ELMA MURRAY
Chief Executive

Reference : DW

For further information please contact Doreen Walkinshaw, Project Manager
on 01294 324175

Background Papers

None

North Ayrshire Council
Strategic Review of Educational Services
Interim Report
23 February 2015

Background and Context

In 2013, concern was growing in North Ayrshire on the impact of inequality in our communities on educational attainment. This inequality has led to a gap in educational attainment between areas of higher deprivation and the rest of our communities and means that too many learners do not have the chance to lead the lives they want and deserve. On 10 December 2013, Cabinet agreed the remit for a review of educational services in North Ayrshire. A Programme Board was formed and an Improvement Charter was developed (Appendix 1A). The aims of the Review were agreed as follows:

1. To develop a vision and strategy for the delivery of education in North Ayrshire which will ensure that:
 - a. The inequality that exists across different groups of learners, is reduced.
 - b. Educational outcomes improve for all learners
 - c. The community of North Ayrshire maximises value from available resources.
2. To set out how the Council will engage with our communities and build confidence in the Council's vision and strategy, so that they can be realised.

The Review will support the Single Outcome Agreement high level outcome:

Children's health and wellbeing is improved by breaking the cycle of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes

The scope of the review was aligned into three workstreams:

- **Educational Environment** – to develop proposals for the future shape of the Council's property and ICT infrastructure to support the delivery of a highly effective lifelong learning service. This includes consideration of co-location with other public and community-led services.
- **Educational Equality** – delivered in partnership with external agencies to draw on national and international research and relate to local issues and challenges. This workstream will put forward approaches which fit a local context through an agreed strategy in partnership with all stakeholders.
- **Engagement** – to develop a plan of action that will include assessment and sharing of evidence and information; identifying and engaging with key stakeholders using a range of appropriate methods to enable co-design and co-production of ideas and actions.

The Programme Board is chaired by the Chief Executive, meets on a monthly basis, and is responsible for the direction, resourcing, and the assurance of quality and progress of the Review.

Since the commencement of the review, the new Executive Director of Education and Youth Employment has been appointed. He will assume the responsibility for chairing the Review from 2015.

Executive Summary

The Strategic Review of Educational Services commenced in December 2013 and the three workstream groups have been led by the Programme Board to deliver on a number of key objectives. This interim report highlights the work that has been delivered so far:

1. Workstream 1- Educational Environment

Work on the review of the educational estate is now underway and is informed by the Neighbourhood Asset Remodelling work that is also taking place. A review of ICT Infrastructure and Capital Funding Options have also been carried out by this group

2. Workstream 2 - Educational Equality

Research by the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change has commenced and the first stage Contextual Analysis report has been produced. This will be followed by a more in depth study of 4 key areas:

- The use of data and evidence in practice
- Parental engagement
- Learning and teaching
- Leadership across all levels

In addition, improvement methodology from the Scottish Government Raising Attainment for all Programme is being used to raise attainment in numeracy across the Kilwinning and Ardrossan clusters in the first instance.

3. Workstream 3 – Consultation and Engagement

Training on consultation and engagement has been delivered and validated by the Consultation Institute to a number of key staff across the Council. This knowledge is being used to develop plans for stakeholder consultation particularly in relation to the school estate review and the parental engagement study being carried out by the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change.

The Final Report of the Review is scheduled for November 2015 when the research outcomes will be available and the workstream activities will be concluded. This will inform the Review's outputs and action plan.

Current position

Workstream 1- Educational Environment

This Workstream Group is led by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support and comprises officers from Education, Finance, IT, and Property Management and Investment. Where required, officers from other Departments have contributed to the workstream outputs. The group was tasked with delivering on 4 key objectives:

Objective 1

Development of proposals for the future Council estate to support educational attainment and achievement and lifelong learning.

Current Progress

Neighbourhood Asset Re-Modelling is underway and aims to: 1) progress an estates re-modelling strategy for operational property that complements service delivery across our six neighbourhoods; and 2) agree the over-arching principles to “right size” the operational portfolio in each area.

This work will inform the future shape of the educational estate. A series of workshops are taking place to review assets, including the school estate, Early Years and ASN provision and will explore the opportunities for a campus approach. This work will also explore the opportunities to co-locate leisure and other appropriate community assets and facilities. Stakeholder consultation and engagement will be an important strand of this work, which is scheduled to be completed by June 2015.

A series of background papers have been prepared on key areas of service delivery. These are considered as work in progress and will be discussed by the Programme Board during early 2015.

A study visit to Penistone Grammar School in Sheffield has been undertaken to understand more about alternative approaches to funding, the procurement of goods and services, and facilities management including ICT.

Objective 2

Development of an education ICT strategy to support future learning needs.

Current Progress

A review of ICT infrastructure across schools has taken place and an ICT strategy that will support future educational needs has been drafted. Nine recommendations were made in the strategy and a report on the progress of their implementation is available at Appendix 2.

Objective 3

Development of revenue and capital financial plans

Current Progress

A Capital Funding Options paper has been produced which reviews the various options that are open to the Council and makes recommendations for future capital financing. It should be noted that funding options are subject to regular review to ensure best value for the Council

Objective 4

Identification of alternative sustainable funding sources to support future service delivery

Current Progress

As above

Workstream 2 - Educational Equality

This Workstream Group is led by the Head of Schools and comprises Head Teachers and Senior Managers from the Directorate of Education and Youth Employment.

The group is tasked with delivering on 3 key objectives:

Objective 1

To carry out a mapping exercise drawing on national and international evidence based research

Current progress

On 16 July 2014, Cabinet approved the procurement of work with the University of Glasgow's Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change to carry out research in North Ayrshire schools. This will support the development of an improvement programme that is designed to support an improvement in attainment as well as increased opportunities for wider achievement which will be delivered within an equitable education system across the authority. The Centre will utilise national and international research and data and apply it to the local context of North Ayrshire. This work commenced in October 2014 and is scheduled to be completed by October 2015.

Ardrossan and Irvine Royal school clusters provide the platform for focussed in depth analysis. The research will include contextual and data analyses, a series of "deep dives" to understand how policy is enacted in schools, a series of consultation events to develop a theory of change that is bespoke to North Ayrshire, cross authority action research testing change theories, and external evaluation of practitioner interventions. The findings will be reported to the Council in October 2015.

Through discussion with the senior leadership team, researchers have identified 4 key areas of focus for the research. These are:

- The use of data and evidence in practice
- Parental engagement
- Learning and teaching
- Leadership across all levels

The work of the Robert Owen Centre will be discussed at the Private Members Briefing scheduled for 03 March 2015.

Objective 2

The analysis of data and information drawing on similarities and differences between wider research and the local context.

Current Progress

The first strand of the research by the Robert Owen Centre has been completed and includes quantitative analysis of school data and comparisons of authority neighbourhood data and National figures.

A series of interviews and focus groups exploring the 4 key areas of focus have also been held with the Head Teachers and teachers of the schools within the case study clusters. As a result of these discussions a number of key themes and questions have provided the basis for further exploration during the next phase of the research. The report on this Contextual Analysis is available at Appendix 3

A conference was held for all North Ayrshire Head Teachers in September 2014. The event focussed on parental engagement and system leadership and heard from international experts on these key areas. A follow up conference is planned for June 2015.

Objective 3

The development of a Programme of Change that will be designed to raise achievement and deliver more equitable outcomes.

Current progress

North Ayrshire Council is one of 14 local authorities participating in the Scottish Government's Raising Attainment for All (RAFA) Programme. This programme uses the 3-Step Improvement Framework for public services which is being used to demonstrate measureable gains in learner engagement and achievement. In North Ayrshire the framework is being applied to improve our learning and teaching of mental maths strategies and drive up standards of performance in Numeracy, particularly amongst primary school pupils. This area of focus is supported by the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) study¹. This stated that across the 65 OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries, a more socio-economically advantaged student scores significantly higher in mathematics than a less-advantaged student - equivalent to nearly 1 year of schooling. Further, the OECD's new survey² of adult skills asserts that foundation skills in maths have a major impact on individuals' life chances.

In recognition of the research evidence, currently 20 teachers and early years practitioners have embarked on training in Maths Recovery – an early intervention programme to support pupils who exhibit early difficulties in numeracy. In addition, the mental maths strategy programme, Number Talks, is being piloted across 9 primary schools. Improvement methodology is being applied to test and measure the difference these initiatives are making which will inform next steps and actions.

A number of additional actions have been put in place to identify areas for further investigation and action planning:

- A discussion paper on the range of parenting programmes within North Ayrshire has been prepared and can be viewed at Appendix 4. This paper aims to highlight the issues and learning arising from North Ayrshire's existing programmes and projects

and direct thinking on the challenges of parental engagement, particularly of late primary and secondary age pupils.

- The workstream group are also exploring the role of arts education as means of raising attainment, particularly in our most deprived communities. Opportunities with Centrestage Music Theatre in Kilmarnock are currently being explored and a paper has been prepared on the Aspire immersive model of practice in arts education currently in place in Dundee. This paper can be viewed at Appendix 5.

¹ PISA 2012 Results in Focus P12 ² PISA 2012 Results in Focus P6

Workstream 3 – Consultation and Engagement

This Workstream Group is led by the Head of Connected Communities and comprises officers from Communications and Economy and Culture.

The group is tasked with delivering on 3 key objectives:

Objective 1

To carry out pre-consultation, including a plan of action, according to the defined scope of the project.

Current progress

A series of staff training programmes on consultation and engagement have been delivered and validated by the Consultation Institute and a cross-directorate consultation team has been established to support the work of the Review. This team was put into action for the pre-consultation that was carried out for the proposed Largs Campus development.

The work of the Review is now reaching an appropriate stage to fully activate this workstream and currently the senior management teams of Education and Youth Employment and Economy and Communities are developing a Consultation and Engagement plan which includes:

- An assessment of the evidence bases for the key components of the consultation
- Selection of information to be presented to communities and stakeholders
- Identification of the key stakeholders, the appropriate methods of engagement, and the right time for consultation.

Work has commenced on the consultation plans for the review of the school estate and for the work of the Robert Owen Centre research particularly on parental engagement.

Objective 2

To build and deliver consultation dialogue across a range of relevant stakeholder groups that enables the best possible contribution to the issues at hand.

Current Progress

Consultation dialogue will be about promotion of ideas, providing clarification and providing consultees with the best possible opportunity to give their best possible response.

Objective 3

To develop post consultation reports and carry out ongoing dialogue as required.

Current Progress

Post consultation actions include the analysis of the responses and providing robust and accurate feedback through communication and dialogue with stakeholders and consultees.

Evaluation of consultation is a crucial part of this phase which enables lessons to be learned and learning to be shared.

Other key outputs

Educational Attainment of Looked after Children

The Local Authority Benchmarking Working Group was set up by the Directors of Social Services of Dundee, East Ayrshire, Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire and North Ayrshire to compare performance across a range of key areas. Their first project looked at the Educational Attainment of Looked After Children. The Review Programme Board asked for a report on the work of this group and this is attached at Appendix 6.

The report identified that in some settings, North Ayrshire's looked after children are performing better than many of our comparator authorities. However it must be acknowledged that the educational attainment of looked after children remains significantly below that of their peers. The Programme Board have requested an update on progress of the recommendations contained in the Educational Attainment for Looked after Children Benchmarking Report, in February 2015.

Dartington – Improving Children's Outcomes

The Dartington Social Research Unit (SRU) has been working with the Scottish Government to develop an evidence-based approach to improving children's services across Scotland. As a result, the "Improving Children Outcomes" project was established to support work on gathering evidence on the needs of the child population locally and how services meet that need. In April and May 2014 the Council's Cabinet and the Shadow Integration Board of the Health and Social Care Partnership agreed to participate in the Improving Children's Outcomes project. Progress updates were provided to Elected Members at a Private Members Briefing on 23 July 2014. A report of the project was provided to the Programme Board in October 2014 and can be seen at Appendix 7.

The research was carried out in the community and in schools between September and October 2014. Development and Strategy Days to share the findings and plan future children's services based on this and the research on "what works" in improving children's outcomes, will take place in January and February 2015. A further update on the Improving Children's Outcomes Project will be the subject of a private Members Briefing on 03 March 2015.

Promoting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

The establishment of Irvine's Enterprise Area focussing on Life Sciences is providing opportunities for jobs and economic growth in North Ayrshire. In Scotland it is anticipated that 60,000 to 90,000 jobs will be created in green technology, in addition to the 80,000 that already exist. Ensuring that the young people of North Ayrshire are well equipped to take advantage of the future job opportunities is a key priority in North Ayrshire schools with an increased focus on STEM in the curriculum across all schools.

On 09 December 2014, Cabinet received a report that laid out the measures being taken to continue to engage learners in STEM and, in particular, the work being undertaken to upskill teachers in the teaching of numeracy in primary schools and early years. These are:

- The Maths Recovery early intervention programme.
- The "Number Talks" mental maths programme being supported at individual school level and cross – authority networks set up
- Curriculum for Excellence review of maths and numeracy in light of the recommendations of the National Progression Framework launched in January 2015.
- The Ardrossan cluster will work with four other clusters, the Scottish Government and Education Scotland to design a National STEM Self-Evaluation Improvement Framework.
- Continue to promote STEM related pathways and careers across all schools including the continued participation in the Reach Programme.
- Further develop an industry recognised qualification in partnership with the Construction Industry Training Board
- To work collaboratively with East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire to establish a STEM hub at Dumfries House

A copy of this Cabinet Report can be seen at Appendix 8. Cabinet agreed to receive regular updates on the work of the STEM programme.

Curriculum for Excellence Senior Phase

In summer 2013, the Council launched the Senior Phase Strategy and Action Plan to ensure the provision of a wide range of educational opportunities including high quality vocational education. The strategy builds on and extends the effective partnerships that exist between schools, Economy and Communities, universities, colleges, Skills Development Scotland (SDS), employers, social enterprises and voluntary organisations, and aims to:

1. Ensure that the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence meets the needs of all learners and enables them to obtain qualifications whilst continuing to develop the four capacities.
2. Provide a wide range of experiences to enhance skills for learning, life and work. These skills include literacy, numeracy, skills for health and wellbeing, working with others, employability skills, entrepreneurial and enterprise skills.
3. Raise aspirations and increase the ambitions of the young people of North Ayrshire fostering resilience and independence in preparation for adult life.

4. Provide high quality vocational education experiences for young people that increase their preparedness for the future whether it be in further education, higher education, employment or training.
5. Increase the percentage of young people moving into positive and sustained destinations.
6. Improve attainment and achievement for all in North Ayrshire.

The Strategy Action plan was updated in November 2014 to take account of the Report by the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce (The Wood Report) and the emerging relationship with the new Ayrshire College.

School Transport

Since the implementation of the Corporate Transport Hub in April 2013, services are no longer responsible for commissioning transport. As a result there has been a significant reduction in duplication particularly in relation to schools transport. The Hub provides a corporate approach when organising school transport, utilising all in house transport and procuring additional transport via competitive tender and the Corporate Taxi Framework.

Through identification and management of points of supply it is possible to reduce the volume of transport services and thus reduce costs. There are also additional opportunities that relate to managing the demand for social transport by encouraging service users to choose alternative transport methods that can be delivered for a lower total costs whilst improving desired outcomes for the individual.

Other benefits include

- More immediate response to services
- Improved safety and security for service users with all drivers now being checked by Disclosure Scotland
- More fit for purpose vehicles, thereby providing better service for Pupils
- Consistent driver training and standards
- Reduced health and safety risk as all pupils transported in vehicles serviced to high standards by NAC garage
- Regulation compliance

Next Steps

Workstream 1- Educational Environment

- The work to complete the review of the school estate will be complete in June 2015 and this will include the plans for Council's denominational and ASN schools.
- The Programme Board will also consider papers on alternative approaches to funding, the procurement of goods and services, and facilities management. The workstream group will bring forward a paper which reviews the Council's approach to the management of shared campuses which ensures the best use of the asset for education and the local community.
- The funding options for the Council's capital plans will be subject to ongoing review.

Workstream 2 - Educational Equality

- The work with the Robert Owen Centre will continue with a series of “deep dives” into school on the key themes that have emerged during the contextual analysis. A series of tailored interventions will be developed to tackle inequalities within, between and beyond schools, which will be tested and refined. This will be the subject of an interim report in August 2015. The final report on the research will be received in October 2015.
- The results of the Raising Attainment for All (RAFA) improvement research on the Maths Recovery and Number Talks numeracy programmes will be analysed and used to inform next steps and actions.
- RAFA improvement methodology will be used to measure new programmes of work and this will be reported to the SRES Programme Board when complete.

Workstream 3 – Consultation and Engagement

As detailed earlier in the report, the work of this group is about to be deployed in relation to the school estate review and in the Robert Owen research programme. Consequently this will be reported within the outputs of these two pieces of important work.

Educational Attainment of Looked after Children

The Programme Board will receive an update report on the progress of the recommendations contained in the Educational Attainment for Looked after Children Benchmarking Report in February 2015.

Dartington – Improving Children’s Outcomes

The results of the Improving Children’s Outcomes (ICO) research will be used to support and inform the research being carried out by the Robert Owen Centre. In addition the Programme Board will consider other ways in which the ICO research findings can be used to close the gap in attainment across our schools.

Promoting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

The Programme Board will receive reports and updates on the progress of this strategy

Senior Phase

The Programme Board will receive reports and updates on the progress of this work

The Strategic Review of Educational Services

It was anticipated that the Strategic Review of Educational Services would be complete by February 2015. However the complexity of the task and the development of work with research partners (The Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change, Dartington Social Research Unit and the Scottish Government RAFA programme) means that the Review is benefiting from significant evidence based research. The Final Report of the Review is therefore now scheduled for November 2015 to ensure that the research outcomes can inform the Review's outputs and action plan.

Appendices

1. Improvement Charter
2. ICT Infrastructure Strategy
3. Robert Owen Contextual Analysis Report
4. Parenting Paper
5. Aspire Programme paper
6. Educational Attainment of Looked After Children.
7. Improving Children's Outcomes Report
8. Promoting the STEM Agenda in North Ayrshire Schools

IMPROVEMENT CHARTER:

STRATEGIC REVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

WHY

Inequality in our society unduly impacts upon educational outcomes. As a result:

- Too many of our learners don't and won't have the chance to lead the lives they deserve
- A vicious cycle means that the gap between areas of higher deprivation and the rest of the country will continue to grow as long as Educational Outcomes are so closely linked to inequality. This impacts directly upon everyone in North Ayrshire, not just those caught in the vicious cycle

WHAT

Reduce inequality in Educational Outcomes within North Ayrshire whilst continuing to improve Educational Outcomes for all learners.

CHALLENGE

There is a known causal relationship between poverty and Educational Outcome. There is therefore a necessity to address the attainment gap on the basis that Educational Outcomes are a strong determinant of later life chances. By giving our young people the best skills for life, learning and work, a route will be provided through which we can aim to improve social mobility, reduce poverty and enable our young people and communities to reach their potential. Consequently, we can strive to develop our competitiveness and attractiveness as an authority through greater equality. Given the subject matter, even if a better approach can be developed, there will be a significant challenge developing sufficient stakeholder support:

Consequences: We overestimate risk where there are extreme consequences, e.g. the future of our own children.

Proximity: We overestimate risk in close proximity, e.g. this year's intake versus future years or learners in our Community versus Nationally.

Familiarity: We underestimate risk we are familiar with, e.g. the consequence of not changing versus taking an approach which is different to what we have experienced.

GOAL A

To develop a vision and strategy for the delivery of Education in North Ayrshire which will ensure that:

- The inequality that exists, across different groups of learners, is reduced
- Educational Outcomes improve for all learners
- The Community of North Ayrshire maximises value from available resources

GOAL B

To set out how the Council will engage with our communities and build confidence in the Council's vision and strategy, so that it can be realised.

WHAT WOULD SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- The gap in Outcomes between different groups of learners narrowing
- All school leavers going into sustainable positive destinations
- Educational Outcomes improving for all groups of learners
- We have evidence that our investment is delivering the best possible outcome

WHAT WOULD FAILURE LOOK LIKE?

- Educational Outcomes declining for any of our learner groups
- Our learners not having the skills for learning, life and work
- Inequality of Educational Outcomes increasing

“To develop a vision and strategy for the delivery of Education in North Ayrshire which will ensure that: The inequality that exists, across different groups of learners, is reduced. Educational outcomes improve for all learners. The Community of North Ayrshire maximises value from available resources.”



Information Technology Services Education ICT Strategy Education Review Summary Update – November 2014

1. Introduction

North Ayrshire Council, Education & Youth Employment Service, provides education to children and young people in 36 nursery classes, 5 community nurseries, 50 primaries, 9 secondaries and 4 schools for children with additional support needs. This provision includes establishments on the Isle of Arran and Isle of Cumbrae.

There have been many changes in ICT provision in Education over the years, including an increase in the type and number of devices in schools, libraries and community centres, expansion of the network and servers in schools. Significant investment is already being made in the establishment of a new Infrastructure, providing modern Local Area Network (LAN) and Wide Area Network(WAN), and the deployment of Wireless Access in schools, allowing schools to take advantage of new technologies and devices.

To date, the procurement of ICT devices has been dependent on the priorities set by each individual school resulting in a wide variation of types, numbers and ages of devices throughout the service.

To ensure the service continues to meet the needs of schools, and other facilities in the future an Education ICT Strategy was required to ensure the development and use of ICT in schools was imbedded within the curriculum.

1.1 Approach

IT Services conducted a review of the ICT Managed Service in Autumn 2013 and gained significant feedback from all education establishments. Subsequently, consultants XMA were appointed to develop an Education ICT Strategy. The methodology used included the formation of stakeholder groups covering Secondary and Primary Teaching staff, Education & Youth Employment management, school ICT technicians and ICT staff.

2. Current Position

Consultants XMA, have provided a report and the main points and recommendations are as follows;

a) The Council should maintain central control of budget for ICT. Along with decisions for procurement, infrastructure, hardware, training and support being centrally managed and delegated to schools on the basis of an allocation formula, based on for example, pupil numbers or need.

Progress:

Education & Youth Employment have reviewed the funding arrangements for educational establishments and retained a central fund to support an allocation of equipment into all primary schools. This will allow all primary schools to be brought up to an equitable level of resource over the next year. Thereafter, IT, in partnership with Education, will present a case for ongoing funding to support the developments required.

The consultants evaluated 5 Strategic Service Delivery options, ranging from a fully delegated managed service, with the entire responsibility for the provision of the infrastructure, hardware, training and support, to individual schools making decisions regarding procurement and management provisioning of infrastructure, hardware and training. Estimated costs were provided for similar externally managed contracts of between £3.5 and £5.85 million. The consultants recommended (a) above which was the basis of option 3.

The centralisation of funding has already allowed investment in a Council wide Microsoft Campus Agreement, mirroring the successful Corporate Agreement. This will provide standard office software to all devices in schools, the introduction of a home use programme, elearning for teachers and each pupil has the ability to have free access to up to 5 copies of Office 365. There are further advantages in utilising configuration and asset management software licences as part of the agreement.

b) One of the key demands identified from schools and pupils throughout the consultation was that of moving towards mobile tablet devices.**Progress:**

The strategic investment will be to procure mobile devices such as laptops and tablets to integrate more easily with the curriculum requirements and support a more modern future proof education environment.

However, more particularly within Secondary schools where ICT Computer Suites are required, there remains a demand for desktop computers and this will be facilitated. Currently, secondary schools are using existing resources to facilitate a number of upgrades.

The present infrastructure investment is a prerequisite for allowing more flexible learning options, particularly the implementation of Wireless Access in Schools. Progress is also being made to ensure a best practice standard approach to ICT provisioning in schools by modelling any facilities within the Garnock and Largs Campus on schools that have already achieved best practice in this area. Site visits are being arranged to visit schools out-with North Ayrshire that are held in high regard with ICT provisioning and integration with the curriculum.

c) ICT devices should be deployed with a core allocation for each school with equality of access adhered to.

Progress:

All Primary schools have been visited by IT Services and an audit has been undertaken to determine the age and worthiness of the existing ICT assets in schools. This information was used to determine the required baseline provisioning on a core allocation model to ensure equity of allocation at each school. The minimum allocation level agreed at present for each primary school is one laptop per Teaching FTE and one laptop or tablet for every four pupils. Continued investment in modern mobile devices such as tablets will see an increase in the allocation of these types of devices over future years. Furthermore, the current infrastructure renewal and Wireless Access will allow us to investigate the introduction of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) within schools. The provisioning of the technical aspects will allow schools to introduce flexible learning, although consideration on how this will operate at a classroom level will be required. This may reduce the number of devices procured whilst still maintaining or increasing the ratio of devices to pupils.

d) A three to four year refresh period should be built into the strategy, to ensure that a situation does not arise in the future as is currently faced, whereby old, out of date, and in some cases obsolete equipment is found in schools.

Progress:

The centralisation of funding, more effective asset management and continued investment will ensure that this is the case.

e) A review of the existing governance and communication arrangements is required to strengthen existing relationships.

Progress:

An Education/ICT Strategy Review meeting is held quarterly with representation from Heads of Service and senior managers. Furthermore, a Head Teacher/IT meeting is held quarterly, chaired by a Head Teacher. However, these arrangements require to be reviewed to strengthen the governance arrangements and communications between IT Services, Education HQ and schools. It is proposed that 2 groups are set up. A Technology Strategy Group(TSG) to monitor, evaluate and review progress and act as the primary liaison body with the Council, and an Operations Group to ensure implementation within schools and act as a conduit between schools, teaching staff and the TSG

f) CPD for teaching and technical staff should be a core element and provide a clear development pathway for individuals.

Progress:

A number of initiatives are currently being established and include;

- Closer working relationships with secondary ICT Technicians and IT Services, including a training programme to ensure the technicians have up to date skills.
- A comprehensive training programme in the use of ipads for teachers to ensure the devices are being used to their full potential.

g) The Council should continue to operate a centralised procurement system for schools.**Progress:**

All schools have been reminded that procurement of ICT equipment should be done through IT Services.

h) A printer consolidation programme should be established to effectively manage the procurement and management of printers and multi functional devices (MFD).**Progress:**

Schools have an array of printer types and multi-functional devices (MFD's) , many of which are old and not economical to operate. A review will be required to ascertain the availability and usage of printers in schools, with the strategic direction of centralised MFD and network printers in each school. Security access to printing and monitoring should be in line with corporate printing functionality.

Similarly, a review is also underway to identify the age and state of school smartboards. These devices are seen as an integral part of classroom based teaching, however, many are unsupported with no maintenance or support contracts with 3rd party providers. Any replenishment programme will need to fit in with the ongoing update of ICT assets as described in (d) above.



University of Glasgow | Robert Owen Centre
for Educational Change

Contextual Analysis:

North Ayrshire Council

Making Education Work For All

Contact: chris.chapman@glasgow.ac.uk

Table of Contents

Executive summary	3
Introduction to the contextual report	5
Section 1: The North Ayrshire Initiative	6
Making Education Work for All: A model for change and tackling inequality	7
Strand 1 - Analysis of context.....	8
Strand 2 - From analysis to action	8
Section 2: School Profiles	9
School Demographics – the secondary schools.....	9
School roll	9
Deprivation	9
Attendance and exclusions	10
Selected examination performance	11
Initial and follow up school leaver destinations.....	12
All positive leaver destinations	13
Higher Education.....	13
Further Education.....	13
Employment	14
Linked cluster primary schools.....	14
Ardrossan cluster	14
Irvine Royal cluster.....	15
Primary schools deprivation profiles and the move to secondary	16
Summary	16
Section 3: North Ayrshire key themes from Headteacher and teacher discussions	18
Key findings	18
<i>The use of data / evidence in practice</i>	18
Parental engagement	21
Learning and Teaching.....	23
Building leadership capacity	26
Section 4: Key themes and critical reflections	29
Next steps.....	32

Executive summary

North Ayrshire is a Scottish West Coast Local Authority with a population of just over 138,000 people (2.6% of the Scottish population - 2011 census). The authority is geographically, demographically and economically diverse. North Ayrshire contains a number of areas of multiple deprivation. For example, Irvine and the three towns, where the current project is focused, account for 35 of the 46 datazones ranked in the top 15% most deprived of the 2012 SIMD,¹ while Ardrossan Central has been ranked in the top 1-2% most deprived areas in Scotland.

The Robert Owen Centre (ROC) programme - *Making Education Work for All* underpins the current North Ayrshire initiative. *Making Education Work for All* incorporates three interconnected strands of Development & Research activity focusing on 'within-school', 'between-school' and 'beyond-school' improvement for systemic change which promotes more equitable outcomes. The within, between and beyond model is neither short-term or a quick fix, rather it is designed to stimulate deep and sustainable change within schools and across local authorities and ultimately education systems. The work involves two school clusters in Ardrossan and Irvine focusing on the key issues of:

- The use of data / evidence in practice
- Parental engagement
- Learning and Teaching
- Building leadership capacity.

This report provides an analysis of context and raises a number of issues requiring discussion with the Local Authority and school leaders. These issues will be further explored in the in-depth case studies (deep dives) and in further research and development work across the clusters.

Key Findings and issues

The use of data / evidence in practice

- There is variation within and between schools in the extent to which data is used and understood by staff. Some teachers stressed the need for support to engage more critically with the data they collect and with how data can be used to inform improvements.
- There is variation in the uptake and use of pupil transition data at the secondary level.
- Some schools have introduced collaborative enquiry for teaching staff including peer observation and investigation of lessons and whole-school research. However, there is a need for this type of work to become more widespread, systematic and rigorous.

¹ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2012

Parental engagement

- Schools need to rethink how they engage and involve parents in their children's education. Lack of engagement with the school does not necessarily equate with lack of interest or involvement in their child's learning.
- Early years and primary schools appear more able to adapt to involve parents in aspects of their activities and are seen by parents as approachable.
- There is scope for increased community partner involvement with schools to support parental engagement/involvement.

Learning and Teaching

- There is a lot of on-going activity in Learning and Teaching. It is unclear how systematic and coherent this work is in relation to wider knowledge on what works and why for different groups of students.
- Taking risks and experimenting is important in improving teaching and learning and raising attainment. However, teachers can be reluctant to do this for fear of jeopardising attainment targets.
- Early career teachers can offer an important stimulus for creative professional dialogue. However, the profession should not be solely reliant on new practitioners to foster developments in learning and teaching.

Building leadership capacity

- There is evidence of a wide range of leadership opportunities for staff, pupils and parents in the life of their schools. However, the level at which these are consistent and embedded in school planning and systems is less evident.
- Arrangements for cross-school and cluster activity can promote the sharing of leadership strategies and approaches including ways to articulate these with other aspects of school improvement. The Local Authority has a key role to play in supporting senior management in their efforts to promote leadership capacity.

Next steps

The ROC team will work with the Local Authority to design, support and monitor the development of tailored interventions designed to tackle inequalities within, between and beyond schools and monitor developments.

Specifically the next phase of the project entails:

- Discussion and feedback on the key questions with senior education officers.
- Undertaking a school staff survey in each school to explore staff perceptions of the four key areas; leadership opportunities, teaching and learning, parental engagement and use of data. In addition the survey will explore the extent to which developments in these areas take place within, between, and beyond schools. Findings from the survey will contribute to our understanding of the capacity for change within the schools in the Ardrossan and Irvine Royal clusters.
- Conducting 'deep dives' – to gain a deeper understanding of the context and prepare a collaborative plan for action.

North Ayrshire Contextual report

Introduction to the contextual report

This report primarily addresses Strand 1 of the current Robert Owen Centre North Ayrshire Initiative by providing an analysis of context and raises a number of issues requiring discussion with the Local Authority and school leaders. These issues will be further explored in the 'deep dives' and further research and development work across the clusters.

Quantitative data analysis will be focused at school level rather than geographic information since the schools will form the unit of analysis and development for the later in depth case studies - 'deep dives'. In addition, the report also builds on a number of interviews carried out by the seconded headteacher to the project with the support of the research team. The document is divided into four sections.

Section 1 - introduces North Ayrshire and provides background information on the current ROC initiative.

Section 2 - profiles the Ardrossan and Irvine Royal school clusters and makes a number of comparisons with the Authority and National figures. This section will be expanded with the inclusion of additional material, requested of the authority, but first requiring a data sharing agreement to be concluded between the University and the Authority.

Section 3 - provides an overview of the interviews and focus groups conducted with Ardrossan and Irvine Royal school cluster headteachers and teaching staff. These interviews were conducted to explore local responses to authority priorities and issues identified in the literature as important factors in school improvement.

Section 4 - pulls together the evidence from the sections 1 and 2 of the report to inform the development of Strand 2 - *From analysis to action*. This strand will design, support and monitor the development of tailored interventions designed to tackle inequalities within, between and beyond schools and monitor development.

Section 1: The North Ayrshire Initiative

North Ayrshire is a Scottish West Coast Local Authority with a population of just over 138,000 people (2.6% of the Scottish population - 2011 census). The authority is geographically, demographically and economically diverse. It is responsible for a number of islands including Arran and the Cumbrae isles, as well as towns including; Irvine, Ardrossan, Beith, Dalry, Kilwinning, Largs and West Kilbride. In addition, much of North Ayrshire is classified as rural with both upland and lowland areas.

North Ayrshire contains a number of areas of multiple deprivation. For example, Irvine and the three towns, where the current project is focused, account for 35 of the 46 datazones ranked in the top 15% most deprived of the 2012 SIMD,² while Ardrossan Central has been ranked in the top 1-2% most deprived areas in Scotland.

This project is the result of dialogue between the Robert Owen Centre (ROC) and representatives of the North Ayrshire Improvement and Innovation Network. The current programme of work is based on the ROC model for educational improvement - ***Making Education Work for All***. This approach incorporates three interconnected strands of Development & Research activity focusing on 'within-school', 'between-school' and 'beyond-school' improvement for systemic change which promotes more equitable outcomes. The approach is underpinned by collaboration across boundaries and the collection and analysis of data to inform action, the impact of which is monitored and then refined as necessary. This model is neither short-term or a quick fix, rather it is designed to stimulate deep and sustainable change within schools and across local authorities and ultimately education systems. The work involves two school clusters in Ardrossan and Irvine focusing on the key issues of:

- The use of data / evidence in practice
- Parental engagement
- Learning and Teaching
- Building leadership capacity.

The proposed model for collaborative action and change is in line with Key Principles of North Ayrshire Council as set out in the **Council Plan for 2012, p.6** which stresses the need for making new connections, innovative thinking, inclusive approaches, building the resilience and capacity of communities and promoting and sharing excellence.

² Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2012

Making Education Work for All: A model for change and tackling inequality

The Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change (ROC) has developed an innovative research-based methodology to better understand and tackle the relationship between low educational attainment and socio-economic disadvantage. The process involves undertaking a detailed analysis of context and then drawing on expertise located within the Centre, the Local Authority, Schools and their partners to develop bespoke change initiatives which are monitored and refined in light of emerging evidence of impact. The model is underpinned by the development and collaborative relationships and a sustainable partnership approach. The design of the project and methods build on a body of international research that confirms the value of school-to-school networking and cross-authority partnership work as key levers of innovation and system improvement (Fullan 2013).

The approach goes beyond traditional analyses of the factors influencing disadvantage and attainment, to combine research, experimentation and developmental work to more equitable and innovative practices. The model explores the impact and interaction at three key levels: Within-school, Between-schools and Beyond-schools. The focus is on working with Local Authorities to enhance internal arrangements and processes in schools (within-school), their relationships with other schools (between-school) and the wider promoting equity and innovation community (beyond school) to research, develop and refine a range of holistic strategies and practices that make a difference to the outcomes of students from disadvantaged settings.

The development and impact of these approaches will be monitored and evaluated, both internally by practitioners and externally by the University team, using a range of methods to determine more precisely what combinations of strategies e.g. targeted school literacy and numeracy programmes, and practices work (and why) in specific contexts. This will enable the development of an underpinning theory of positive change with robust frameworks and tools to inform policymakers and support practitioners to develop their practice. For example, Local Authority brokering and facilitating, school to school collaboration and intervention of a broader range of services including social work and health services.

This model offers a context-specific approach which is informed by instructive examples of Policy and Practice to generate more equitable outcomes for young people. It achieves this by drawing on the following to stimulate innovation, testing and refining what works and why.

- external knowledge such as published literature, research reports and journal articles
- expertise including researchers, former HMCIE, past CEO of the GTCS and government advisors

This model will be pursued through two main strands:

Strand 1 - Analysis of context (this report) The purpose of this strand of activity is to construct a detailed analysis of the Local Authority context (using a within, between and beyond school perspective). The activity will draw on available sources of data and relevant documentary evidence. This includes statistical analysis which highlights a number of relationships between poverty, deprivation, educational attainment, and post school outcomes within the Local Authority. This work helps to provide an 'official' map of characteristics that can be used in various ways including: (a) identifying priorities for action and informing areas for development (b) stimulating debate and engagement by testing against community perceptions, experiences and beliefs and (c) informing a theory of change.

Strand 2 - From analysis to action The purpose of this strand of activity is to design, support and monitor the development of tailored interventions designed to tackle inequalities within, between and beyond schools and monitor development. This strand of activity will involve a number of elements, which may include:

- *Strategic support for Local Authority capacity building – this will involve identifying the Local Authority's strengths and areas for development*
- *Case studies and accounts of practice – developing detailed pictures of practice within schools which can be used as a stimulus for reflection and discussion on improving practice*
- Support for collaborative action research and knowledge exchange – supporting the development of expertise within schools to undertake research and enquiry projects across networks
- Formative evaluation and testing – evaluation of specific developments, monitoring progress and feeding in recommendations for future developments in real time

Section 2: School Profiles

North Ayrshire is responsible for nine secondary schools, fifty primaries, four ASN schools and five early years centres as well as a range of associated services. The current Robert Own Centre initiative is focused on the Ardrossan Academy and Irvine Royal Academy clusters. Each secondary school cluster includes four linked mainstream primary schools. The profiles presented here focuses on three main areas; school demographics, examination performance, and leaver destinations.

School Demographics – the secondary schools

Table 1 summarises a number of key data for Ardrossan Academy and Irvine Royal Academy. The primary focus here is on school roll, deprivation, attendance absence and exclusions.

Table 1 – School roll, deprivation, attendance and absence (2013/14)

Profiles	Ardrossan Academy	Irvine Royal Academy	North Ayrshire
Roll (2013/2014)	846	555	899
% FME (ranking in authority)	21.6 (3 rd)	31.9 (2 nd)	21.6
% Pupils in 10% worst deprived SIMD data zones (ranking in authority)	27.5 (3 rd)	33.9 (2 nd)	16.2
% Attendance	91.2	89.8	91.7
% Unauthorised absence	4.4	4.2	3.5
% Exclusions	0.06	0.05	0.07

Source: North Ayrshire Council services

School roll

- Ardrossan Academy has a substantially greater pupil roll than Irvine Royal. North Ayrshire's average secondary school roll (899) is above the national figure of 794. Ardrossan's pupil roll (846) is, above the national average, and 94% of the authority average. On the other hand Irvine Royal (555) is substantially below both the national and authority pupil roll figures. In 2013/14, the pupil roll was just under 62% of the authority figure.
- Between 2009/10 and 2013/14, the total secondary school roll in North Ayrshire has fallen by 5.9%. Over the same period, Ardrossan Academy saw a reduction of 7.8% in its pupil roll and Irvine Royal also witnessed a more substantial decrease of 13%. The national pupil roll fell by 5.5% over the period.

Deprivation

- Both schools have relatively high levels of deprivation in comparison to the North Ayrshire figures which in themselves are generally above the national figures. However, it is evident that the figures for Irvine Royal, on both FME and SIMD

measures, indicate a greater proportion of deprivation among the school's pupils compared with those pupils attending Ardrossan Academy.

- The average Free Meal Entitlement (FME) for secondary schools is 15.5% nationally and 21.6% in North Ayrshire. In Irvine Royal just under 32% of pupils are entitled to free meals (the second highest in the authority) while the figure for Ardrossan, is 21.6%, the third highest in the authority.
- Across North Ayrshire 16.2% of pupils live in neighbourhoods classified as the worst SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) deprived 10% of datazones. The comparative figure for both schools is substantially greater than this, with 27.5% of Ardrossan and 33.9% of Irvine Royal pupils living in neighbourhoods classified as the worst SIMD deprived 10% of datazones.
- More generally there is some evidence to suggest that North Ayrshire's share of the nationally most deprived areas has grown in recent years. For example, according to Scottish Government published Local Authority profile³

Of the 325 datazones in the 5% most deprived datazones in Scotland, 12 (3.7%) were found in North Ayrshire in SIMD 2012, compared to 10 (3.1%) in 2009, 9 (2.8%) in 2006 and 6 (1.8%) in 2004.

Attendance and exclusions

- Attendance figures for the authority have remained fairly static over the last five years, 91.5% in 2009/10 and 91.7% in 2013/14⁴. The attendance figures for Ardrossan and Irvine Royal are close to the Authority figures and have also been relatively static in recent years. Ardrossan attendance was 91.1% in 2009/10 and 91.2% in 2013/14. Irvine Royal attendance was 91.7% in 2009/10 and 89.8% in 2013/14.
- As with attendance, North Ayrshire's figures for unauthorised absence has remained relatively static over the last five years and currently stands at 3.5%. Both Ardrossan (4.4%) and Irvine Royal (4.2%) are slightly above the authority figure and again share the authority's static picture of recent years.
- Secondary school exclusion rates within North Ayrshire have fallen in recent years from 0.18% (2009/10) to 0.07% currently. Both Ardrossan Academy and Irvine Royal have recorded a similar drop in exclusions over this period, albeit from a

³ SIMD Local Authority Summary SIMD 2012 – North Ayrshire

⁴ Nationally attendance and absence figures are affected by ongoing differences in recording procedures across local authorities and over time.

higher starting point in the case of Ardrossan (0.23% (2009/10), and a lower one for Irvine Royal (0.11% 2009/10).

Selected examination performance

This section focuses on pupil performance on a selected number of SQA examinations. Table 2 provides a summary profile for the years 2012/13 for each of the secondary schools as well as comparative figures for the authority and Scotland.

Table 2 – Selected Examination performance for Ardrossan Academy and Irvine Royal Academy (2012/13)

Selected Exam performance	Ardrossan Academy	Irvine Royal Academy	North Ayrshire	Scotland
S4 - Standard grades				
% S4 achieving five or more awards at SCQF Level 3 (Foundation)	100	97	98	95
% S4 year group achieving five or more awards at SCQF Level 4 (General)	82	64	79	82
% S4 year group achieving five or more awards at SCQF Level 5 (Credit)	36	10	34	38
S5 – Higher grades				
% of S4 year group from previous year achieving one or more awards at SCQF Level 6 (Higher) or better	34	29	40	48
% of S4 year group from previous year achieving three or more awards at SCQF Level 6 (Higher) or better	19	8	20	28
% of S4 year group from the previous year achieving five or more awards at SCQF Level 6 (Higher) or better	7	4	9	13
S6 – Higher grades				
% of S4 year group from two years previously achieving three or more awards at SCQF Level 6 (Higher) or better	34	17	33	38
% of S4 year group from two years previously achieving five or more awards at SCQF Level 6 (Higher) or better	24	11	23	26
% of S4 year group from two years previously achieving one or more awards at SCQF Level 7 (Advanced Higher)	16	12	14	17

Source: Scottish Schools Online

- In relation to S4 Standard Grades, it is clear that there are differences in the performance of the schools. While the figures for Ardrossan are generally in line with the average for those of the Authority and Scotland, Irvine Royal, beyond Foundation Level, drops off markedly. The Authority figures for Standard Grades are close to the national figures.
- Results for Higher grades generally show a similar difference between the two schools with Ardrossan Academy performing better on average than Irvine Royal.

- At S5 stage, both schools are markedly below the national figures though generally closer to the authority results. North Ayrshire's S5 Higher results are clearly below the national figures
- At the S6 level North Ayrshire's Higher results are closer to the national figures than at the S5 level. Differences between the two schools are marked, with Ardrossan performing better than Irvine Royal, although at SCQF level 7 this difference is much less pronounced.

This leads us to conclude that further analysis is necessary to ascertain the extent to which the attainment patterns in the schools are correlated with levels of deprivation. Moreover, historical analysis would have to be conducted to review attainment patterns over time. The introduction of the new national qualifications presents a short-term challenge to the continuity of longitudinal studies of attainment focused on standard grades. This is not the case with Higher grade qualifications which have not been replaced.

Initial and follow up school leaver destinations

Skills Development Scotland conduct an annual national initial survey of school leavers three months after they have left school (September) and a follow up survey six months later (March of following year). According to the most recent release⁵ ninety percent of school leavers were in positive destinations 9 months after leaving school. This figure was higher than any previously recorded figure. Table 3 details leaver destinations for Ardrossan and Irvine Royal schools for 2013/14.

The majority of positive destinations recorded across Scotland fall into three categories; Higher Education, Further Education and Employment. In 2013/14, these categories accounted for 84.7% of initial destinations and 85.4% of follow up destinations. In North Ayrshire, these three categories accounted for 87.8% of initial and 88% of follow up leaver destinations.

⁵ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/TrendDestinations>

Table 3 - Initial and follow-up Leaver Destinations for Ardrossan Academy and Irvine Royal Academy (2012/2013)

Leaver Destination	Return	Ardrossan Academy	Irvine Royal Academy	North Ayrshire	Scotland
% All Positive Destinations	Initial	92.5	92.5	93.8	91.4
	Follow up	94.4	90.6	91.9	90.0
% Higher Education	Initial	37.0	28.3	35.7	36.5
	Follow up	36.1	28.3	37.3	36.3
% Further Education	Initial	32.2	45.3	36.0	27.8
	Follow up	27.8	43.4	30.1	24.5
% Training	Initial	6.2	3.8	5.1	5.0
	Follow up	4.2	4.7	3.4	3.2
% Employment	Initial	15.8	13.2	16.1	20.4
	Follow up	25.7	14.2	20.6	24.6
% Unemployed, seeking	Initial	6.2	3.8	5.1	7.1
	Follow up	4.2	4.7	6.5	7.9
% Unemployed, not seeking	Initial	1.4	3.8	1.0	1.2
	Follow up	1.4	4.7	1.4	1.7
% Voluntary work	Initial	0.7	0.9	0.7	0.5
	Follow up	-	-	0.4	0.5
% Activity agreements	Initial	0.7	0.9	0.4	1.3
	Follow up	0.7	-	0.2	0.9
% Not known	Initial	-	-	-	0.3
	Follow up	-	-	0.2	0.3
Totals (N=)	Initial	146	106	1,380	52,792
	Follow up	144	106	1,373	52,611

Sources: North Ayrshire Community Planning report June 2014
Scottish Schools online

All positive leaver destinations

- Both initial and follow up figures for all positive destinations in North Ayrshire were above the comparative national figures. The figures for all positive destinations in Ardrossan and Irvine Royal schools were also above the national figures and Ardrossan Academy was also above the Authority figure for the follow up survey. Given the relatively high rates of pupil deprivation present in both schools, this represents an encouraging result.

Higher Education

- North Ayrshire's Higher Education destination figures compare favourably with the national figures. However, while Ardrossan Academy closely matches the Authority and National figures for HE destinations, Irvine Royal is eight percentage points lower. This is likely to reflect the relatively poorer showing on examination performance in Irvine Royal compared to Ardrossan.

Further Education

- Both North Ayrshire and the two secondary schools are above the national figures for Further Education destinations. This is particularly pronounced in the case of Irvine Royal where just under half of the pupils (45.3%) initially entered Further

Education in 2013/14. Looking across the authority we can see that Irvine Royal is the school with the greatest proportion of its pupils going on into Further Education. Moreover, there is also some indication in the figures that these pupils are also more likely to still be in FE six month later in comparison with pupils entering FE from other North Ayrshire secondary schools which exhibit higher levels of drop-out.

Employment

- Employment represents the third most frequently recorded destination for school leavers. At both the National and Authority levels, employment levels rose between the initial and follow up returns. In both instances this represented just over four percentage points. There were also obvious differences between the two schools; while employment destinations for Ardrossan pupils rose by almost 10 percentage points over the period, the figure for Irvine Royal increased by only one percentage point.

Linked cluster primary schools

Each of the two secondary schools has four linked primary schools in its cluster. A review of the available data for these schools suggests marked variation in the characteristics of the linked primaries and the pupils who attend them.

Tables 4a and 4b provide summary statistics for each primary school in the Ardrossan (Table 4a) and Irvine Royal Cluster (Table 4b).

Table 4a – Profile of the Ardrossan Cluster primary schools (2012/13)

Ardrossan Cluster Primaries	Dykesmain PS	Stanley PS	West Kilbride PS	Winton PS	North Ayrshire
Roll	200	421	373	130	195
% FME (ranking in authority)	26.5 (25 th)	33.3 (16 th)	11.3 (42 nd)	46.9 (5 th)	26.8
% Pupils in 10% worst deprived SIMD data zones (ranking in authority)	9.0 (23 rd)	38.5 (9 th)	0.3 (38 th)	57.7 (4 th)	17.7
% Attendance	94.0	94.3	95.8	94.1	94.7
% Unauthorised absence	1.0	1.5	1.2	2.0	1.2
% Exclusions	0.0	0.02	0.0	0.03	0.006

Source – North Ayrshire Council Services

Ardrossan cluster

- While Dykesmain Primary is of average size for the Authority, both Stanley and West Kilbride Primaries have substantially larger pupil rolls. Winton is the smallest school in the cluster.
- There is a marked degree of difference in the levels of deprivation across the four primary schools. Winton primary has one of the highest levels of FME in the

authority while West Kilbride has one of the lowest. This pattern is reproduced in the SIMD data where Winton has just under 58% of its pupils living in a neighbourhood classified as the worst SIMD deprived 10% of datazones. By contrast, less than one percent of pupils attending West Kilbride primary live in such a neighbourhood.

- Attendance levels between the schools is very similar, between 94% and 96%.
- Unauthorised absence levels is also low across all of the schools, between 1% and 2%.
- Exclusion levels for the primaries is again very low, ranging from 0% in the case of West Kilbride to 0.03% for Winton primary.

Table 4b – Profile of the Irvine Royal Cluster primary schools (2013)

Irvine Royal Cluster Primaries	Annick PS	Castlepark PS	Loudoun-Montgomery PS	Woodlands PS	North Ayrshire
Roll	278	349	137	350	195
% FME (ranking in authority)	15.5 (38 th)	48.4 (4 th)	46.0 (6 th)	33.7 (14 th)	26.8
% Pupils in 10% worst deprived SIMD data zones (ranking in authority)	2.5 (32 nd)	28.4 (14 th)	73.0 (2 nd)	32.6 (11 th)	17.7
% Attendance**	94.9	92.7	92.7	93.6	94.7
% Unauthorised absence	0.9	1.7	1.6	1.9	1.2
% Exclusions	0.01	0.05	0.02	0.0	0.006

Irvine Royal cluster

- Annick, Castlepark and Woodlands Primary schools have pupil rolls substantially greater than the Authority average. Loudon Montgomery, on the other hand, is substantially smaller than the Authority average and is the smallest school in the cluster.
- As in the Ardrossan cluster, there is a marked degree of difference in the levels of deprivation across the four primary schools. Castlepark and Loudon Montgomery primaries both have high levels of FME compared with the authority. Only Annick Primary is below the authority figure. This pattern is reproduced in the SIMD data with the exception of Castlepark which, whilst having one of the highest FME figures in the authority, has a relatively low percentage of pupils in the 10% worst deprived SIMD data zone. We would expect explanations for this difference to emerge during the ‘deep dives’.
- Attendance levels between the schools is very similar, between 92% and 95%.

- Unauthorised absence levels is also low across all of the schools, between 0.9% and 1.9%.
- Exclusion levels for the primaries is again very low, ranging from 0% in the case of Woodlands to 0.05% for Castlepark primary.

Primary schools deprivation profiles and the move to secondary

Looking at the profile of Ardrossan and Irvine Royal in terms of the primary schools pupils previously attended we can see that in both secondary schools the linked primary with the lowest levels of deprivation was also the school with the highest proportion of pupils going onto secondary schools out with the catchment area.

West Kilbride primary school, which exhibited the lowest levels of FME and SIMD among the Ardrossan cluster schools, saw only 33% of its pupils in 2014 move onto Ardrossan Academy. The majority (63%) of the school's leavers in 2014 went to Largs Academy.

Similarly, in the Irvine Royal cluster, Annick Primary saw only 24% of its 2014 leavers going onto Irvine Royal Academy. The majority (71%) of its leavers went to Greenwood Academy. Interestingly, the 2014 figures for Annick Primary is markedly different from previous years where much small percentages of leavers had gone on to Irvine Royal. For example, in 2011 only 4% of the pupils went to Irvine Royal, in 2012 it was 9% and in 2013 it was 7%. We would expect the explanation for this, almost four fold increase in pupils from Annick primary moving to Irvine Royal, to emerge during the 'deep dives'.

What is important to note here is that the social mix of pupils in both secondary schools will be impacted as a result of pupils from less deprived neighbourhoods being more likely to move to secondary schools outwith their catchment area. There is some evidence⁶ of the association between school composition and peer effects, which suggests that schools with lower levels of deprivation are more likely to experience; parental support, have fewer disciplinary problems, and retain motivated and talented teachers.

Summary

It is evident from the quantitative analysis that Irvine Royal Academy and Ardrossan Academy clusters share many similarities but also demonstrate important differences. Ardrossan Academy has a substantially greater pupil roll than Irvine Royal. Both secondary schools have relatively high levels of deprivation, compared

⁶ Thrupp, M., Lauder H., and Robinson T. (2002) School composition and peer effects. *International Journal of Education*. Vol 37, Issue 5 pp 483-504

to the authority and national figures, however, Irvine Royal has a greater proportion of pupils either qualifying for free school meals or living in areas of high deprivation. Examination attainment also varies between the schools with Ardrossan's results on Standard and Higher Grade generally above those of Irvine Royal. There is also some difference in leaver destinations with Ardrossan pupils more likely to enter Higher Education and Employment than pupils in Irvine Royal who are more likely to enter Further Education destinations. In fact, Irvine Royal pupils are more likely than pupils in all other secondary schools in the authority to go onto FE. While each secondary is linked to four mainstream primaries there is a clear difference in both the size and levels of deprivation exhibited by each primary. Analysis of the primary profiles suggests that if all P7 pupils went onto their catchment secondary then the deprivation profile of Ardrossan and Irvine Royal would look less challenging. However, in both instances pupils from the primary schools with the lowest levels of deprivation are more likely, than other primary schools in the cluster, to go to secondary schools outwith their zoning area.

Section 3: North Ayrshire key themes from Headteacher and teacher discussions

As part of the research for this contextual report, the Headteacher seconded to the research project conducted interviews with Headteachers at the two secondary schools and Headteachers at the associated primary schools in the Ardrossan Academy cluster and Irvine Royal Academy cluster. In addition, in each of the schools, class teachers were invited to take part in a focus group which responded to a summary of points from the headteacher discussion. Participants' comments were recorded as detailed notes and then thematically analysed using the four key issues that frame the project as the primary analytical structure. These were:

- The use of data / evidence in practice
- Parental engagement
- Learning and Teaching
- Building leadership capacity.

These key areas and related sub topics were devised from the initial scoping and planning meetings between the Local Authority and the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change. These question areas were seen as salient to the strategic plans of the Local Authority and also congruent with important factors in the literature regarding collaborative working for [school improvement]. During the analysis process, other relevant themes were included if they added to the understanding of context and factors influencing change.

Key findings

The use of data / evidence in practice

Within education an increasing number and wide range of data sources have become available to both educational professionals and the general public. These include;

- Establishment inspection reports - Education Scotland
- Examination results - Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).
- The Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy⁷, an annual sample survey of primary and secondary pupils performance in literacy and numeracy
- Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)⁸ run by the OECD.
- Attainment and leaver destinations - Scottish Government.
- Scottish Schools Online⁹ allows access to a range of individual school information including inspection reports, attendance and absence records

It is also accepted that educational professionals should be more than just aware of

⁷ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/Datasets/SSLNTables>

⁸ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/12/4338>

⁹ <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/myschool/findaschool/>

the existence of such data sources but also be familiar enough with them to interpret and use them to develop their practice. Moreover, teachers are increasingly being encouraged to collect their own evidence and engage in reflective action research. As Donaldson noted,

The most successful education systems ...invest in developing their teachers as reflective, accomplished and enquiring professionals who have the capacity to engage fully with the complexities of education and to be key actors in shaping and leading educational change ...if we are to achieve the aspiration of teachers being leaders of educational improvement, they need to develop expertise in using research, inquiry and reflection as part of their daily skill set.

(Donaldson, 2010: p.4)¹⁰

Similarly the GTCS highlights the increasing importance and recognition of practitioner enquiry in Scottish education,

Practitioner enquiry is foregrounded in the new Professional Standards and in Scottish Education policy. Teacher education and what it means to be a teacher in Scotland is being reconceptualised. Teachers being and becoming enquiring practitioners is at the heart of that. Whilst the term 'practitioner enquiry' is not new to the Scottish education system what is now proposed is distinctly different in three key ways:

- *the underpinning principles and aims of practitioner enquiry are stated for the first time*
- *it is envisaged to become an integral aspect of the day-to-day practice of teachers and other education professionals*
- *it is being recognised that for systemic change support is required at all levels of the system.*¹¹

Teachers in the North Ayrshire schools were asked a number of questions about the data they routinely collected and how it was used. Across the schools in both clusters an extensive range of data, information and evidence was collected. Indeed, the schools could be seen as 'data rich' with information used to assess learners' attainment and progress, identify their needs and also to inform school planning and professional dialogue regarding learning and teaching. In particular, data on learners' Literacy and Numeracy progress was scrutinised.

The range, forms of data, and evidence was exemplified in feedback from one of the secondary schools. This school collected and used data including:

- Attendance
- Tracking data – whole school and department
- CAT test results S1 and S4
- BGE transfer information from primary

¹⁰ Donaldson, G. (2010) Teaching Scotland's future. Report of a review of teacher education in Scotland. (Online) (PDF) Available at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/resource/doc/337626/0110852.pdf>

¹¹ The General Teaching Council for Scotland (n.d). Professional Update: Practitioner Enquiry. (Online) Available at: <http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/practitioner-enquiry/practitioner-enquiry.aspx>

- S1 and S4 Learning Needs
- Confidential information on pupil circumstances
- ASN information
- Analysis of tests.

Appropriate data was entered into SEEMIS and shared but some teachers commented on this system's 'inflexibility'.

Teacher accounts highlighted that, overall, the data and evidence available to them did inform their teaching approaches and school planning. For example, in some instances data relating to pupils' learning styles and learning needs were used to help teachers to differentiate lessons to ensure that the needs of learners were met.

Analysing tests allowed teachers to review their own teaching. For example, if most young people get a question wrong in an assessment, then the teacher needs to review how they taught that outcome. In the secondary schools, there were departmental tracking systems on significant aspects of learning (S1-S6), CfE tracking and monitoring – target setting, a whole school tracking system focused on long-term monitoring. Discussion of these data promoted staff dialogue, including Year Heads discussing "broadness versus individualised assessment".

In primary schools data was also used to monitor learners' progress, particularly regarding literacy and numeracy and to inform teachers' practice. In one school, staff evaluated their practice and pupil progress weekly with SMT feedback. Extensive information and data was passed on to secondary colleagues throughout June each session. Some primary staff did indicate that secondary schools either ignored much of this information or did not fully trust it.

Data on parental and pupil views as well as staff opinions was also being collected across schools in the clusters. For example, in one primary school; parents, P4-7 pupils, and teaching and support staff were audited every two years using variations on HMle questionnaires.

Reviewing evidence, data and information appear to inform, to varying degrees, the teaching approach, style, strategies and techniques used by staff in the schools. It also influences the allocation of resources, including ASN teaching and support staff. The grouping of pupils, including arrangements for Setting can also be affected by new information, data and evidence.

Confidential information gave teachers an insight into what is going on in a young person's life and where necessary adjustments can be made to deadlines etc and what approaches were best to support the young person. Data on learners' health issues and disabilities was also maintained and pupils' staged intervention status and the potential involvement of 'outside agencies' was informed by information and data. There were also reports of schools monitoring the needs of ethnic minorities each session to ensure equality in provision.

Headteachers and teachers acknowledged the range of available data but stressed that effective use and analysis of the myriad of available data and evidence required appropriate reflective questioning and had staff development implications. In addition, some teachers stated that they needed to do more to evaluate the impact of their teaching and strategies over the short, medium and long-term including

acquiring evidence regarding 'closing the attainment gap'. Indeed, some accounts highlighted that while a wide range of descriptive data was available from routine sources, more evaluative evidence, such as that regarding the effectiveness of learning and teaching approaches and longer-term impact, was less available. There was evidence that, in response, to this issue, some schools were introducing a level of collaborative enquiry including peer observation and investigation of lessons and whole-school research.

Parental engagement

The centrality of parents to the educational outcomes and life chances of their children has long been established. Longitudinal evaluations such as Perry pre-school project¹², part of the 1960s US *Headstart Programme* established that where parents were involved in their children's education the educational and social gains of their children were likely to be maintained throughout their school career and beyond.

More recently the Scottish Government has noted that¹³,

... engaging with families is crucial to raising attainment and closing the attainment gap. The Scottish Government, Education Scotland and Children in Scotland have worked together to develop a new web-based resource (www.engagingwithfamilies.co.uk) which supports parents, schools and communities access the very latest Scottish, UK and international research evidence on what works to engage vulnerable families. It has a particular focus on engaging with families living in our more deprived communities, as well as engaging with fathers and looked after children.

Indeed research quoted on the *engaging with families website* suggests that parental involvement has a large 'effect size' on pupil achievement¹⁴,

Home has a 60-80% influence on pupil achievement whereas a school has 20-40% influence.

In the North Ayrshire schools there was a high level of activity and wide range of approaches regarding efforts to engage with parents. Some schools reported that parental engagement was a serious challenge with unsuccessful attempts to get a notable proportion of parents "interested in their children's education".

In the secondary schools, parents' evenings, generally had a turnout of between 30-50%. The exception to this were evenings for parents of S1 pupils where there was usually a much higher level of participation. Parents' evenings were used to focus on particular themes such as primary to secondary school transition (including tours of

¹² <http://www.highscope.org/content.asp?contentid=219>

¹³ The Scottish Government. (2014) Raising Educational Attainment: Parental Engagement. (Online) Available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/Raisingeducationalattainment/Parentalengagement>

¹⁴ (www.engagingwithfamilies.co.uk)

the school), S3 choices, and providing information about SQA exams, university and FE subject specialist presentations and career pathways.

Across the schools other opportunities for parental engagement included:

- Sports events
- Seasonal fayres
- Concerts
- After school clubs
- Open days
- School management contacting parents regularly to provide positive feedback
- Parents' information afternoons
- Whole school assemblies and celebrations of achievement etc.
- Weekly local newspaper column family newsletters
- Summaries of overviews of events and successes
- Parent Councils and PTA.

The reported impact of these approaches varied from school to school and even across year groups.

Parents were also involved in helping teachers with excursions. This was mainly in primary schools although some schools reported difficulty in getting sufficient numbers to help. The use of electronic communication such as websites, class chat and twitter were useful tools for schools as part of their parental engagement repertoire.

Report cards were used but varied in quality despite often requiring a lot of effort being put into publishing them. Schools found that feedback from parents indicated that they did not always understand the content of report cards and implications for their child.

Parent councils and associations were found to attract those parents who were already highly motivated regarding school involvement, particularly in the case of parent councils. Those parents who were less confident about being involved with formal school activities could be encouraged to take part in association activity such as fund raising.

All schools reported challenges in consistently engaging with a proportion of parents. However, particular strategies had been found to be effective in getting such parents to engage in some cases. Successful activities to engage with parents included those that provided opportunities for parents to directly discuss their child's progress and issues with teachers. This included drop-in sessions and appointment meetings. Parents were more likely to engage when they saw the relevance of the content to their own child. Home-school visits that included teachers were also very effective as were breakfast clubs for whole families. Where present, the FAST Programme appeared effective particularly when supported by school management and experienced and enthusiastic teachers.

Primary schools also reported success with activities that involved parents to promote their skills such as cookery. Overall, schools reported that it was often

mothers who were more likely to engage with teachers about their child's learning rather than fathers and often it was the same parents who were involved.

Most of the examples provided on parental involvement underlined the passivity of parental engagement with the school, often stressing participation in school routines, fund raising and providing an extra pair of hands and eyes for trips. There were substantially fewer instances where schools highlighted activities which sought to engage parents in their children's learning or actively involved them in contributing to developments in teaching and learning. The following examples provide some evidence of active parental involvement in their children's learning.

Parental workshops and focus groups were occasionally employed to explain particular learning and teaching approaches to parents and enlist their support, for example *'Helping your child to succeed at secondary'*. Such workshops were reported by teachers in some schools as relatively popular compared to parental evenings, yet in other schools, teachers stated that regardless of the time held such approaches appeared to have relatively poor attendance. Again, parents' perceived value and relevance of the event to their children's situation appeared to be a key factor in their participation.

Afternoon story time where the teacher models reading and story follow-up for parents proved very successful in one primary school. Similar activities to address parents' lack of involvement in supporting their children's maths homework for P5/6 had a limited level of involvement. This might reflect parents' relative lack of confidence in maths compared to reading.

When parental involvement/ engagement strategies worked well teachers reported beneficial impact on children's learning, including progress in literacy and reading (with children more engaged with texts, more confident in reading skills) and writing (with the quality of writing improving). From teacher feedback, it appears that parental involvement was more evident in nursery and primary school contexts. This suggests that these contexts are currently more able to flexibly adapt to involve parents in aspects of their activities and are seen by parents as approachable.

Teachers also reported that other key factors in successfully engaging with parents included: having an open door policy and a welcoming ethos; the level of expectations parents had for their children; the expectations school staff have for pupils; school programmes of study; and consistency and staff professional development.

Learning and Teaching

Learning and Teaching must be a key area for any initiative seeking to raise pupil attainment and achievement. As Donaldson notes¹⁵

The revised Professional Standards in 2013 have reinvigorated the approach to 21st century teacher professionalism by intending to "build the capacity of teachers, irrespective of career stage, to have high levels of pedagogical expertise, including deep knowledge of what they

¹⁵ Donaldson, G. (2010) Teaching Scotland's future. Report of a review of teacher education in Scotland. (Online) (PDF) Available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/resource/doc/337626/0110852.pdf>

are teaching; to be self-evaluative; to be able to work in partnership with other professionals; and to engage directly with well-researched innovation.

(Donaldson, 2010: p.19)

The development and implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence* is regarded by many as crucial in any attempt to both raise attainment and improve educational outcomes for pupils from a wide range of backgrounds. The Scottish Government's Consultation on the Next Generation of National Qualifications¹⁶ (2008) indicated that,

while many of our young people perform well in school and beyond, too many do not develop sufficiently the competences, capabilities and values which are vital for the future success and well-being both of themselves and Scotland as a whole.

The report went on to indicate that the new curriculum was both timely and necessary in encouraging learning and teaching of the highest quality.

Interviews in North Ayrshire revealed a variety of reported developments and issues regarding the schools' Learning and Teaching approaches and strategies. There were also reports, particularly in secondary schools, of the pressure to perform regarding attainment and that influenced the extent to which some teachers were comfortable about taking risks in Learning and Teaching.

Staff development and practitioner evaluation were seen as key factors in promoting effective Learning and Teaching with learning visits and peer observation increasingly being adopted. Feedback also indicated that secondary teachers were:

- Moving away from textbooks and photocopies to more appropriate and active methods
- Receiving critical skills training and more in house CPD
- Conducting peer observation programmes to develop innovative approaches to learning and teaching
- Significantly using technology in more appropriate ways
- Using learning tasks, development skills and more pupil presentations
- Improving differentiation in teaching across departments
- Improving moderation
- Facilitating greater involvement of learners in discussions about learning and teaching.

The project's deep dives will allow the research team to establish the frequency and nature of such approaches.

In some cases, changes in staff had allowed Learning and Teaching developments to address competency issues. Staff turnover and new staff, including entrants from university have also led to "fresher approach...more willing to take risks in Teaching and Learning strategies". Often, teachers stressed that relationships, ethos and the whole school culture were key factors in permitting and fostering improvements in Learning and Teaching.

¹⁶ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/06/09084232/5>

In the primary schools, some key areas of Learning and Teaching, especially in literacy, numeracy and sciences were progressing. However, this progress was also seen as uneven as a range of factors including time pressure limited revisiting and consolidating areas. Substantial success was reported in some schools through increased professional dialogue between teachers, improved monitoring of learning and teaching and the whole school teaching and learning environment and approaches being addressed to ensure that children were more actively engaged and motivated. In addition, there were reports of teachers having been trained in a Critical Skills approach and having implemented it in their classroom practice. Elsewhere, this was reported as being an area that needed attention.

Teachers also highlighted need for clear goals, success criteria, and paths of action, evaluation and consistency of approaches. Key Learning and Teaching developments in primary schools were reported as including:

- Greater variety in methods throughout schools including independent and active learning
- Introducing 'shiny boards' in infants
- More group work
- Introducing critical skills challenges
- Better use of ICT and more effective use of technology to motivate children
- Learning outdoors, for example taking maths / language outside
- Integrated learning in p4-7
- Topic work (ids contexts)
- Greater range of resources
- Use of effective assessment and assessment is for learning being better embedded in learning
- Children involvement in planning
- Teachers' self-evaluation improving
- Improved interpretation of CfE.

In one primary school, there had been an overhaul of the timing of school day and approaches. For example:

Early Years has seen the introduction of an active approach that mirrors nursery with P1, 2, 3 having a 'soft start' at 8:50am, independent start – self regulation etc, Shiny board activities. Choice of 6, told about previous day personalisation and choice. Then at 9:20am teaching groups. Literacy (letter and sounds) and Numeracy (playtime). Reading group smaller groups intensive direct teaching. Afternoon sees used of Shiny board throughout the day.

P4/5 open area. Focus on STEM from transition from P3-4 – it used to be more sedentary – that has changed. Challenges in music and drama. IT is now integrated in classes [with an] IT suite now in music and drama room. PE is also successful now- teacher specialist.

Primary school in the Ardrossan cluster

Such approaches and developments were reported as making learning more interesting and relevant for pupils who were more responsive with a resulting improvement in learning. In some primary schools, teachers reported progress in

literacy and reading with children now more engaged with texts, more confident in reading skills. Progress was also reported in writing with the quality of writing improving. Science was also reported as receiving attention with increased awareness of science throughout the curriculum.

However, in some schools there was less progress reported in the same areas and approaches that focused on child-led activities and also behaviour. Teachers highlighted the need for more and improved CPD regarding: Learning and Teaching (including training for critical skills); tracking; better ways of recording assessments and raising standards and use of data. New teachers entering the profession were seen as bringing new knowledge, skills and approaches, including self-evaluation that were positively impacting on Learning and Teaching.

Building leadership capacity

Building leadership capacity within Scottish education has become increasingly important in both national and local government policy agendas in recent years. The enactment of *Teaching Scotland's Future*¹⁷, has resulted in the development of a new model of career-long professional learning for teachers. This has placed increased importance on professional enquiry and monitoring the impact of professional learning on pupils' experiences, progress and achievements. In addition the Scottish College for Educational Leadership is in the process of developing its fellowship programme¹⁸ which is designed to

... provide advanced development opportunities for senior level leaders in schools and early years centres. Its design principles are underpinned by the model of professional learning that integrates reflection on practice, cognitive development, experiential learning and collaborative learning. Through the programme participants will be able to extend their professional learning and widen their leadership experience while taking forward an aspect of policy development that enables them to engage with policy formation and implementation at local, national and international levels.

SCEL 2014

Equally Curriculum for Excellence¹⁹ clearly recognises the importance of developing leadership skills in our young people. For example, Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work²⁰ states

Working with others in a wide range of settings can also help young people to develop leadership skills which will become increasingly important to them as they move through their school years and beyond compulsory education into lifelong learning and adulthood. They will need to understand that everyone can develop leadership skills, which can be used across learning, life and work settings.

¹⁷ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/01/13092132/0>

¹⁸ <http://www.scelscotland.org.uk/leadershipdevelopment/fellowshipprogramme.asp>

¹⁹ <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence>

²⁰ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/10/16155220/7>

From the interviews in the schools in the Ardrossan and Irvine Royal clusters, a range of measures were evident across the two clusters to promote the leadership of staff and learners. However, the level at which these are consistent and embedded in school planning and systems is less evident.

In the secondary schools, one secondary headteacher noted that more work was required to build greater pupil leadership. One idea was to explore school led leadership academies. Currently, senior pupils deliver assemblies and lead committees. Particular successes included a 4th year eco-committee, the pupil council, prefects, sports captains and accreditation of leadership.

In this school, staff leadership was evidenced by short and long-term working parties that included non-promoted staff, faculty heads delivering parents' evening and office staff being involved as mentors for young carers.

The importance of a clear vision, values and direction of travel were emphasised as was providing role models. Staff development has included a focus on a 'Growth Mindset' approach with non-teaching staff also choosing to become involved. The Local Authority was reported to offering opportunities for staff leadership development.

In the other secondary school, pupils were involved in councils, supported by appropriate training and involved in leadership opportunities within the classroom and in assemblies. School champions were also used. Staff leadership activity included staff being involved in producing personal development bulletins, collegiate nights, developing work streams and again, involvement in setting school vision and values. The PRD system also included a strong focus on developing leadership.

Across the primary schools, there was a wide range of measures to promote leadership. Some schools noted that leadership had changed considerably as their management structures had altered. For example, where there was no longer a DHT, then staff were taking up opportunities to lead. Pairing up staff to capitalise on their strengths was seen as an effective strategy. Such measures were found to promote collegiality and this was seen as evident in meetings with dialogue being more focused and educational.

In the primary schools, there were again a wide range of leadership opportunities. While teachers stressed the need for providing leadership opportunities a strong theme included the need for developing an ethos of 'responsibility of all' with all staff (including non-teaching and those at Local Authority level), pupils and parents being aware of and understanding their role and responsibilities and that of others. Such teachers saw this as part of a vision of building their community and identity.

Particular examples of leadership at all levels reported across the primary schools included:

Staff

- Working groups led by staff, including focus on curricular areas
- Identifying candidates to be encouraged to go for management posts
- Facilitating decision-making responsibilities for staff
- giving staff roles in consulting with parents - involving them in decision making

- Kitchen staff led and organised coffee for Cancer research
- Classroom assistants involved in aspects of strength e.g. display, Eco, IT
- Janitor and class assistants in learning reviewing where appropriate

Pupils

- Pupil councils, committees, eco school groups etc - child-led but staff supported
- Pupils leading their own learning
- Providing pupils with choice over how and what they learn
- Children leading, for example in Critical Skill challenges
- P7 buddies and guides around the school, e.g. induction in P1 new starts
- School house captains vice captains
- Pupils involved in running clubs e.g. at lunchtime
- Trained peer mediators in playground (P6 liaising with P7 monitors)
- Children organising fundraising
- Leading assemblies
- School monitors
- Role in fitness clubs
- Critical skills tasks take on leading roles – P6 scientists of the week
- Personal research tasks
- Class helpers.

Parents and ex-pupils

- Homework partners
- Classroom helpers
- Assisting with after school clubs and sports
- Play leaders
- Discussing and informing school policies as part of a school councils and associations.

It is clear that across the two school clusters there is evidence of leadership opportunities for staff, pupils and even parents in the life of their schools. However, the level at which these are consistently embedded in school planning and systems is less evident. It is arguable that greater cross school and cluster discussion and partnership could promote the sharing of leadership strategies and approaches including ways to articulate these with other aspects of school improvement.

Section 4: Key themes and critical reflections

This section summarises the key themes and critical reflections which emerged from the staff interviews and discussions and, for each of the four key areas, suggests questions for further exploration during the next phase of the initiative. The section concludes with Next Steps.

Table 5 – The use of data/evidence in practice

The use of data/evidence in practice		
Key theme	Critical reflection	Further questions
Primary and secondary schools are 'data rich' and staff were generally aware of this. Informants regularly spoke of accessing information on deprivation, learner attainment, progress, planning and professional dialogue grounded in specific sources of information. Teacher accounts often highlighted that data and evidence informed their teaching approaches, school planning and the allocation of resources.	There is variation within and between schools in the extent to which data is used and understood by staff. Some teachers stressed the need for support to engage more critically with the data they collect and with how data can be used to inform improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data sources do schools use? • How often and for what purposes? • How useful are these data sources? • What additional information is required? • What support is needed to help staff engage more effectively and critically with their data to inform improvement efforts?
There is evidence of primary schools passing on information on pupil progress and achievement to secondary colleagues particularly during June of each year.	There is variation in the uptake and use of pupil transition data at the secondary level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data/information is being passed on to secondary schools? • How is this being used/not used? What is required to increase the use/usefulness of this information?
Information from parents, pupils, and staff is collected across schools in the clusters.	The quantity and quality of this material is varied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data is being collected and from whom? • How is this data collected? • Are the best data collection methods being used? • How is this data being used to inform decisions?
Staff in both primary and secondary schools acknowledge the range of available data but stressed that effective use of data required appropriate staff development.	There is a need for staff to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of different data sources and data collection methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What staff development is required to improve staff use of data? • How could this staff development be best delivered?
Staff acknowledge a need to better evaluate the impact of their teaching in student learning and progress, specifically in relation to 'closing the attainment gap'.	There is a need for staff to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of different data sources and data collection methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are staff currently evaluating the impact of their practice? • How could this be improved? • What are the key messages in relation to evaluating initiatives to reduce inequity?
There was indication of some schools introducing collaborative enquiry including peer observation and investigation of lessons and whole-school research.	There is a need for this type of work to become more widespread, systematic and rigorous.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the nature of this work? How common is it? How is it used? • What scope is there for more collaborative, peer research – what support would be needed for this?

Table 6 – Parental engagement

Parental engagement		
Key theme	Critical reflection	Further questions
Schools have a lot of experience in attempting to engage with parents. Some schools reported that parental engagement was a serious challenge and indicated that it was difficult to get a significant proportion of parents engaged with the school or involved with their child's learning.	Schools need to rethink how they engage and involve parents in their children's education. Lack of engagement with the school does not necessarily equate with lack of interest or involvement in their child's learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the nature of parental engagement/ involvement? • What do schools and parents regard as successful engagement/ involvement? • What strategies will build meaningful home-school partnerships?
Parent councils and associations generally attracted those parents who were already highly motivated regarding school involvement.	There is a need to engage with a wider audience of parents/carers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What groups of parents are schools engaging? • What groups of parents are not being engaged? • How might schools engage a wider cross section of their parent/carer population?
Staff report that parents appear more reticent about helping with their child's learning when it concerns maths and numeracy compared to literacy and reading.	Staff generally view parents as having better literacy than numeracy skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What numerical programmes are schools offering to help parents better understand the curriculum and their educative role? • What additional support for parents is required?
When parental involvement/ engagement strategies worked well, teachers reported beneficial impact on children's learning, including progress in literacy and reading.	Development time on parental engagement/involvement appears worthwhile for pupil learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do teachers offer up as successful parental engagement programmes that impact on pupil learning? • How do they measure this impact? • How could this knowledge be shared across the schools and authority?
Staff suggested that parental engagement/ involvement was more evident in nursery and primary schools.	Early years and primary schools appear more able to adapt to involve parents in aspects of their activities and are seen by parents as approachable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can secondary schools best capitalise on early years and primary parental engagement experience? • How could secondary parental engagement programmes reflect the growing maturity and independence of pupils?
There was little evidence of secondary schools drawing on wider community experience or partner organisations to support parental involvement/engagement.	There is scope for increased community partner involvement with schools to support parental engagement/involvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who do schools identify as key partners in engaging with parents? • What scope is there for increasing the use of community partners to engage with parents? • How might secondary schools redefine their relationship with parents/carers?

Table 7 - Learning and Teaching

Learning and Teaching		
Key theme	Critical response	Further questions
Schools use a wide range of approaches and strategies to Learning and Teaching.	There is a lot of on-going activity in Learning and Teaching. It is unclear how systematic and coherent this work is in relation to wider knowledge on what works and why for different groups of students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we know which strategies are effective? • How coherent is this work with the school curriculum? • How well do developments reflect the particular needs of pupils in the school?
There is a tension between delivering on a school improvement agenda to raise levels of attainment and developing innovative approaches that require staff to take risks.	Taking risks and experimenting is important in improving teaching and learning and raising attainment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are teachers risk averse? • How do we develop a risk taking culture in schools where raising attainment is an urgent priority? • What support is required to encourage schools to foster a culture of innovation?
Staff development and practitioner evaluation are key factors in promoting effective Learning and Teaching. Some teachers reported that learning visits and peer observations were part of their professional routines.	Opportunities for systematic professional learning should be a priority for school improvement in North Ayrshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are current teacher networks able to support increased collaborative working? • What is required to increase collaborative learning and the sharing of good practice?
Teachers highlighted the need for more and improved CPD regarding: Learning and Teaching (including training for critical skills); tracking; better ways of recording assessments and raising standards and use of data.	There is demand for an increased focus on developing classroom practice that meets the needs of all learners and assessing and supporting student progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the specific CPD requirements in each of the clusters? • How can these requirements be met? • What resources and on-going support is needed to improve teaching and learning in these settings?
New teachers entering the profession are seen to bring new knowledge, enthusiasm, skills and approaches, (including methods of self-evaluation) that were positively impacting on Learning and Teaching.	The profession should not be reliant on new practitioners to foster developments in learning and teaching. However, early career teachers can offer an important stimulus for creative professional dialogue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do schools maximise the impact of early career teachers? • What conditions optimise the contribution that early career teachers can make to whole school improvement? • What other methods of acquiring new knowledge, skills and approaches are available to schools and how can these be accessed?

Table 8 – Building leadership capacity

Building leadership capacity		
Key themes	Critical response	Further questions
Across the two school clusters there is evidence of a wide range of leadership opportunities for staff, pupils and parents in the life of their schools.	The level at which these are consistent and embedded in school planning and systems is less evident.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How systematic are leadership opportunities across schools and clusters? • How can schools better share practice on leadership developments?
Schools promote leadership in a range of different ways.	Arrangements for cross-school and cluster activity can promote the sharing of leadership strategies and approaches including ways to articulate these with other aspects of school improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the Local Authority support leadership development at all levels? • To what extent is the school ethos and culture important in facilitating leadership?
Parental leadership roles are underdeveloped in schools.	There is an opportunity to draw on this important resource.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can schools best develop the leadership potential of parents to support student experience and outcomes?
Schools in one cluster have a more developed Headteacher network than in the other.	Given the challenges faced by schools all headteachers will benefit from support from their peers and the authority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is required to develop the support networks in both clusters? • What strategies do headteachers feel would be effective in maximising their leadership potential?

The above tables summarise the emerging themes, offer a critical reflection on those themes and pose a number of key questions for exploration in the ‘deep dives’. These questions will frame the data collection and provide a focus for intervention during the next stages of the initiative. We propose the following next steps:

Next steps

- Discussion and feedback on the key questions with senior education officers.
- Undertake a school staff survey in each school to explore staff perceptions of the four key areas; leadership opportunities, teaching and learning, parental engagement and use of data. In addition the survey will explore the extent to which developments in these areas take place within, between, and beyond schools. Findings from the survey will contribute to our understanding of the capacity for change within the schools in the Ardrossan and Irvine Royal clusters.
- Define, negotiate and agree working arrangements with seconded HT and
- Undertake “deep dives” – to gain a deeper understanding of the context and prepare a collaborative plan for action.

Strategic Review of Educational Services

Discussion Paper

North Ayrshire Parenting Programmes

Introduction

The Strategic Review of Educational Services (SRES) has been set up to reduce inequality in educational outcomes within North Ayrshire whilst improving educational outcomes for all learners. The Programme Board has been considering the impact of parental engagement on the attainment of young people. This is a particular focus of the research being carried out by the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change which is currently carrying out an early stage contextual analysis of the parental engagement programmes within the Ardrossan school cluster.

The Programme Board is keen to harvest the learning from the existing parenting programmes currently delivered by Education and Youth Employment and Health and Social Care across North Ayrshire. This discussion paper highlights the current parenting programmes and projects, the learning arising from each of them, and poses some questions for consideration by the SRES Programme Board.

Parenting Programmes

The Solihull Approach

This is North Ayrshire's foundation approach for all families with children under five years. The Solihull Approach has been rolled out to staff, parents, child minders, carers and partner nurseries. It is now being piloted in one primary school and with parents of young school children.

Parents Early Education Partnership (PEEP)

This is an evidenced based programme to support babies and children's learning and development and is a universal programme designed for all parents and carers. There is a specialist programme for those families who require more in-depth support due to e.g. child protection or addiction issues. SQA accreditation will soon be offered to parents to record their learning.

Mellow Parenting

This is a new 14 week intensive parenting programme which is effective in improving mother child interaction and child behaviour. It is aimed at those families with children under five years who require more in-depth support due to e.g. child protection or addiction issues. This is currently only available in some parts of the authority with plans being made to roll it out across North Ayrshire.

ABC Handling Children's Behaviour

This is a course delivered by nursery, health and social service staff to assist parents in dealing with difficult behaviour

FAST (Families and Schools Together)

This is an award winning programme run across Scottish Schools by Save the Children. It aims to support parents over a series of eight weekly sessions, to improve their child's learning and development. The programme works with family groups and includes the preparation and sharing of meals together. Parent participants are approached by Head Teachers and Health Start Officers.

The Healthy Start Initiative

This programme supports the health and wellbeing agenda for primary school age children and their families with five Healthy Start Officers working across primary and special schools. Currently most active in 14 of our most vulnerable areas and providing one hour play sessions and lunches for children (and their families) during school holidays.

Travellers Programme

This programme increases awareness of the importance of play amongst travelling children and their families who may not engage with school based education. This programme involves the Play Ranger and the Early Years and Family Support Officer acting on site with the travelling families.

Literacy programmes

Story Carousel and Book Bug are examples of programmes delivered within early years centres, primary schools and local libraries which encourage parents and children to explore books and story led play. This is a universal service that can also act as a gateway for parents to access other programmes and projects.

Learning Emerging from Parenting Programmes

1. Programmes like the Solihull Approach currently focus on the early years. It is recognised that the support that parents require in early years is also required in the Primary and Secondary school stages of a child's development. Consistency in approach is preferable and beneficial for staff, parents and children.
2. Accreditation for parents' learning may be a route to incentivising a parent's engagement with a programme since many parents are challenged by the need to evidence job searching whilst dealing with parenting or care giving challenges.
3. Programmes which involve both the parent and the child make the initial engagement easier – dispersing anxiety for the parent.
4. Lifestyle changes like parental employment and the child's maturity mean that parents have less time or are less inclined to be "present" in the school building. Programmes work best when they are arranged to take account of parental choice in timing and venue.
5. Staff awareness of other services and programmes, and referral or access routes, is really important in ensuring that parents get the support they need at the right time. Staff training and work shadowing in other services has been shown to be very effective in developing this knowledge.

Parenting Projects

Asset Based Community Development Project

This project consulted with parents in Castlepark and Ardrossan and focussed on healthy eating and baby and child first aid training. The project also assisted with speech and language development

through its “Learning Language and Loving It” programme.

Stop Now and Plan

This is a schools based programme involving parents as part of a multi-disciplinary team in behavioural interventions to keep “at risk” children in mainstream school. It focusses on primary school children and supports transitions into S1.

Integrated Early Years Centres

There are 5 EY Centres in North Ayrshire which have been developed as hubs for work with children, families and the surrounding community to reduce the isolation experienced by vulnerable families and connect them to the wider community. Education, social work and Money Matters staff support this integrated approach.

Capacity Building with Parents

The project aims to increase engagement with parents by providing information and advice and training for parents to be parent support volunteers. The project funds 2 full time speech and language therapists to focus on communication in early years. The project also works in partnership with Parent Network Scotland to deliver the Parenting Matters Course. So far 88 parents have completed the programme. Six parents work as parent-link volunteers in the community

PIP (Play Information Project)

This project involves both parents and children in the exploration of play, the benefits of play and how to play. It is run over a variety of settings including early years centres, primary schools and community halls. There is a specialist tailored PIP aimed at those families supported by Addictions Services.

Appiness

This project offers a programme of digital learning to stimulate the development of literacy and communication and build the capacity of parents to positively engage with digital tools as an asset through which they can engage with and develop their child’s education. This project often leads parents to further engagement with other projects and programmes.

Play and Capacity Building Officers

They support and build the capacity of parents and community groups to develop facilities, projects and activities that meet local needs and are community led.

Learning Emerging from Parenting Projects

1. Parent consultation and establishing a parent-led approach, leading to individualised outcomes, are crucial in the delivery of a parenting project.
2. An asset based approach works, drawing on parents’ own skills sets, gifts and talents.
3. The relationship between staff and parents is the key to success in any project. The time limited nature of projects can force an unnatural pace in the development of relationships, as can the pressure to sustain funding.

4. Using a community connections model working with parents as a conduit to engagement with other parents, works.

Some Issues for Discussion

1. Relationships are the key to successful engagement. The skill set of person who is leading the engagement with the parents really matters. Often teachers' own experience of being a parent or being 'parented' will influence their engagement with other parents. How can we manage this within a school setting?
2. Ease of access for parents is an important way to incentivise engagement. How ready are schools to consider parental engagement outwith the school setting and at unconventional times e.g. weekends at the local shopping centre?
3. How can we achieve reciprocity in the traditional school parental engagement process? Dealing with parental concerns and providing support for them as a starting point, has been shown to work as a route into enabling discussions around the school's concerns with a child.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**Education and Youth Employment****Scoping paper**

Subject: Immersive arts initiative based on the Dundee “Aspire” model

Purpose: To scope out a possible immersive model of practice in arts education for North Ayrshire.

1. Introduction

Background

Dundee City Council has developed the **ASPIRE** programme to support 9 of its primary schools to work with artists , musicians, dancers and other professionals in the creative industries.

The aim of this immersive programme is part of Dundee’s commitment to tackling the issue of disadvantage and lack of aspiration within some of its most deprived communities.

The pilot programme was launched in late 2013.

What is involved?

The young people involved are

- Working closely with professional artists
- Attending professional events and performances
- Participating in local events
- Exposed to the full range of the arts through a personal and flexible approach
- Working both within school and the wider community

How does it operate in Dundee?

Dundee's model is based on having specialist hub schools, focusing particularly on one specific aspect of the arts. There are 9 schools involved in total:

4 are Music schools
3 are Dance schools
2 are Drama schools

Funding the programme

Funding has been put in place for the first two years of the programme. Dundee City's financial commitment is £50,000 with additional funding coming from:

- Creative Scotland,
- Youth Music Initiative Scottish Government
- Legacy 2014 funding
- Dundee City

Dundee City is currently in discussions with Big Lottery 21st Century Life Funding to extend the programme till 2016/2017.

For North Ayrshire, the funding implications would be significant, but dependent on the model of delivery developed. The Dundee model would be a realistic comparator and similar partnership funding would have to be sought.

Update

Current programmes in Music, Drama and Dance are proving to be extremely successful and their impact is clear to those who are delivering in these early stages. The first update on progress and impact will be the subject of a survey and evaluation in early 2015.

North Ayrshire

A possible project of this nature in North Ayrshire schools would resonate with our aims in relation to the "Raising attainment for all" agenda and the Education Department's commitment to closing the gap between the most disadvantaged young people and those from more affluent backgrounds.

Creativity

The link between creativity and attainment is well recorded and involvement by young people in projects of this nature, while often hard to measure with hard data in terms of their impact, is undoubtedly of huge benefit to learners. While creativity across learning is

a lynchpin of the curriculum for excellence, direct opportunities for creativity and participation in the arts can empower young people in a range of different ways.

- Increasing confidence levels
- Increasing self-belief and self esteem
- Enabling collaboration with others

Providing opportunities for Invaluable social interactions as well as the development of invaluable creativity thinking skills including:-

- Being constructively inquisitive
- Being open minded
- Being able to harness imagination
- Being able to identify and solve problems

When Aspire was being developed by Dundee City, best practice in North Ayrshire was recognised by their Education Department and advice sought from our own Music Service about some of the programmes of work being implemented in our council. This is our obvious starting point. In North Ayrshire a number of initial ideas have been discussed:

- A pilot programme with two schools
- Utilising the skills of our existing arts staff in secondary schools
- Working with local professionals, theatre groups and dance companies
- Seconding a member of staff one day a week, or increasing the time allocation to our existing music service manager. This would allow us to take the programme forward and develop a bespoke model of practice for North Ayrshire schools.
- Making the work of our existing Music Service our starting point
- Working in partnership with colleagues in Community and Culture
- Utilising underused community resources and venues
- Working closely with partners in Health
- Working closely with CLD and communities

1. Current Position

The following schools currently have music provision funded through YMI

String Class Project - 4 schools (Pennyburn, Springside, Glencairn and Whitehirst Park)

Soundstart bands - 14 schools - (Ardeer, Blacklands, Castlepark, Cumbrae, Dreghorn, Glengarnock, Hayocks, Loudoun Montgomery, Moorpark, Skelmorlie, St Bridget's, Stanley, West Kilbride, Winton)

These are highly successful projects and have been extremely well received by schools and practitioners.

A formal evaluation is now being undertaken to show the impact that these projects have had in the past 18 months. All projects are delivered by tutors funded exclusively by YMI.

After discussion with key stakeholders, it is felt that it would be wrong to take any of this provision away, but by August 2015, we would anticipate that some adjustments to the current programmes could be made, and some hours could be given to our North Ayrshire Aspire model.

Both Drama and Dance are delivered through the curriculum, with variable success. In primary schools it is very much dependant on the skills and enthusiasm of practitioners. There are opportunities to further develop these areas of expressive arts utilising current facilities, staff expertise and available equipment through partnership working with secondary schools.

Most schools offer opportunities for learners to perform through school shows, concerts and performances of understanding.

2. Proposals

We would initially seek funding to roll out an immersive programme in two of our primary schools in the new session (2015 -2016). An additional 2 schools would be added in the spring term (2015). In year 2, we would add a fifth and sixth school.

August 2015 - December 2015 - Ardeer and Loudon Montgomery

January 2016 - June 2016 - Blacklands and Winton added to the programme

August 2016 - June 2017 - Hayocks and Castlepark added to the programme

These schools have been selected as the data we hold shows that they are situated within the lowest SIMD areas in North Ayrshire, with the learners attending these schools constituting some of the most deprived of our young people across the local authority.

Funding would be sought into year 3 of the programme, as we believe a North Ayrshire model could include an immersive arts programme in one of our secondaries.

Although the budgets include staffing measured as FTE equivalents, the main thrust of the model in Dundee is based on commissioning the work to professional companies (in Dundee this is Dundee Rep/ Smallpetitklein dance company and aspire tutors)

In a North Ayrshire model, it is anticipated that this work would be done by:

- Capall Dorcha Theatre Company - A small locally based professional group.
- Dimitri Konstantis - A locally based dance specialist
- Music tutors drawn from our current bank of YMI tutors

The key to a successful rollout of this initiative is getting the right team together to ensure that the programmes that are delivered are of the highest possible standard and is as creative and innovative as possible.

Every stage within the primary school would experience a high quality arts experience in one or more disciplines throughout the year.

The tutors would work closely with class teachers and school managers to plan appropriate, bespoke programmes of work for learners. This may be as part of a wider interdisciplinary learning project or as part of an existing programme of delivery within Curriculum for Excellence.

We would introduce new elements to the curriculum, including Kodaly in the lower school, African Drumming, Music Technology, Theatre Arts and Drama convention based work as well as Street Dance and Dance History.

The tutors would also be contracted to deliver some work to both young people and to the wider community outwith school hours, either within the schools themselves or within some of our community venues.

We would also utilise the Harbour Arts centre for sharing work through performances and small scale presentations.

Budget for Year 1

	Cost
Staff – equivalent of 3 x 0.5 FTE	£64,000
Management cost – equivalent of 1 day per week	£12,000
Instrument cost and repairs (4 schools)	£18,000
Dance/Drama resources	£7,000
Input from external arts professionals	£5,000
Showcase costs	£8,000
Pupil transport costs	£7,000
Community costs – transport to showcase events, evening tuition	£10,000

for parents	
External evaluation	£5,000
Total	£ 136,000

Additional funding for Year 2

	Cost
Staff – equivalent of an additional 1.0 FTE	£42,000
Instrument cost and repairs	£8,000.00
Dance/Drama resources	£3,000.00
Input from external arts professionals	£1,000.00
Showcase costs	£1,800.00
Pupil transport costs	£3,600.00
Community costs – transport to showcase events, evening tuition for parents	£3,000.00
External evaluation	£5,000.00
Total	£ 67,000

3. Implications

Financial Implications

we would spend this preparatory period January - June 2015) seeking funding from a number of sources:

- **YMI funding** - We would look to use a proportion of our existing budget to fund tutor hours. YMI also have a communities fund to promote music learning within communities.
- **Legacy 2014** - We would look to apply for grant funding to cover the costs of dance programmes, especially in relation to the delivery of dance outwith school hours. This fund closes in February 2015.
- **Creative Scotland**
- **North Ayrshire Council**
- **Scottish Government**
- **CLN funds** to be used to look at the impact of these creative projects on attainment across all learning

- **Awards For All**
- **Community and Culture**

West of Scotland College will be invited to become a partner in the development of this initiative as they may also be able to provide us with support through their programmes of study.

4. Human Resource Implications

We would have to work very closely with our professional partners to deliver the programme. Contracts would have to be issued for their commissioned hours.

5. Equality Implications

The programme would be open to every learner within the designated schools and the community learning programme to anyone within the community who would like to engage in the arts based work provided outwith school hours

5. Sustainability

The professionals delivering the programmes would work alongside class teachers, offering rich opportunities for CLPL.

LOCAL AUTHORITY BENCHMARKING WORKING GROUP

Educational Attainment for Looked After Children

A benchmarking exercise

Prepared by - Planning & Performance Team (NAC)

March 2014

This report outlines the findings of benchmarking activity between, East Ayrshire Council, Inverclyde CHCP, North Ayrshire Council and West Dunbartonshire Council on the topic of Educational Attainment for Children that are statutorily looked after by each local authority.

Acknowledgements

The Local Authority Benchmarking Working Group would like to thank the following individuals for their contribution to this exercise:

- Anne Marie McDonald, Manager – Fieldwork Services, West Dunbartonshire Council
- Pat Montgomery, Inclusion Officer – Educational Services, West Dunbartonshire Council

Local Authority Benchmarking Working Group – Members List

Andy McDonald	Planning and Development Manager	East Ayrshire Council
Anna Aitken	Service Officer Information & Research	East Ayrshire Council
Kathleen Kennedy	Performance Improvement Lead	Inverclyde Council
Norma Bell	Planning & Performance Manager	North Ayrshire Council
Scott Bryan	Planning & Performance Officer	North Ayrshire Council
William Pook	Performance & Information Manager	West Dunbartonshire Council

Contents

Preface	3
Introduction	4
Background Information	5
National Statistics – drilling to Local Authority level	5
Methodology.....	8
Data Gathering.....	8
Children Looked After Survey (CLAS) 2013	8
Educational Attainment Data.....	9
Local Authority Support	9
Returned information	10
Unavailable educational information	11
Analysis	12
Average tariff scores	12
Ranking of average tariff score	13
Summary of Findings and Recommendations	15
1. Outcomes	15
Best in Class.....	15
LA Trends & National Trends	15
National Trends.....	15
High level summary of Statistics Trend last update: June 2013 average tariff scores of School leavers	16
2. Limitations of Analysis	16
Additional Supports	16
Number of placement changes.....	17
Financial analysis.....	17
3. Learning from the Exercise: Challenges in gathering information	17
Appendix A – Returned Educational Attainment information.....	0
Appendix B – Supports Matrix - Extended	1
Appendix C - Population Data	4
Appendix D – Total tariff score range.	5
Appendix 5 – Solace Indicators.....	6

Preface

The Local Authority Benchmarking Working Group (LABWG) was established following agreement by Social Service Directors of Dundee, East Ayrshire, Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire and North Ayrshire local authorities. They identified a need for a forum within which sharing and comparing performance information in key service areas could be examined, best practice identified and service improvements continually identified.

The group would facilitate benchmarking across Social Service areas that were both, of specific interest to each local authority, and would not be possible through existing, thematically focussed, benchmarking networks.

The LABWG was established at an initial meeting held in June 2013. Unfortunately, Dundee Council was unable to commit. However, the other four local authorities, recognised within SOLACE recommended 'Peoples Services' benchmarking club have continued to work in a collaborative manner. This paper is the outcome of the group's first project.

Introduction

As part of the National Performance Framework, the Scottish Government have set out the following outcome:

“Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens”

To measure this outcome, the Scottish Government have also set out the following national indicator:

“Improve levels of educational attainment”

Research published annually by the Scottish Government demonstrates the on-going trend that Children Looked After under-perform in educational attainment.

It was agreed the benchmarking of Educational Attainment for Looked After Children would be a suitable first project for the group due to its local and national significance and robustness of available data (published by the Scottish Government). It would allow for comparison of outcomes achieved at a local level and further consideration of what might underpin the findings. All relevant findings will be submitted to each Local Authority for review by the relevant Senior Management Team.

Background Information

National Statistics – drilling to Local Authority level

The starting point for the benchmarking exercise was the Scottish Government publication "Educational Outcomes for Scotland's Looked After Children, 2011/12". This publication presented information on the educational outcomes of young people who were looked after continuously for at least one year and who had left school during the reported academic year.

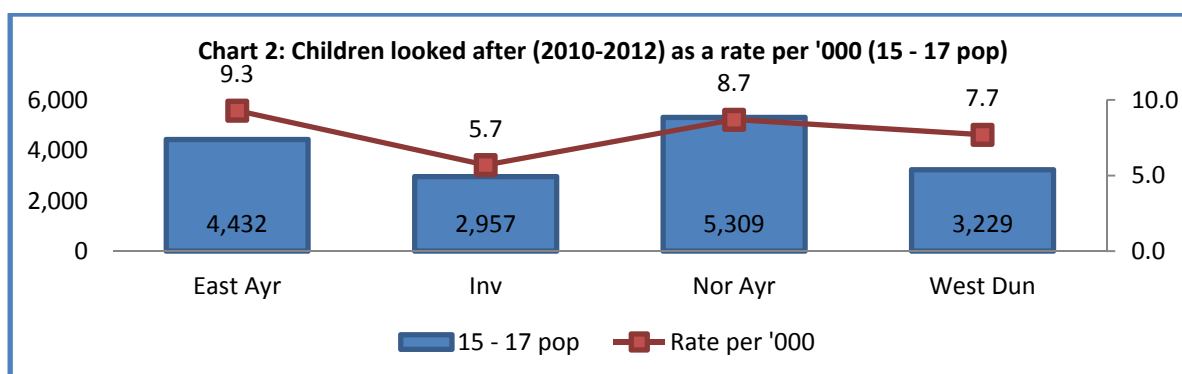
The publication contains information on the average tariff scores and destinations on leaving school and also includes statistics from a dataset combining three years of looked after children data (Table 1). This data facilitated longitudinal analysis over the preceding three years using the average tariff score as the performance measure.

Table 1 Number of Looked After School Leavers (Benchmarking family group)				
Local Authority	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Total
East Ayrshire	19	14	8	41
Inverclyde	5	7	5	17
North Ayrshire	12	16	18	46
West Dunbartonshire	9	10	6	25

Source: Education outcomes for Scotland's looked after children, 2011/12 (additional table data tables)

It is evident from table 1 that there is a variation between the numbers of looked after children in each local authority. For analysis, the group calculated the number of children reported as a rate of each authority's 15-17 year old population.

Chart (2) below provides this rate per thousand information on each authority's 15 – 17 year old population.



Source: Education outcomes for Scotland's looked after children, 2011/12 (additional table data tables) and GROS Mid-year population estimates 2012.

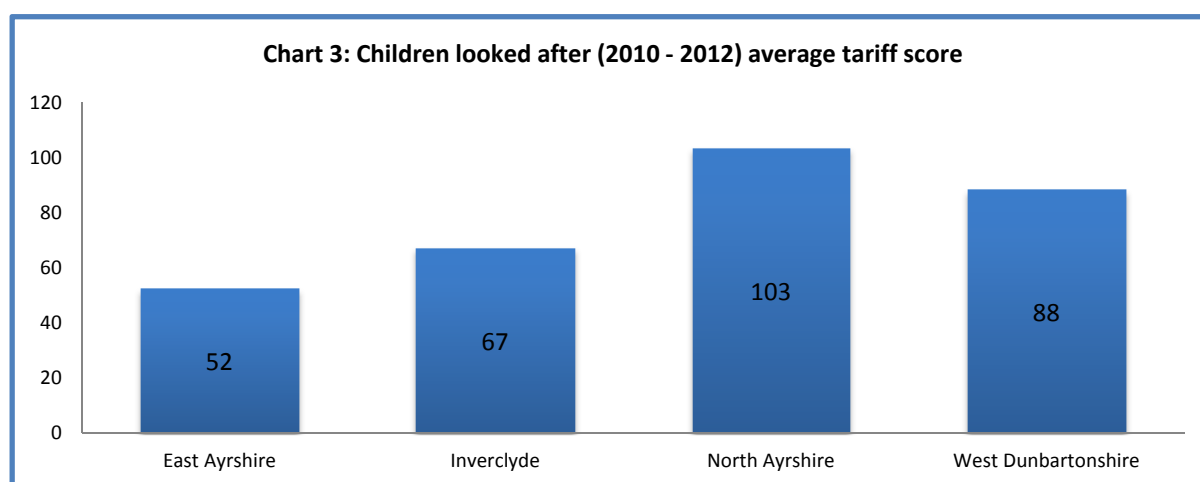
As in table 1, the chart demonstrates that Inverclyde returns as the authority of lowest incidence of looked after children. This should be contrasted with the information outlined in Chart (4a) (page 10), where the group's analysis of local authority data identified Inverclyde as having a proportionally higher incidence of Looked After Children.

Table (2) below demonstrates the average tariff score of each local authority compared to the overall Scottish Average. Annual average tariff scores can be skewed by high scores or no scores by a small number young people in a given year. The three year average provides a more robust guide to overall performance. The tariff score is averaged over a three year period to flatten out fluctuations in annual scores.

Table 2		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		Avg tariff Score
East Ayrshire	✗	35	✗	69	✗	64		52
Inverclyde	✓	90	✗	72	✗	38		67
North Ayrshire	✓	70	✓	137	✗	95		103
West Dunbartonshire	✓	74	✓	88	✓	111		88
Scotland		67		78		106		-

Source: Education outcomes for Scotland's looked after children, 2011/12 (additional table data tables)
Red crosses indicate where the average tariff score achieved by a local authority was below the Scottish average, where a green tick represents those above the Scottish average.

Chart (3) below demonstrates the three year cumulative average tariff score. It indicates that North Ayrshire has the highest recorded tariff score for looked after school leavers suggesting it is the best performing.



Source: Education outcomes for Scotland's looked after children, 2011/12 (additional table data tables)

The publication highlighted a number of conclusions:

1. It evidenced that the fewer the placement moves experienced by a Looked after child, the higher the educational attainment.
2. The average tariff scores were higher among those looked after in foster placements and lowest for those looked after at home.
3. There was an overall increase in educational attainment over the three year period, this was true for both looked after and non-looked after children.
However, there was a significant variation in tariff scores between the two groups where non-looked after children's average tariff score was roughly 300 higher than that of those looked after.

Table 2	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Avg tariff Score
East Ayrshire	35	69	64	52
Inverclyde	90	72	38	67
North Ayrshire	70	137	95	103
West Dunbartonshire	74	88	111	88
Scotland	67	78	106	-

Methodology

It was agreed by the benchmarking group that the nationally published statistics are somewhat limited and do not offer an in-depth picture of how services are delivered at the local level. The group agreed the following weaknesses in the national statistics:

1. While aggregated information on average tariff scores broken down by accommodation type is presented in the nationally published statistics, this data is not provided at the local authority level. Therefore meaningful comparisons between local authorities could not be undertaken.
2. The National Statistics only return information on school leavers that have been continually looked after during the academic year. They do take into account young people that are still in education or those who may have been discharged from care during the year or even become newly looked after. As such, not only are sample sizes restricted, they also discount all those children who have had a status of Looked After during a critical period in their lives.

Therefore, the group agreed to extend the inclusion criteria to be all young people of schools leaving age that had a looked after episode during the academic year 2013.

Data Gathering

Children Looked After Survey (CLAS) 2013

As part of Scottish Government reporting requirements, each local authority is required to submit the CLAS statistical return for all children looked after during the academic year. It was advised that each member of the group draw the relevant young people for the benchmarking work from their own 2013 CLAS dataset. This would allow for simple identification of each child's placement type.

Information returned in the CLA Survey relates to the academic year (August to July) 2013. This is the preferred timescale for the Scottish Government as it allows for more robust match up with Educational data. As such, the analysis contained in this report relates to the 2013 academic year.

As stated above, as long as the young person had been looked after at some point during the academic year 2012-13, they would be included for benchmarking purposes.

It was established at the earliest stage that information gathered should relate to the most recent educational activity. It was agreed that information in relation to the 2013 summer exam diet would be gathered. To ensure each authority reported on the same cohort, the group identified two eligible leaving dates that pertained to the 2013 exam diet, summer leavers and Christmas leavers. In that way all LAC young people with a birthday before 1st October 1997 would be included in the exercise. Filtering before this date means that all those included would be of eligible school leaving age.

Educational Attainment Data

Educational attainment data is not collected for the CLAS return. Therefore it required to be obtained by direct liaison with colleagues in Education Services with identification of the 'all Looked After Children' status agreed for this project.

Consistent with the national statistics the information to be gathered of the educational tariff scores of the cohort. While this meant no data could be provided on actual subjects attained, it would facilitate more robust statistical analysis.

Gathering the relevant tariff score information from education proved a challenge for some members. In most cases, each authority's Education Service had to undertake a manual matching exercise in order to link each child in the benchmarking cohort to their total tariff score. This is a clear indication that systems and processes are not in place across the partner authorities to facilitate easy access to this information.

Where possible, the CLAS return is seeded with each looked after child's Scottish Candidate Number (SCN). This is used by the Scottish Government at the national level to link looked after children to their educational information in order to produce the national statistics.

Local Authority Support

To facilitate learning between authorities, in addition to analysing educational scores, each member was asked to provide information on the range of educational supports provided to looked after pupils. A full list of the supports provided by each local authority is available in Appendix B.

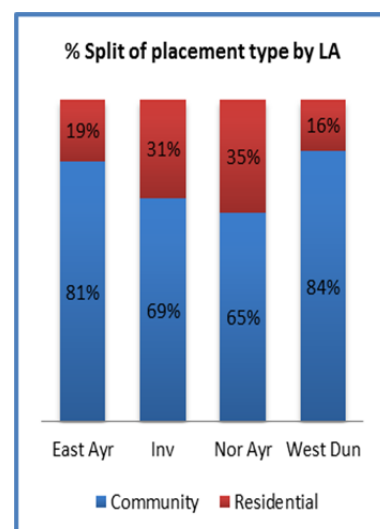
Returned information

Table (4) below, details the number of young people returned by each local authority, broken down by Placement (Community/Residential) and Accommodation (at home, with foster carers, etc) type. Despite large differences in each local authority's population (see Appendix C), the number of young people returned is reasonably similar. Chart (4a) below, demonstrates the cohort as a rate per thousand of each local authority's 15-17 year old population. It demonstrates that despite larger populations, North and East Ayrshire have relatively low proportion of looked after children of school leaving age.

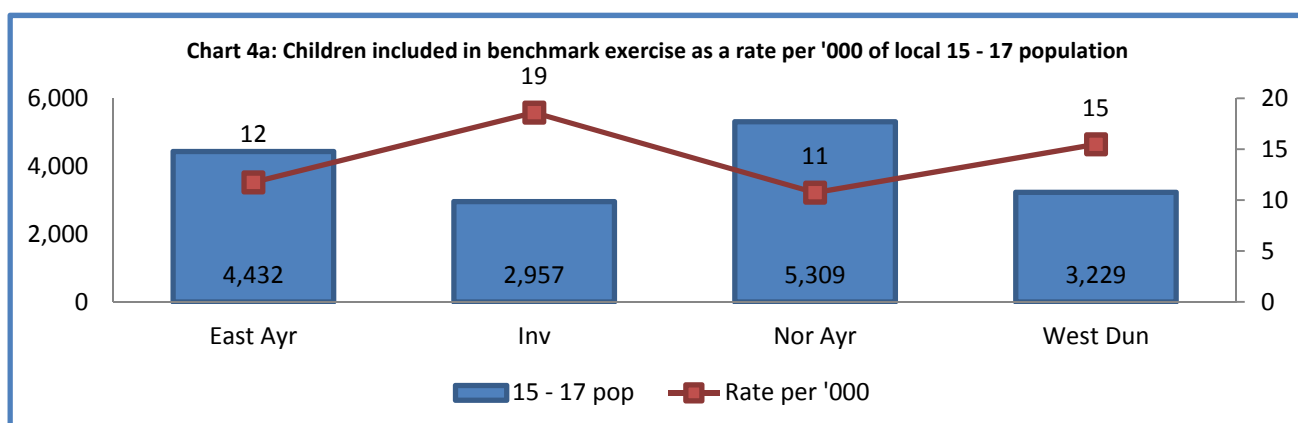
Note, the information provided in this section accounts for all those returned, even where no tariff score was recorded or information was unknown. The full data tables of returned information can be found in Appendix A.

Table 4: CLAS 2013 information for all children whose date of birth is before 1st October 1997

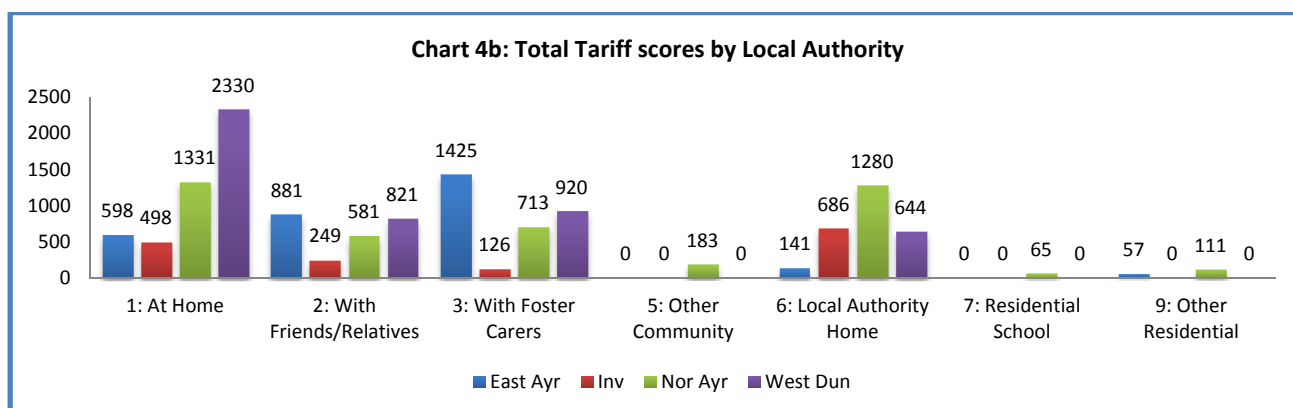
Table 4: Placement Type	East Ayr	Inv	Nor Ayr	West Dun
Community	42	38	37	42
At Home	16	32	20	28
Other Community	0	1	4	0
With Adopters	0	0	0	0
With Foster Carers	16	2	7	7
With Friends/Relatives	10	3	6	7
Residential	10	17	20	8
Local Authority Home	6	13	15	8
Other Residential	1	0	2	0
Residential School	3	4	3	0
Secure Accommodation	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	52	55	57	50



The chart provided to the right of the table shows the split between community and residential placements.



In addition, chart (4b) below provides an overview of the total tariff scores returned by each Local Authority.



The chart above shows the cumulative total tariff scores by accommodation type. It should be noted that within each accommodation type there can be wide variations in tariff score between individuals. To provide some context to this, Appendix D demonstrates the range between the lowest and highest individual tariff scores recorded by each local authority.

Unavailable educational information

Table 4 above details the full cohort of young people who met the eligibility criteria for this benchmarking exercise. While educational information was gathered for the majority of those returned, some young people were not known to the home authority's Education Services. A looked after child will not appear on the home authority's SEEMIS system if they are educated out-with the area.

Table 5 demonstrates missing educational information only for those young people included in the benchmarking exercise. It is likely that there are more young people currently looked after of school age, not known to the caring authority's Education Services.

Table 5a: Missing data	East Ayr	Inv	Nor Ayr	West Dun
1: At Home	0	0	1	0
2: With Friends/Relatives	1	0	0	0
3: With Foster Carers	0	0	1	0
5: Other Community	0	0	0	0
6: Local Authority Home	0	0	1	0
7: Residential School	3	0	0	0
9: Other Residential	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	4	0	3	0

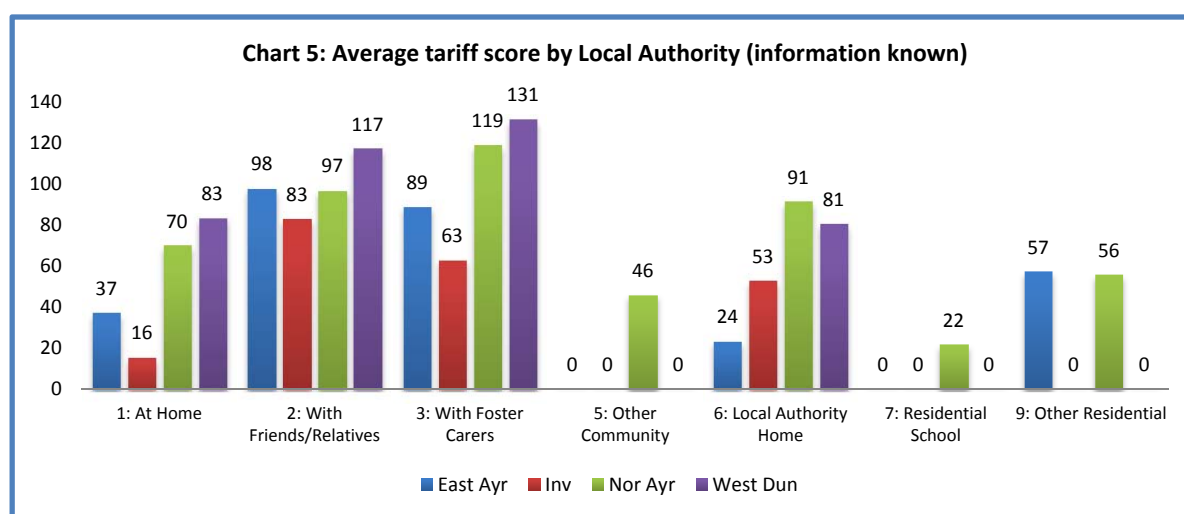
Analysis

Average tariff scores

Average tariff scores were calculated only on those looked after children whose educational attainment information was confirmed (table 5b). It excludes those young people whose information was not provided (those detailed in table 5a).

Table 5b: Known data	East Ayr	Inv	Nor Ayr	West Dun
1: At Home	16	33	19	28
2: With Friends/Relatives	9	3	6	7
3: With Foster Carers	16	2	6	7
5: Other Community	0	1	4	0
6: Local Authority Home	6	13	14	8
7: Residential School	0	4	3	0
9: Other Residential	1	0	2	0
Grand Total	48	55	54	50

Chart (5) below details the average tariff score by accommodation type and local authority.



The chart demonstrates that in most instances for children looked after in the community, West Dunbartonshire is achieving the highest average tariff score. In Residential settings, North Ayrshire has the highest average tariff score in LA Homes, where East Ayrshire has the highest in Other Residential placements.

For ease of reference, table 6 below identifies the lead authority in each looked after placement type.

Table 6: Placement Type	Leading Local Authority
1: At Home	West Dunbartonshire
2: With Friends/Relatives	West Dunbartonshire
3: With Foster Carers	West Dunbartonshire
5: Other Community	North Ayrshire
6: Local Authority Home	North Ayrshire
7: Residential School	North Ayrshire
9: Other Residential	East Ayrshire

Ranking of average tariff score

The table below (table 7) demonstrates for each local authority, the ranking of average tariff score by accommodation type. The intention of this table is to highlight the areas of strength and weakness in each local authority and therefore identify areas which may require additional supports.

It is clear that each local authority share similar strengths and weaknesses. For example, young people in foster placements are the highest performing in all but Inverclyde (where they rank second).

In all local authorities, Children cared for away from home, either in a foster placement or with friends and family are the highest educational achievers. Excluding West Dunbartonshire, children in Residential Schools are the worst performers.

Table 7: Accommodation type	East Ayr	Inv	Nor Ayr	West Dun
1: At Home	4	4	4	3
2: With Friends/Relatives	2	1	2	2
3: With Foster Carers	1	2	1	1
5: Other Community	-	5	6	-
6: Local Authority Home	5	3	3	4
7: Residential School	-	5	7	-
9: Other Residential	3	-	5	-

Note: ' - ' indicates no young people returned

It is envisaged, that each local authority can use this table to identify those areas that would require additional support or development.

Analysis of additional supports

The group endeavoured to undertake an analysis of the various educational supports available to looked after children. However, due to variations in terminology and support description the group were challenged in making meaningful comparisons.

The information provided suggests that each local authority has similar initiatives to pupils with additional support needs (either looked after or non-looked after).

However, the group was unable to identify any unique activity that contributed to improving educational attainment for looked after pupils.

A list of the additional supports provided by each local authority is available in Appendix B.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The findings of the exercise are contained below. Recommendations are provided in the blue text boxes.

1. Outcomes

Best in Class

West Dunbartonshire performed best overall in relation to children looked after in community placements (except other community).

North Ayrshire had the highest average tariff scores for children in local authority children's units, other community settings and residential schools.

East Ayrshire had the highest scores for children in other residential units.

- Each local authority should consider the contents of this report with a view to addressing the relative strengths and weaknesses in its own services

LA Trends & National Trends

The educational attainment for the average tariff score was ranked by individual local authority (table 7, page 13). This table reveals that in most cases, children looked after in foster placements have higher average tariff scores than other placement types. This is in agreement with the nationally published statistics.

Overall, table 7 suggests that among the local authorities, children cared for in 'Other Residential' placements had the lowest average tariff score. While this is a departure from the national statistics (which state those children looked after at home have the lowest average tariff score), it should be noted all local authorities in the exercise performed poorly in 'At Home' placements (mostly ranking fourth).

- The group recommends undertaking the comparison of tariff scores on an annual basis in order to build up trend information for looked after children. This will be simplified in future years due to the methodology being established as a result of this initial exercise.

National Trends

The national statistics highlight that while average tariff scores for pupils are increasing across Scotland, there is still a significant attainment gap between looked

after and non-looked after pupils. In 2011/12, this gap was 300 tariff points. It should be noted that this disparity is reflective of the general gap between SIMD levels.

High level summary of Statistics Trend last update: June 2013 average tariff scores of School leavers

The average tariff score (an overall measure of attainment) of school leavers has increased from 341 in 2007/08 to 406 in 2011/12. The average tariff score of school leavers in each Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) quintile has also increased each year since 2007/08. However, there remains a gap in the attainment between leavers from the most deprived areas and those from the least deprived areas. In 2011/12 the average tariff score for the most deprived 20% was 268 compared with 552 for the least deprived 20%. The current tariff score scale does not recognise pupils' achievements in individual National Qualifications units and non-SQA accredited courses, and it does not include achievements of pupils in special schools.

(Scottish Government <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/TrendTariffScores>)

- Each authority should give strategic consideration to developing activity that would reduce the attainment gap between looked after and non-looked after children.

2. Limitations of Analysis

Additional Supports

As part of the data gathering exercise, members of the group were asked to provide narrative information on educational supports available to Looked After Children. While the lists provided were comprehensive, it proved difficult to identify key differences between local authorities that would contribute to best practice. It is possible that this limitation arose from the information being supplied by Education Services, with no information available identifying particular support from social services.

Number of placement changes

The national statistics indicate that looked after children with fewer placement moves perform better educationally. For the exercise, members were asked to provide information on the cohorts most recent looked after placement type. No information was gathered on the total number of placements each young person had experienced throughout the duration of their episode. Inclusion of this data would require a deeper level of analysis.

Financial analysis

The exercise did not review financial resources due to difficulty in undertaking any meaningful comparative analysis. Solace provides national benchmarking indicators related to costs for looked after children (see appendix 5). However, given the different structures of each authority, unpicking budgets for looked after children and educational costs would prove challenging and time consuming. Over and above this

- Each authority's Senior Managers should give consideration to commissioning further analysis of the support networks available to looked after children in education. This would include a financial analysis of looked after budgets. It is likely that this work would be labour intensive. It is also likely that this will require joint working with the relevant Education Authority

3. Learning from the Exercise: Challenges in gathering information

Contrary to the initial assumption that this first benchmarking exercise would be relatively straightforward, given that all local authorities regularly return information regarding Looked After Children and also Educational data, this proved not to be the case

1. All authorities had to work closely with their own Education services in order to identify the educational attainment of each child. In all cases this required a manual calculation of tariff scores it became clear that each local authority's education service operated differently and in all cases it took a manual search of records to produce the information required.
2. Gaps in information: The exercise also highlighted a discrepancy between Education and Social Services. Not every child that was highlighted in the CLAS cohort had a record on the authority's SEEMIS* system maintained by

Education. In discussion it appears that whilst this number is few (see Table 5a) there are a range of possible reasons for this. One is that the child's placement, be it with foster carers or residential accommodation out with the local authorities boundaries result in the child's education attainment not being recorded on a local SEEMIS system.

This represents a potential failing where Social Services do not have access to every child's educational information. This goes against the principles of 'Getting It Right For Every Child' (GIRFEC). Any gap in information for looked after/vulnerable children, regardless of how small, should be addressed.

In addition, Education Services may also be responsible for educating children that are cared for by another local authority. As such, they may also face challenges in keeping LAC records up to date if no proper information sharing mechanisms are in place.

- Each authority should implement actions to improve the availability of educational information from Education Services. This would include making the information more readily available on an individual basis and, perhaps more importantly, addressing the gaps in information where looked after children are not known to Education Services.

Appendix A – Returned Educational Attainment information

LA	Accommodation Type	Placement Type	Number of Young People	Number with Tariff Score at 31st July 2013	Number with no Tariff Score	Number with no information available	Total Tariff Score	Known Info Avg Tariff Score
West Dun	1: At Home	Community	28	28	0	0	2330	83
West Dun	2: With Friends/Relatives	Community	7	7	0	0	821	117
West Dun	3: With Foster Carers	Community	7	7	0	0	920	131
West Dun	5: Other Community	Community	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Dun	6: Local Authority Home	Residential	8	8	0	0	644	81
West Dun	7: Residential School	Residential	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Dun	9: Other Residential	Residential	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nor Ayr	1: At Home	Community	20	18	1	1	1331	70
Nor Ayr	2: With Friends/Relatives	Community	6	6	0	0	581	97
Nor Ayr	3: With Foster Carers	Community	7	6	0	1	713	119
Nor Ayr	5: Other Community	Community	4	4	0	0	183	46
Nor Ayr	6: Local Authority Home	Residential	15	14	0	1	1280	91
Nor Ayr	7: Residential School	Residential	3	3	0	0	65	22
Nor Ayr	9: Other Residential	Residential	2	2	0	0	111	56
East Ayr	1: At Home	Community	16	11	5	0	598	37
East Ayr	2: With Friends/Relatives	Community	10	8	1	1	881	98
East Ayr	3: With Foster Carers	Community	16	10	6	0	1425	89
East Ayr	5: Other Community	Community	0	0	0	0	0	0
East Ayr	6: Local Authority Home	Residential	6	5	1	0	141	24
East Ayr	7: Residential School	Residential	3	0	0	3	0	0
East Ayr	9: Other Residential	Residential	1	1	0	0	57	57
Inv	1: At Home	Community	32	9	23	0	498	16
Inv	2: With Friends/Relatives	Community	3	2	1	0	249	83
Inv	3: With Foster Carers	Community	2	1	1	0	126	63
Inv	5: Other Community	Community	1	0	1	0	0	0
Inv	6: Local Authority Home	Residential	13	6	7	0	686	53
Inv	7: Residential School	Residential	4	0	4	0	0	0
Inv	9: Other Residential	Residential	0	0	0	0	0	0

Appendix B – Supports Matrix - Extended

<i>Additional Supports</i>	<i>East Ayrshire</i>	<i>Inverclyde</i>	<i>North Ayrshire</i>	<i>West Dumbarton</i>
<i>Staffing</i>	<p><i>All schools have a designated manager generally primary school headteachers and guidance teachers in secondary schools. The LAC remit is in addition to their main responsibilities. There is one LAC teaching post funded by Social Work. The remit of the principal teacher of the East Ayrshire Support Team includes LAC/LAAC. There is also a 0.5 teacher providing support to children in Children's units. A LAC Co-ordinator is in post with a remit to raise educational attainment One school has created a Principal teacher post to manage provision of additional support needs which includes LAC pupils.</i></p> <p><i>Departments encouraged to bid for additional funding</i></p>	<p><i>4 Nurture teachers are based in 4 schools providing input and support to individual pupils. Their role also involves wider consultation and training with staff across the authority</i></p> <p><i>All Looked after children are assessed as to whether they meet the criteria for a CSP</i></p> <p><i>Looked after children cannot be excluded unless agrees by the head of service</i></p> <p><i>Some secondary schools hold specific joint assessment team meetings to look at the needs of looked after children and young people</i></p> <p><i>Looked after children who are placed in out of authority provision are provided with a service from the educational psychology team</i></p> <p><i>Input for head of establishments from Who Cares Scotland on the needs of looked after children</i></p> <p><i>Support from the LAC teachers covers pre-school to those in FE</i></p>	<p><i>A Looked After Children, Coordinator is assigned to every school in North Ayrshire.</i></p>	<p><i>Advice and support for school and unit staff.</i></p> <p><i>Liaison and information transfer between units and schools.</i></p> <p><i>Awareness raising and staff development for social work , teaching staff and learning assistants.</i></p> <p><i>Additional staffing to support LAC.</i></p> <p><i>Staff cover to develop resources to support LAC.</i></p>

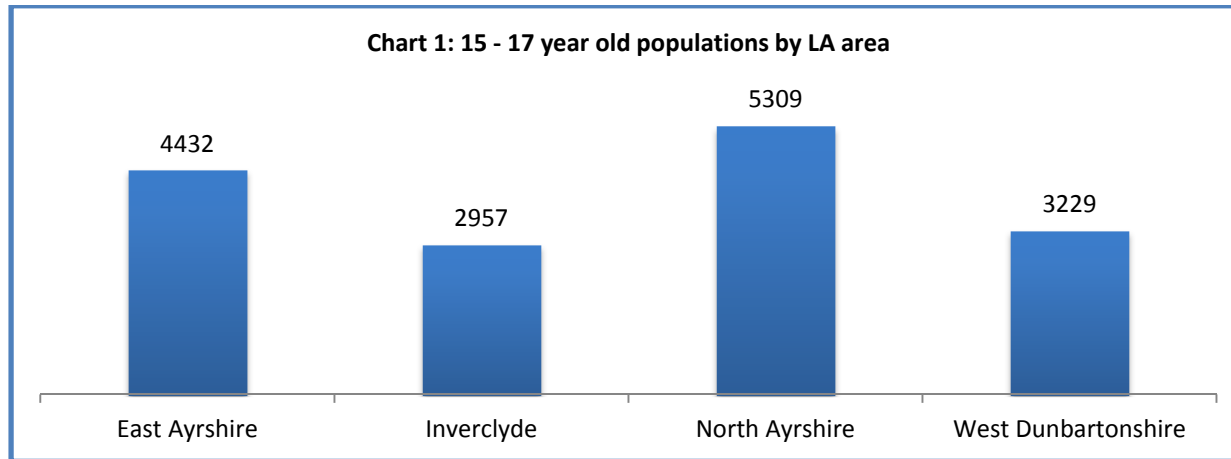
		<p><i>and supports those Looked After at Home and Away from Home.</i></p> <p><i>All schools have a designated manager generally head teachers or in some instances DHT's. The LAC remit is an integral part of their responsibilities.</i></p> <p><i>In-service input from the LAC teachers.</i></p> <p><i>Close working relationships between unit staff, social work and LAC teachers.</i></p>		
<i>Support for learning</i>	<p><i>Individual tuition, small group tuition. Master classes before exams. The "Connect" programme for hard to reach children who are encouraged to attend school in an alternative setting. Up to six Intensive support sessions with relevant subject specialists</i></p>	<p><i>4 LAC teachers employed provide added support to Looked After children / young people. This can take the format of 1:1 or small group and can take place in the school both in and out with class as well as sometimes being provided at an alternative location eg children's unit, LAC teachers' base. Strategic Leadership and Development Group attended by senior managers from Education and Social Work CHCP. Development of Action Plan of practical measures to improve performance (perhaps say: to improve the outcomes of the</i></p>	<p><i>Staged Intervention from stage 1 – additional classroom support to stage 4 specialised schooling (in the main for children with learning disabilities) Non mainstream courses/ exams . Tutoring in local authority children's units, support with studying and homework</i></p>	<p><i>Extraction from Class to small group or 1:1 learning opportunities. Support in unit for excluded pupils Support in unit out with school day Study skills Revisions classes Project work</i></p>

		<i>LAC pupils in terms of their attainment, attendance and to reduce exclusion rates)</i>		
<i>Supports for Looked-after young people</i>	<p><i>Individual mentors for looked-after children</i></p> <p><i>Issues/ support for LAC students is standing item on Pupil Support agendas</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral / review meetings to identify areas where young people is in need of support – shared with guidance and other teaching staff.</i></p> <p><i>Transport for supported study or examinations</i></p> <p><i>Extra curricular activities to encourage engagement with school e.g. Duke of Edinburgh Award, Saltire Awards etc.</i></p>	<p><i>Nurture Teachers are based in schools providing generic additional support.</i></p> <p><i>LAC teachers provide support across all sectors to young people and have a particular focus on transition years and S4 pupils.</i></p> <p><i>Extra curricular activities eg Christmas card craft club at Neil Street provided by LAC teachers.</i></p> <p><i>Provision of SQA approved study guides for Nationally presented exams for LAC pupils.</i></p>	<p><i>All LAC assessed to determine if they require additional support.</i></p> <p><i>Extended Outreach programme. Individual tailored support based on the needs of the child.</i></p> <p><i>1:1 support with key worker</i></p> <p><i>Support can be provided at home</i></p> <p><i>Focussed vocational support Support young people on paths to positive post school destinations.</i></p>	<p><i>Careers discussions</i></p> <p><i>Social and emotional support</i></p>
<i>Monitoring</i>	<p><i>Parent / Carers questionnaire sent at start and end of each term</i></p> <p><i>Weekly LAC attendance/exclusion monitoring</i></p> <p><i>Teachers provide designated manager regular feedback on young persons progress.</i></p> <p><i>Results analysis on prelims inform support for actual exams</i></p> <p><i>Monitoring of ASN log</i></p>	<p><i>Officer Monitoring Forum</i></p> <p><i>A questionnaire is distributed to schools each year to evaluate the provision from the LAC teachers and to inform change.</i></p>	<p><i>Monitoring for staged intervention.</i></p>	<p><i>Monitoring of attendance , progress and exclusions through JAT</i></p>

Appendix C - Population Data

To facilitate a meaningful analysis, it is appropriate that consideration is given to variations in population size between local authorities. As such, where appropriate rate per thousand calculations will be carried out.

As the nature of the work will revolve around children of exam diet age, any rate per thousand calculations will be based on the local authority '15 – 17' year old populations. Chart (1) below provides this information by local authority.



The population data was extracted from the GROS mid-year population estimates for 2012.

Appendix D – Total tariff score range.

The data table below shows the range of tariff scores that are reported within the report. These figures in the table relate to the lowest and highest scores attained by a single pupil.

LA	Min Tariff Score	Max Tariff Score
East Ayrshire	8	288
Inverclyde	8	164
North Ayrshire	8	446
West Dunbartonshire	1	298

Appendix 5 – Solace Indicators

Weekly Gross Costs per 'Looked After' Child in the Community

This indicator looks to allocate a gross cost of children looked after in the community per week.

Local Authority	2011	2011 Rank	2012	2012 Rank	Rank Shift
East Ayrshire	214.70	4	199.63	3	+1
Inverclyde	93.88	2	101.00	2	< >
North Ayrshire	190.81	3	200.61	4	-1
West Dunbartonshire	47.99*	1	52.15*	1	< >

*West Dunbartonshire's information is considerably lower than all other local authorities. This has been identified as an error caused by mistake in the authority's Local Finance Return.

Weekly Gross Costs per 'Looked After' Child in a residential setting

Conversely, this indicator assess the cost per week of children looked after in a residential setting.

Local Authority	2011	2011 Rank	2012	2012 Rank	Rank Shift
East Ayrshire	2,091	1	3,910	4	-5
Inverclyde	3,109	4	3,064	3	+1
North Ayrshire	2,918	2	2,895	1	+1
West Dunbartonshire	2,962	3	3,009	2	+1

Strategic Review of Educational Services

24 October 2014

Subject: Improving Children's Outcomes

Purpose: to advise on the progress of the Improving Children's Outcomes project

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Dartington Social Research Unit (SRU) has been working with the Scottish Government in recent years to develop an evidence-based approach to improving children's services across Scotland. As a result, the "Improving Children Outcomes" project was established to support work on gathering evidence on the needs of the child population locally and how services meet that need.
- 1.2 In April and May 2014 the Council's Cabinet and the Shadow Integration Board of the Health and Social Care Partnership agreed to participate in the Improving Children's Outcomes project.
- 1.3 The project has previously been piloted in Perth and Kinross and in Renfrewshire and is now being implemented in Angus, Dundee and North Ayrshire.

2. Current Position

Community Survey

- 2.1 The community survey of parents of children aged 0-8 years, where trained staff personally interviewed parents and carers, is now complete. There were 600 parents interviewed on the mainland and 33 families on Arran. The sample was scientifically drawn to ensure statistically valid results.
- 2.2 There was a slight pause to this survey in late August. Additional information was provided in those areas being targeted to advise on the purpose of the community survey.
- 2.3 There has been positive joint working and support involving TACT, Community Development, Police, Communications, Scottish Government and Dartington Social Research Unit (SRU) in carrying out this work.

Schools Survey

- 2.4 The Dartington Social Research Unit (SRU) has provided its on-line survey tool for children aged 9-16 years. The survey tools have undergone a comprehensive review and refinement process involving the Dartington SRU and the Scottish Government's Analytical Services Division to ensure they are reliable, valid and age appropriate.
- 2.5 The surveys have been offered to pupils in mainland, mainstream schools from 29 September to 24 October on an opt-out basis. The survey is to be completed in schools on Arran between 20 and 31 October. There had been a response rate of over 80% by 10 October. The SRU will provide an analysis of the survey results by December which will be produced as area wellbeing profiles. These will include the results for each individual secondary school and its cluster primary schools.

Fund Mapping

- 2.6 Children's Services Managers have been requested to provide detailed funding arrangements for their services and how this funding is currently being directed towards improving outcomes. This is being done using a tool previously used in Renfrewshire and Perth and Kinross.

Information Briefings

- 2.7 A range of briefings for CPP partners, Head Teachers, School Co-ordinators, Elected Members, Health and Social Care staff and others have been held in recent months to provide further information on the project and its benefits in improving the evidence based approach being used across North Ayrshire in improving children's outcomes.
- 2.8 A Steering Group has been formed to implement the project. The project is governed by the Children's Services Strategic Partnership, which reports to the CPP.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 Once the area wellbeing profiles and the information on current spending on children's services is available, the CPP will be able to review the provision of its services. This will improve our commissioning of children's services targeted on the local needs identified through the survey work. It will support a wider process of service re-design and revision of existing investment.

4. Funding

- 4.1 A total contribution of £46,000 has been approved towards the costs of implementing the project in North Ayrshire. The Health and Social Care Partnership is contributing £15,000 towards this cost and the remaining £31,000 is being met by the Council. The Scottish Government is contributing £90,000 to the project.
- 4.2 In addition, there have been costs of £2,340 incurred in the printing and distribution of leaflets on the community survey and in briefing school co-ordinators.
- 4.3 Once the survey work and fund mapping exercise is complete in early 2015, events will be held to share their findings and to plan future children's services strategy, based on this information and the research on "work works" in improving children's outcomes.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Strategic Review Steering Group agree to receive a report on the outcome of these exercises in due course.

Joint Report

Name: Marjorie Adams
Designation: Programme Manager,
Chief Executive's,
North Ayrshire Council

Name: John O'Dowd
Designation: Consultant in Public Health
Medicine,
NHS Ayrshire and Arran

Date: 13 October 2014

Department Education and Skills
Joint Authorship:

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item Cabinet

Subject: Promoting the STEM agenda in North Ayrshire Schools

Purpose: To inform the Cabinet of the increased focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) across all schools.

Recommendation: That the Cabinet agrees to (a) note the information presented; (b) receive regular, annual updates,

1. Introduction

The establishment of Irvine's Enterprise Area, focusing on Life Sciences is providing opportunities for employment and economic growth in North Ayrshire. To support the development of the enterprise area, it is crucial that we provide an appropriately skilled workforce for Life Science industries relocating or locating in Irvine.

In addition, Skills Development Scotland forecast that 30 billion pounds will be spent in Scotland on offshore wind and 60 billion on oil and gas. They identify future job opportunities in engineering sectors such as renewables, biomedical and chemical engineering.

Over the next ten years, it is likely that 60,000 to 90,000 jobs will be created in the green sector, in addition to the 80, 000 that already exist. Developing technologies such as carbon capture and storage as well as wind and tidal power will generate many of these jobs.

E-skills UK forecast that there could be around 11,000 job opportunities in Scotland annually in technology roles.

- 1.2 Ensuring that young people in North Ayrshire are well placed to take advantage of future job opportunities in the science, technology and engineering sectors is a key priority in North Ayrshire schools and, consequently, there has been an increased focus on STEM within the curriculum in all schools. A key recommendation in the interim Wood Report on Developing Scotland's Young Workforce (Scottish Government 2013) states, "A focus on STEM should sit at the heart of the development of Scotland's young workforce"

- 1.3 STEM has an essential role to play in creating sustainable communities and a new generation of scientists and engineers are required to help create a sustainable future. We need our young people to be willing to challenge existing norms, to be innovative, resilient, critical thinkers and problem solvers. A skills framework which facilitates the development of these skills for learning, life and work should underpin the curriculum from the early years through to the senior phase and beyond.
- 1.4 To support the development of STEM, teachers need continuous professional learning (CPD) across the four aspects of STEM as well as the opportunity for collaborative planning to ensure continuity and progression in learning across transitions, both from stage to stage and school to school. In addition, partnership working is required to ensure staff have access to a wide range of STEM providers, including industry and further and higher education, to enhance learning and teaching. The involvement of parents and carers as key partners in learning in STEM should be encouraged, especially, as young people make their choices for qualifications and pathways in the senior phase.

2. Current Position

2.1 Education and Skills continues to monitor and evaluate the measures undertaken to promote STEM and improve uptake and attainment in STEM subjects (see tables in appendix 1)

- It is encouraging to note that the total presentations for STEM subjects at National 4 and National 5 (combined) when compared to Standard grade has increased. The uptake in STEM subjects in the senior phase will be monitored closely to ensure uptake does not decline with the reducing national trend in the number of qualifications being undertaken in the fourth year in the senior phase.
- Presentations for STEM Highers (S5/6) are, in most cases, proportionally higher than last year. The estimated 2014 proportion of S5/6 pupils sitting Highers is exceeding national levels, when compared to previous years, in Biology, Chemistry, Graphic Communication and Mathematics with the rest of the STEM subjects in line with national trends. Higher exam passes (A-C) in 2013 exceeded national averages in Graphic communication and Human Biology
- In most STEM subjects at Advanced Highers, North Ayrshire students performed in line with the national average with performance in Computing and Graphic communication exceeding national levels.

2.2 Schools have been audited to determine the level of STEM provision in session 2013-14; the results of the survey are attached in Appendix 2. This information will provide a baseline against which to measure progress in participation in STEM activities; it will be identify good practice to share with stem coordinators and encourage schools to increase their current provision.

- Of the 54 primary and special schools surveyed, 35% have STEM link with an industry. Examples include: The Royal Society of Edinburgh, Magnox, Ardagh Glass, Hunterston, Glasgow University, Springfield Construction, Sainsburys, INPUT, and links with individuals through the STEM Ambassador program, Primary Engineers and through parents and relatives connected to the schools.
- St Matthew's cluster consistently reported the highest levels of competition entry, participation in STEM projects, attending trips and visits and applied for the most grants.

- 2.3 Subject networks, STEM coordinators conferences, headteachers meetings and the Maths Strategy group have provided platforms for professional development and for strengthening relationships with STEM partners. Collaborative opportunities are proving very worthwhile for sharing practice as well determining the STEM activities that are most effective in engaging and enthusing learners.
- 2.4 The Edina Trust fund is a non-competitive grant that primary schools, early years centres and special schools can apply for to support STEM activities. This year, to date, 21 schools have applied for Edina Trust funding receiving £10,645. At the end of 2013, 52 schools successfully applied for funding of £27,620.
- 2.5 Four primary schools, three of whom have received grants from Royal Society of Chemistry, are working towards achieving the Primary Science Quality Mark (PSQM). The PSQM coordinator, sponsored by the Wellcome Trust, will work closely with primary schools to help them strengthen their science provision through training and assessment.
- 2.6 The National Science and Engineering week (NSEW) is an annual ten day program, set by the British Science Association, runs in March to raise awareness of STEM in the community. This year North Ayrshire schools involved the wider community in their events; volunteers included friends and family, parents and STEM ambassadors. Examples included class challenges, science festivals involving the whole school, showcase events for young people to show their work to parents, trips and special visits and science fairs. Many schools took advantage of the NSEW £200 grant.
- 2.7 Irvine Bay Regeneration is a key STEM partner for schools in North Ayrshire. They worked with schools on the Discovering and Exploring Science competition, aimed at inspiring interest in STEM in young people from primary five to sixth year. The competition raised the awareness of science related opportunities which could have an impact on young people's future employment.

Two teams from Hayocks Primary School shared the overall first prize, winning an overnight trip to the Edinburgh Science Festival. Lamlash Primary won a public vote, determined by Facebook, and Garnock Academy won the secondary competition.

- 2.8 North Ayrshire Council has formed a partnership with Dumfries House which is a “hub” for STEM activities for East, North and South Ayrshire Councils. Dumfries House has developed a food education program around their estate gardens and is building a STEM facility to develop training programs for teachers and learners. Dumfries House provides transport to bring classes out to the facilities to take part in these education days. A number of North Ayrshire primary schools have participated in their outdoor learning activities.

North Ayrshire schools were involved in the first Scottish Industrial Cadets programme which was sponsored by the Engineering Development trust (EDT) and Dumfries House; this initiative allowed four North Ayrshire secondary schools to take part in a Go4Set event providing S2 pupils with a mentor from Glaxosmithkline (GSK) to support them in a STEM recycling project. At the recent Go4SET Celebration and Assessment Day, our four schools competed against Montrose Academy and Forfar Academy for a place in the Scottish Finals. The winner of the team work award was Kilwinning Academy and the winner of the Best Overall Project was Garnock Academy who will represent North Ayrshire in the Scottish Finals at the Scottish Parliament.

- 2.9 Local businesses, Ayrshire College, STEMNET ambassadors, and the Royal Society of Chemistry supported a "Women into Engineering" seminar in October 2013 which was attended by around one hundred third year girls. Role models provided career advice, offered mentoring and work-shadowing opportunities and delivered a number of demonstrations and engineering challenges. Secondaries were inspired by this event and have, subsequently, organised their own events taking advantage of industry links and STEM ambassadors.

- 2.10 Young Engineers and Science Clubs Scotland (YESCS) continue to thrive in North Ayrshire schools with YESCS working with Dumfries House to provide excellent continuing professional development opportunities for NAC teachers:

- “Science on the Menu” program, funded by the Education Scotland Food for Thought grant, was delivered at Dumfries House and provided resource kits and teacher CPD. Feedback from the teachers was highly positive where 100% found the CPD useful relevant to the Curriculum of Excellence and 98% of teachers felt that the training increased their confidence in teaching hands-on STEM activities.
- Set by YESCS and Dumfries House to follow on from the “Science on the Menu” program, the Great Frozen dessert

competition tasks primary pupils with researching , designing and “scientifically “ making a new freezer-less ice cream that would appeal to visitors to the Commonwealth Games. North Ayrshire Council is hosting its own competition in May 2014 to select four teams to be representatives at the final at Dumfries House.

- A Raspberry Pi (credit card sized computer that plugs into TV and keyboard) weather station project and Carbon Capture and Storage are the first two CPD courses, aimed at secondary teachers, to be delivered at Dumfries House by YESCS. Eight of our secondary schools are taking advantage of this training.

- 2.11 The Primary Engineer Program provides resources and training for teachers to deliver a teaching program that boosts interest in STEM in young people. 55 of our primary teachers from 24 primary schools have so far been trained by Primary Engineer. In addition, we are working with Primary Engineer to deliver on-line training to all primary schools on Arran. Some of these schools have already delivered a classroom project, whilst other are building it into their planning for session 2014-2015.
- 2.12 Five Irvine Royal Academy students are attending Ayrshire College one day a week to undertake a SVQ level 2 award in Performing Engineering Operations. This option has been offered out across all North Ayrshire schools in 2014-15.
- 2.13 In 2013, St Winning’s primary school won the Scottish Education award for Excellence in Numeracy and Ardeer Primary won the YESCS Heather’s Huts.

3. Proposals

3.1 It is proposed that the Cabinet notes the measures being taken to continue to engage learners in STEM and thereby improve uptake and attainment to ensure North Ayrshire schools are amongst the highest attaining schools in Scotland in the STEM subjects.

3.2 These measures include:

- To continue to promote STEM related pathways and careers across all our schools. There will be a focus on promoting these careers to girls as we know that there is still too wide a gender gap in the post-school choices our young people make. This is particularly important as labour market projections indicate that STEM related industries will require a highly skilled workforce for the foreseeable future. We will continue to work with partners, both internal and external to ensure that our work is informed with the most up to date industry data.
- To develop an industry recognised qualification in partnership with the Construction Industry Training Board and local employers, which will enhance the employability skills of pupils studying construction crafts.
- Gender imbalance across the STEM subjects in secondary schools will be evaluated and, where necessary, action taken to make STEM subjects more engaging, inclusive and contextual.
- To work collaboratively with East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire to devise a pan-Ayrshire strategy for STEM. This will involve liaising with national agencies, such as: Education Scotland, SSERC, YESCS and STEMNET, and will have, at its core, the establishment of a STEM hub at Dumfries House. North Ayrshire Schools will benefit from the specialist engineering and industry partnership set up by the SSWEG group by continuing to demonstrate our high level of commitment to STEM.
- To continue to strengthen local partnerships with Ayrshire College, Argyll College and West College Scotland to develop STEM related pathways in the senior phase in engineering and technology. A priority should be the development of North Ayrshire's Virtual Learning Environment, currently used to deliver low uptake Advanced Highers, to offer wider choice by delivering college courses through video conferencing.

- To promote the Irvine Bay Regeneration Outreach project by collaborating with the Royal Society of Edinburgh who will deliver a three year programme focussed on science (particularly life sciences), engineering, ICT and manufacturing. The programme will include inspirational educational talks, discussion forums, and workshops for primary and secondary pupils and the wider public of the Irvine Bay and the surrounding area.
- A STEM coordinator should be identified in every school to promote STEM working and coordinate STEM learning activities and CPD.
- To work with Education Scotland and SSERC (Scottish Schools Equipment Centre) to deliver a range of bespoke courses to enrich the understanding of science and improve the quality of teaching and learning in the sciences, particularly, within the primary sector. There will be a key focus on improving attainment in Science in Irvine Royal Academy s highlighted in the post- inspection action and in primary improvement plans for session 2014-15, to ensure progression, will be the development of the deep learning in the sciences.

This will include support for assessing, tracking and reporting progress and achievement in science to ensure teachers are confident in making professional decisions on achievement of a C f E level in Science.

Consideration will be given to identifying a primary and secondary science “champion” to promote transition work in science across the cluster.

- A necessary pre-condition for further study in STEM is the importance of a good level of ability in mathematics. Recent research highlights the high cost, around 20 billion pounds, to the economy of the adult population's low numeracy skills. People with very low numeracy skills were two to three times more likely to be living in an unemployed household. There is a clear link between low level of numeracy and exclusion and truancy figures with those with low numeracy skills twice as likely to truant. In addition, for women, poor numeracy is a predictor of poor physical health, depression and unskilled employment.

Opportunities for teacher CPD to ensure learners are receiving high quality teaching in numeracy, a re-focusing on mental maths as well as appropriate additional support resource is required to counter the adverse impact of deprivation on performance in numeracy in the

least deprived 30% of data zones . The recently published SSLN (Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy 2013 (Numeracy) highlights that the largest disparities in performance between the least deprived 30 % and middle 40 % are in the later stages of primary and secondary school.

Membership of the Southern Maths Hub (East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire, Dumfries& Galloway, Scottish Borders and South Lanarkshire) will support partnership working, share effective practice, resources and give access to additional Scottish Government funding to provide quality CPD for teachers in numeracy.

- The work of the STEM support officer has been commendable in promoting, monitoring and tracking STEM activities. Whilst STEM remains a high priority in the council, this level of support from an officer at graduate/intern level is essential.

- 3.3 It is proposed that the Cabinet notes the report and agrees to receive annual progress reports.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

- 4.1 Additional funding to support CPD in Science and Mathematics

Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are no human resource implications from this report

Legal Implications

- 4.3 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Equality Implications

- 4.4 Equality implications arising from this report involve increasing uptake of girls into STEM subjects.

Environmental Implications

- 4.5 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Implications for Key Priorities

- 4.6 3b People are better skilled to get into work
- 4c Levels of educational achievement have improved

5. Consultations

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The promotion of the Education and Skills priority to increase the uptake of young people choosing to study the STEM subjects at a variety of levels will contribute to the economic regeneration of North Ayrshire and the increased positive, sustained destinations of these young people.

Reference : MD/AMacM

For further information please contact Mary Docherty, Head of Education (3-18) on telephone number 01294 324416

Background Papers

NORTH Ayrshire Council

Agenda Item 9

24 February 2015

Cabinet

Subject:	Planning Performance Framework
-----------------	---------------------------------------

Purpose:	To report on feedback from Scottish Government on the Planning Performance Framework 3 and seek approval for an action programme as indicated within Appendix 2.
-----------------	--

Recommendation:	The Cabinet agrees to (a) note the feedback contained with Appendix 1; and (b) approve the action programme contained within Appendix 2.
------------------------	--

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the meeting on 24 September 2014, the Planning Committee approved the publication of the Planning Performance Framework 3 (PPF3) and submission to the Scottish Government. PPF was developed in response to the Government's Reform Agenda and an annual return is required from each Planning Authority within Scotland. The PPF provides the planning system with a balanced score card approach to performance, which enables each Planning Authority to demonstrate its achievements, successes and individuality. The PPF was introduced to provide a broader picture of performance than that offered by the Statutory Performance Indicators (SPI) by Audit Scotland.
- 1.2 The preparation of the next PPF (PPF4) is underway and will be submitted to the Planning Committee for consideration in the Spring of 2015. PPF4 will include the actions arising from PPF3 as detailed within Appendix 2.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 By letter dated 11 December 2014, the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Communication and Pensioner Rights noted that continued progress is generally being made across the country to improve planning performance.

- 2.2 Of the 15 'Performance Markers' the feedback report (see Appendix 1) uses a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating with 6 rated as green, 5 as amber, 2 as red and 2 that are not applicable to North Ayrshire. This compares favourably to the previous year's report which had 3 rated as green, 7 as amber, 3 as red and again 2 that were not applicable to North Ayrshire. The 2 red ratings relate to the Local Development Plan (LDP) as at that time it was more than 8 years old but has since been adopted on 24th May 2014.
- 2.3 The feedback report welcomes proposals to carry out a post-mortem exercise to help the Council fully consider lessons learned from the new LDP. It also welcomes the increase in the take-up of pre-application advice for planning applications from 33% to 51%, and encourages the use of processing agreements in the delivery of decisions on planning applications. During 2014/15, a total of 2 major applications have been the subject of a processing agreement and this information will be included in the forthcoming submission on PPF4.
- 2.4 The report welcomes the further improvements within North Ayrshire on average decision making timescales, which continue to be better than the Scottish average, and that significant progress has been made with clearing legacy cases and in particular, the introduction of a 120 day working practice on applications within the system. Furthermore the report notes the reduction in time taken to decide applications with a legal obligation, with the reduction this year being to 18.7 weeks, which is significantly better than again the national figure. The report considers that all of these matters demonstrate North Ayrshire Council's ongoing commitment to improving our service.
- 2.5 The feedback report notes the Council's open for business approach showing a wide range of initiatives to enable development, including the delivery of timely advice to businesses, the enterprise area protocol in Irvine, the Team North Ayrshire initiative and the Development Delivery study. The Council's commitment to delivering high quality development is also noted by the examples listed within PPF3, in particular, the work with other Services in the Council, which has been recognised in recent award schemes. The report also notes the increase in value added by case officers to submissions for planning permission and also the positive findings of the Council's customer feedback survey with the supporting testimonials from applicants. The feedback report considers that the North Ayrshire Council Planning Service is meeting many of the needs of its customers.

- 2.6 In conclusion, the Cabinet Secretary considers that North Ayrshire Council has provided a concise and well structured report which provides a good indication under each of the planned performance framework headings of our ongoing commitment to a service culture of continuous improvement.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 As noted above, the action points arising from the feedback report will be addressed within the next PPF.
- 3.2 The Cabinet is invited to agree to (a) note the feedback contained with Appendix 1; and (b) approve the action programme contained within Appendix 2.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are no Human Resource implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Equality Implications

- 4.4 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 4.5 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Implications for Key Priorities

- 4.6 PPF contributes to the Council core objective for "operating more efficiently and effectively" by increasing the levels of accountability and transparency within Planning Services and by introducing annual service improvement commitments.

Community Benefit Implications

- 4.7 None

5. Consultations

- 5.1 No consultations have been undertaken in relation to this report.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Scottish Government feedback on PPF3 notes a generally successful performance from North Ayrshire Council Planning
- 6.2 Services and includes feedback points which can be addressed through the above noted actions (see Appendix 2).



KAREN YEOMANS
Executive Director (Economy and Communities)

Reference : JHM/SLP

For further information please contact Mr James Miller, Senior Manager on
01294 324315

Background Papers

0

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Communities and Pensioners' Rights
Alex Neil MSP

T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Ms Elma Murray
Chief Executive
North Ayrshire Council

In 2014 Scotland Welcomes the
World



11 December 2014

Dear Ms Murray

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 2013/14

Thank you for submitting your authority's annual Planning Performance Framework (PPF) report covering the period April 2013 to March 2014.

I am delighted to have planning within my portfolio and I am pleased to see that continued progress is generally being made across the country to improve planning performance.

Please find enclosed feedback on your 2013/14 PPF, which has been prepared by a Scottish Government contractor, and is based on the evidence provided within your report. Contact details for my officials are available in the feedback report should you wish to clarify any element of the contractors commentary. We will be publishing an Annual Performance Report in the new year which will summarise performance across the country against the key markers of performance.

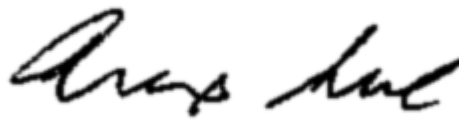
The quality of PPF reporting has significantly improved with many PPF reports setting out a very clear story of how the service is operating and their priority actions for improvement. There is still some inconsistency in planning authority decision making timescales across the country and I look forward to seeing progress in the next set of performance statistics.

You will be aware that Section 55 of the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Act commenced on 30 June 2014. It provides Scottish Ministers with powers to vary the planning application fee payable to different planning authorities where the functions of a planning authority are not being, or have not been, satisfactorily performed. The High Level Group on Performance has been considering the process which would be used to determine if any authorities have not satisfactorily performed. It is hoped to

finalise that process at our next meeting in February 2015. Please note that following the last meeting, the preferred option was to base the process on decision making statistics alone using the annual statistics for the period 2014/15. I shall write again to planning authority Heads of Planning in February to update them on discussions at the High Level meeting. COSLA, HOPS, SOLACE, SOLAR, the RTPi and key agencies are all represented on this group.

I am determined to keep up the momentum with the performance agenda, maintaining continual improvement and enhancing the reputation of our planning service. I look forward to working with you to achieve this shared goal.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Neil', written in a cursive style.

ALEX NEIL

Cc: James Miller, Senior Planning Manager

PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK: 2013-14

FEEDBACK REPORT: North Ayrshire Council

Date performance report due: 30 September 2014

Date of receipt of report: 29 September 2014

National Headline Indicators

- Your Local Plan (LP) was more than 8 years old at the end of the reporting period, whilst noting that your LDP has since been adopted on 20 May 2014. Updating within the 5-year cycle is a statutory requirement and is essential to promote certainty and confidence in the planning system.
- Your undertaking to carry out a 'post mortem' exercise is noted and this will help you to fully consider lessons learnt from your new, approved LDP. Steps can then be taken to ensure your next LDP progresses towards adoption at the earliest possible date through strong project management.
- This year's increase in take up of your pre-application advice from 33% to 51% is welcome with clear benefits for certainty and the speed of decisions as highlighted in your report and case studies. Future reports could describe how your pre-application service is offered and promoted for all development types, and how it ensures clear and proportionate requests for supporting information. We were interested to hear about the seminar for elected members on the role of Councillors within pre-application discussion and look forward to hearing about the outcome.
- It appears that no major developments were subject to a processing agreement in the reporting period. Your report recognises the importance of processing agreements, which is welcome, but you could include details of how they are promoted and publicised. You may wish to consider and promote agreements not only for major applications but also for more substantial or complex local developments.
- We welcome the further improvements in your average decision-making timescales across all developments; these are all better than the Scottish average. The distortion of the major applications average decision-making timescales by one application is noted. The use of processing agreements may help in this regard.
- Significant progress has been made with clearing legacy cases which was one of your service improvement commitments. The introduction of your new working practice for any application which is more than 120 days from registration is of particular note, the sharing of this experience could be of assistance to other Councils. In 2012/13 there was a sharp increase in the time taken to decide applications with a legal obligation, the reduction this year to 18.7 weeks is significantly better than the national figure. All of which demonstrates your ongoing commitment to improving your service.
- This year your approval and delegation rates have increased again, a few percentage points above national levels. These can contribute towards confidence and a degree of certainty in your development management service.

- Your enforcement charter was published in January 2013 with a review due in 2015. As part of your commitment to continuous service improvement we note that you have carried out a recent review and updated the charter. It would have been useful to include further information on those aspects that were updated.

Defining and measuring a high-quality planning service

- Your report demonstrates your Open for Business approach, showing your improvements and describing a wide range of initiatives to enable development. These include the agreement with your colleagues in Business Development Services for the delivery of timely advice, the Enterprise Area Protocol in Irvine, the Team North Ayrshire initiative and the development delivery study.
- It would be useful to see how your pre-application advice service is provided and promoted.
- Your commitment to delivering high quality development is demonstrated. The cases studies show your approach to high quality development. Your emerging LDP policies and supplementary guidance, commitment to training and your work with other Services have successfully led to the completion of development, some of which has been recognised in recent award schemes.
- Your case studies also show how you deliver development working closely with other Services. You continue to demonstrate the importance of providing certainty, highlighting your progress with your LDP and at pre-application stage working with stakeholders to deliver development. Examples of your policy, advice and guidance are provided, but as noted previously some authorities have introduced guidance on pre-application advice for applicants, and protocols/concordats with internal and external consultees to help establish supporting information requirements and working timescales for responding to consultations. Early engagement with them can ensure that the information requests are clear and proportionate.
- The recording of those applications where there has been value added by a case officer was detailed last year and the significant increase in case numbers this year is welcomed.
- We were pleased to see the positive findings of your customer feedback survey, with the supporting testimonials. You are providing a Planning Service which is meeting many of the needs of its customers. We welcome that it will remain open for planning applicants and that the main finding, to improve your web, has been captured for implementation next year. We look forward to hearing about your progress, particularly if developer forums were continued as they were successful last year.
- You have provided evidence that structures and internal processes are in place to enable efficient and effective decision making through senior managers monitoring all applications nearing their determination periods. Active management such as this can be of significant benefit to timely decisions, we would welcome an update on this next year.
- We are pleased to see that you are participating in a benchmarking group with five other authorities, as this can help with the sharing of good practice, knowledge and skills. Your next report could describe the issues discussed in the past year and any specific improvements that have resulted.

- This year you built upon your established culture for staff learning and development. We note the variety of training provided and the importance attached to staff development, particularly in light of your commitment this year to provide an annual training plan. The inclusion of elected members in the training program can assist in delivering sound planning advice.

Service improvements 2013-14: delivery

- We welcome the completion of most of your committed improvement actions during the year, with some work continuing and reflected in your commitments for the year ahead.

Service improvement commitments 2014-15

- You have again committed to a good range of activities under headings of the PPF format for defining and measuring a high-quality planning service. This should help you to report the progress you make for the next period.

Conclusion

- Again you have provided a concise and well-structured report, which provides a good indication, under each of the Planning Performance Framework headings, of your ongoing commitment to a service culture of continuous improvement.
- The significant improvement to your average decision-making times, across all developments to better than the Scottish averages, is welcomed; particularly in the context of the enabling work that was highlighted in your case studies.
- The results and testimonials of your customer survey demonstrated your commitment to improving your Service. This, with the continuous development of staff and elected members, demonstrates a strong ongoing commitment to improving your Service.

The feedback in this report is based solely on the information provided within your Planning Performance Framework Report covering the period April 2013 to March 2014.

If you need to clarify any aspect of the report please contact us on 0131 244 7148 or email Chief.Planner@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Please note that Planning Performance Framework Reports covering the period April 2014 to March 2015 are due to be submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 July 2015.

APPENDIX

PERFORMANCE MARKERS REPORT 2013-14

Name of planning authority: **North Ayrshire**

The Red, Amber, Green ratings are based on the evidence provided within the PPF reports. Where no information or insufficient evidence has been provided, a 'red' marking has been allocated.

No.	Performance Marker	RAG rating	Comments
1	Decision-making: continuous reduction of average timescales for all development categories [Q1 - Q4]	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Developments Average timescales have continued to improve going from 30.9 weeks to 21.5 weeks. This is better than the national average of 53.8 weeks. RAG = Green • Local (Non-Householder) Developments Average timescales have improved since last year from 8.7 weeks to 6.8 weeks. This is better than the national average of 14.3 weeks. RAG = Green • Householder Developments Average timescales have improved since last year from 6.6 weeks to 5.7 weeks. This is better than the national average of 7.7 weeks. RAG Rating = Green TOTAL RAG = Green
2	Processing agreements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offer to all prospective applicants for major development planning applications; and • availability publicised on website 	Amber	<p>Your report refers to the use and conclusion of one processing agreement during the last report period. This appears to be North Ayrshire Community Hospital, however the official statistics do not include this agreement and care should be taken to ensure that reference is made to the correct reporting period.</p> <p>One service improvement commitment of 2013/14 is to use a processing agreement for at least 3 applications.</p> <p>Report lacks a description of how processing agreements are promoted and publicised.</p>

3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications; and clear and proportionate requests for supporting information 	Amber	<p>Pre-application discussions now being recorded with a high proportion of applicants using the service (51%).</p> <p>Report lacks a description of how pre-application is promoted, and would benefit from more details of how early collaboration ensures clear and proportionate supporting information requests.</p>
4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications after resolving to grant permission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reducing number of live applications more than 6 months after resolution to grant (from last reporting period) 	Green	<p>Based upon the Planning Authority Performance Statistics for 'all applications' in 2013/14:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average timescale for the two major applications subject to legal agreements is better at 26.5 weeks than the Scottish average of 87.5 weeks. The average time for local applications is better at 10.9 weeks than the national average of 66.1 weeks. <p>New guidance introduced for the processing of major applications, specifically the reference to early clarity about those matters to be addressed by a planning obligation.</p> <p>Significant decrease in time taken to determine applications subject to legal obligations and new working practice for cases older than 120 days.</p>
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years	Green	Enforcement charter updated February 2013.
6	Continuous improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators; and progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report 	Amber	<p>Significant progress on reducing decision making timescales, such that they are better than the Scottish average.</p> <p>Main concern is that the Local Plan was over 8 years old at the end of the reporting period. It is noted that the replacement LDP has since been adopted on 20 May 2014.</p> <p>Good progress made on delivering previous service improvement commitments.</p>
7	Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption	Red	Local plan adopted November 2005. The replacement LDP has since been adopted on 20 May 2014, but this was outwith the reporting period.

8	Development plan scheme – next LDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on course for adoption within 5 years of current plan(s) adoption; and project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale 	Red	<p>LDP not on course for adoption within 5 years of current plan.</p> <p>The adoption of the LDP on 20 May 2014, post this reporting period is noted.</p>
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – <i>if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</i>	N/A	
10	Cross sector stakeholders* engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – <i>if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</i> <i>*including industry, agencies and Scottish Government</i>	N/A	
11	Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information required to support applications; and expected developer contributions 	Amber	<p>Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information required to support applications Policy advice in proposed LDP. New guidance developed for processing major applications. Specific evidence provided for affordable housing, design guidance etc. RAG = Green Expected developer contributions Report lacks clarity on policy, advice and guidance for developer contributions. Previously proposed Supplementary Guidance on developer contributions not progressed as authority is directly funding road trunk improvements. Internal guidance on affordable housing contributions and demonstrated that part of the process when implementing processing agreements. RAG = Amber <p>TOTAL RAG = Amber</p>
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example: protocols; joined-up services; single contact arrangements; joint pre-application advice)	Green	<p>Report provides good evidence of culture of corporate working to improve outputs and services for customers. Includes examples of planning applications and case studies which involved corporate working to deliver positive results</p>

13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Green	Good practice shared through HOPS and other forums. Benchmarking work ongoing with 5 other planning authorities. Future reports would benefit from description of issues discussed and good practice shared.
14	Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old	Green	Significant progress made in reducing numbers, with ongoing procedure in place to ensure any case older than 120 days is properly managed.
15	Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan); and • in pre-application discussions 	Amber	Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out in the development plan (and/or emerging plan); <p>Report lacks evidence of how developer contributions are set out in the LDP and how the policy ensures clear and proportionate expectations. RAG = Amber</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in pre-application discussions <p>Report not clear how developer contributions are set out during pre-application discussions. RAG = Amber</p> <p>TOTAL RAG = Amber</p>

No.	Performance Marker	Scottish Government Feedback on PPF3	Proposed Actions on Feedback
1	Decision-making: continuous reduction of average timescales for all development categories [Q1 - Q4]	Major Developments Average timescales have continued to improve going from 30.9 weeks to 21.5 weeks. This is better than the national average of 53.8 weeks. RAG = Green <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local (Non-Householder) Developments Average timescales have improved since last year from 8.7 weeks to 6.8 weeks. This is better than the national average of 14.3 weeks. RAG = Green <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Householder Developments Average timescales have improved since last year from 6.6 weeks to 5.7 weeks. This is better than the national average of 7.7 weeks. RAG Rating = Green TOTAL RAG = Green	Continue to deliver efficiencies in the determination of all applications Continue to address the legacy cases with applicants. Restructure the Team to improve the priority given to both Major applications and account managed companies This matter will be fully addressed within PPF4
2	Processing agreements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offer to all prospective applicants for major development planning applications; and availability publicised on website 	Your report refers to the use and conclusion of one processing agreement during the last report period. This appears to be North Ayrshire Community Hospital, however the official statistics do not include this agreement and care should be taken to ensure that reference is made to the correct reporting period. One service improvement commitment of 2013/14 is to use a processing agreement for at least 3 applications. Report lacks a description of how processing agreements are promoted and publicised.	During pre-application discussion on the Pre-Application Consultation, the Service will encourage all applicants for Major Applications to enter a processing agreement and by publicity on the Council's web page. During 2014, a total of 2 processing agreements were completed and a further agreement was being promoted
3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications; and clear and proportionate requests for supporting information 	Pre-application discussions now being recorded with a high proportion of applicants using the service (51%). Report lacks a description of how pre-application is promoted, and would benefit from more details of how early collaboration ensures clear and proportionate supporting information requests.	PPF3 advised that the Service will promote the opportunities for pre-application discussion with stakeholders, and publicise on the web. The Account Managed companies are directed to enter pre-application discussion with the Service. All development enquiries will be advised of the opportunities for pre-application engagement

			with the Service. Further clarification will be sought from SG on the required details.
4	<p>Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications after resolving to grant permission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reducing number of live applications more than 6 months after resolution to grant (from last reporting period) 	<p>Based upon the Planning Authority Performance Statistics for 'all applications' in 2013/14:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average timescale for the two major applications subject to legal agreements is better at 26.5 weeks than the Scottish average of 87.5 weeks. The average time for local applications is better at 10.9 weeks than the national average of 66.1 weeks. <p>New guidance introduced for the processing of major applications, specifically the reference to early clarity about those matters to be addressed by a planning obligation.</p> <p>Significant decrease in time taken to determine applications subject to legal obligations and new working practice for cases older than 120 days.</p>	<p>Further investigation will be undertaken to ascertain the delay in Legal Agreements with in particular to determine if the applicant's legal advisors are unduly delaying the process.</p> <p>In addition work is ongoing to 'front load' the legal requirements, which would reduce the time taken after the decision is taken.</p>
5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published within last 2 years	Enforcement charter updated February 2013.	It is proposed to review the Enforcement Charter during 2015.
6	<p>Continuous improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators; and progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report 	<p>Significant progress on reducing decision making timescales, such that they are better than the Scottish average.</p> <p>Main concern is that the Local Plan was over 8 years old at the end of the reporting period. It is noted that the replacement LDP has since been adopted on 20 May 2014.</p> <p>Good progress made on delivering previous service improvement commitments.</p>	Refer Action 1, 4 and 7
7	Local development plan less than 5 years since adoption	Local plan adopted November 2005. The replacement LDP has since been adopted on 20 May 2014, but this was outwith the reporting period.	The Local Development Plan was adopted in May 2014

8	Development plan scheme – next LDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on course for adoption within 5 years of current plan(s) adoption; and project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale 	LDP not on course for adoption within 5 years of current plan. The adoption of the LDP on 20 May 2014, post this reporting period is noted.	Refer Action 7
9	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – <i>if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</i>	N/A	
10	Cross sector stakeholders* engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation – <i>if plan has been at pre-MIR stage during reporting year</i> <i>*including industry, agencies and Scottish Government</i>	N/A	
11	Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information required to support applications; and expected developer contributions 	Regular and proportionate policy advice produced on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information required to support applications Policy advice in proposed LDP. New guidance developed for processing major applications. Specific evidence provided for affordable housing, design guidance etc. RAG = Green Expected developer contributions Report lacks clarity on policy, advice and guidance for developer contributions. Previously proposed Supplementary Guidance on developer contributions not progressed as authority is directly funding road trunk improvements. Internal guidance on affordable housing contributions and demonstrated that part of the process when implementing processing agreements. RAG = Amber TOTAL RAG = Amber 	Scottish Government will again be advised that following consultation feedback on the proposed developer contributions framework, the Council has decided not to proceed with the Supplementary Guidance. Reference to the other policy, advice and guidance that is available will be clarified in PPF4 which should ensure that this indicator changes from amber to green.

12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example: protocols; joined-up services; single contact arrangements; joint pre-application advice)	Report provides good evidence of culture of corporate working to improve outputs and services for customers. Includes examples of planning applications and case studies which involved corporate working to deliver positive results	Continue to develop good working practices across services.
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Good practice shared through HOPS and other forums. Benchmarking work ongoing with 5 other planning authorities. Future reports would benefit from description of issues discussed and good practice shared.	The Service will continue to develop and share good working practice skills and knowledge with partners.
14	Stalled sites / legacy cases: conclusion or withdrawal of old planning applications and reducing number of live applications more than one year old	Significant progress made in reducing numbers, with ongoing procedure in place to ensure any case older than 120 days is properly managed.	The remaining cases will be progressed during 2015.
15	Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations <input type="checkbox"/> set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan); and <input type="checkbox"/> in pre-application discussions	Developer contributions: clear and proportionate expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> set out in the development plan (and/or emerging plan); Report lacks evidence of how developer contributions are set out in the LDP and how the policy ensures clear and proportionate expectations. RAG = Amber in pre-application discussions Report not clear how developer contributions are set out during pre-application discussions. RAG = Amber TOTAL RAG = Amber 	Refer Action 11

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 10

24 February 2015

Cabinet

Subject: **Non Standard Lending**

Purpose: To provide Cabinet with an update in relation to the officers review of the recommendations made by the Council's short-life non-standard lending working group.

Recommendation: That Cabinet (a) notes the progress made on the review of non-standard lending recommendations as set out in the action plan at appendix 1; and (b) approves the recommendations outlined in the report; and (c) notes a further progress report will be submitted in April 2015.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting of 28 October 2014 Cabinet requested that officers explore twelve recommendations made by the Council's short-life non standard lending working group and to update Cabinet.
- 1.2 This reports provides Cabinet with an update on the progress, as set out in the action plan at appendix 1.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 A review of the twelve recommendations is underway with the majority expected to be complete by 31 March 2015. A summary of the progress made against some of the key recommendations is as follows:

2.2 Debt and Money Advice Services

- 2.2.1 All Council policies are Equality Impact Assessed (EIA) when they are initially drafted. They are updated for relevant legislative or policy changes with a rolling 3 year programme of EIA reviews for all policies.

- 2.2.2 One of the recommendations was for the Council to reaffirm its own debt collection practices and corporate debt policy and ensure its procedures do not exacerbate people's financial difficulties. In response to this an additional review of the Sundry Debtors and Debt Management and Recovery policies and relevant paperwork was carried out in January 2015 with no policy changes recommended at this time. The Council's policies and procedures are designed to provide support to customers with a range of payment methods and payment arrangements available to help customers manage their debt. Wording on all recovery documentation and standard letters was also reviewed by the Council's complaints officer and some minor adjustments are being made to improve our communication.
- 2.2.3 Money Advice Service has started to review debt and money advice services and financial capability and will work with the Community Planning Partnership to ensure early engagement and preventative measures are introduced with customers.

2.3 Credit Unions

- 2.3.1 An agreement has been reached with 1st Alliance Credit Union to facilitate visits to schools; this will include a financial management skills lesson for secondary school pupils, followed up with support if they open a credit union account. Council led training courses designed for post-school young people with barriers preventing them from entering a mainstream positive destination will also be used to promote 1st Alliance Credit Union.
- 2.3.2 A further recommendation of the review was for the Council to invest up to £50k in deferred shares or a grant with 1st Alliance to increase their ability to lend and retain a capital to asset ratio that meets legislative requirements. It is proposed that the Council makes a grant of £50k available to 1st Alliance. This investment will increase 1st Alliance capital to asset ratio from 3% to 5.33% and may increase membership by 849 adults and 110 juniors.

2.4 Not for profit loan fund and rent-to-buy social enterprise schemes

- 2.4.1 Meetings have taken place with 1st Alliance Credit Union and Scotcash in Glasgow to investigate the potential for a social enterprise model offering affordable credit and linked savings products to complement the credit union. An update of this will be provided in the next report to Cabinet.
- 2.4.2. Discussions have commenced with Prince Bishops Community Bank (Credit Union) regarding their involvement in the "Store" model that offers a range of branded household goods; for example televisions around 40% cheaper than high street stores and also provides

customers access to a credit union savings account.

2.5.5 Advanced payment of earnings

- 2.5.1 Work is in progress to review the approach of other public sector organisations. The outcome of this will be reported in the next update to Cabinet.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 That Cabinet (a) notes the progress made on the review of non-standard lending recommendations as set out in the action plan at appendix 1; and (b) approves the recommendations outlined in the report and (c) notes a further progress report will be submitted in April 2015.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

- 4.1 The grant payment to 1st Alliance will require an investment of up to £50k from the Council's General Services Revenue Fund, this can be met from the 2014/15 budget. The financial implications of implementing social enterprise models, a £12 payment for each credit union account open after a year and a review of debt and advice services are uncertain at this time.

Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 Employment opportunities may arise from the implementation of social enterprise models and the review of debt and money advice services.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 None

Equality Implications

- 4.4 None

Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 4.5 None

Implications for Key Priorities

4.6 The recommendations can contribute towards the following key Council priorities:

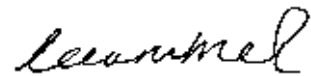
- More vulnerable people are supported within their own communities; and
- Fewer people are living in poverty.

5. Consultations

5.1 Officers have consulted with 1st Alliance Credit Union, Prince Bishops Community Bank (Credit Union) and Scotcash as part of the review exercise.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Officers have commenced a review of the twelve recommendations made by the Council's short-life payday lending working group and good progress is being made. A further progress report will be submitted to Cabinet in April 2015 when the majority of reviews are expected to be complete.



LAURA FRIEL

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference : SH

For further information please contact Stephen Humphries Senior Manager Revenues and Benefits on 01294 310106.

Background Papers

Non-standard lending - a report for North Ayrshire Council

Non Standard Lending Action Plan			
Recommendation/Action	Lead	Target Date	Status/Progress
Credit Union 1st Alliance is supported to grow its membership and loan book across all customer demographics through payroll deductions by Community Planning Partnership and other partners.	Sally Agass	February 2015	Posters placed in Council premises promoting credit unions. 1st Alliance to hold surgeries at Stevenston Employment Hub from April 2015. Discussions held with 1st Alliance to provide credit union accounts as part of the Council's roll out of the Grameen Foundation finance initiative with entrepreneurs. The Council has written to all CPP Chief Executives encouraging the promotion of payroll deductions for credit unions to their staff.
Council to consider investing up to £50k in deferred shares with 1st Alliance to increase their ability to lend and retain a capital ratio that meets legislative requirements facilitating an expansion of their membership and loan book.	Stephen Humphries	Complete	A grant payment of £50,000 is recommended.
Develop an initiative to encourage the use of the Credit Union Current Account amongst 16 to 18 year olds to contribute towards good financial management and open the door to future credit provision. Promote and incentivise young people to	Laura Cook	March 2015	An agreement has been reached with 1st Alliance Credit Union to visit schools; this will include a financial management skills lesson for secondary school pupils, followed up with support if they open a credit union account. Council led training courses designed for post-school young

Non Standard Lending Action Plan			
Recommendation/Action	Lead	Target Date	Status/Progress
open a Credit Union Current Account to deposit their wages, benefit or student grant cheque and utilise the account as their principal form of banking; and as an incentive deposit £12 for each account operational after a year.			people with barriers preventing them from entering a mainstream positive destination will also be used to promote 1st Alliance Credit Union. Contact with post-school education and training providers is still to be made.
Not for profit loan fund and rent-to-buy social enterprise schemes Investigate the potential for a social enterprise in conjunction with other Councils and a Community Development Financial Initiative offering affordable credit and linked savings products to complement 1st Alliance. This service should also offer both bank accounts and savings accounts, and could, potentially embed money advice.	Thomas Reaney	May 2015	A meeting took place between the Council and Scotcash in February 2015 to investigate the Scotcash model. The outcome of this will be reported to the next update to Cabinet.
Investigate "The Store" model to meet the needs of low income consumers requiring household goods on a rent-to-buy basis.	Thomas Reaney	May 2015	Contact has been made with the Prince Bishops Community Bank to establish how this operates.

Non Standard Lending Action Plan			
Recommendation/Action	Lead	Target Date	Status/Progress
<p>Debt and money advice services Re-examine the relationship between debt and money advice services to ensure they meet the needs of customers and provide best value to North Ayrshire citizens. Re-assess the resource requirements to extend or refocus the financial capability support (including Money Matters) to the most vulnerable citizens as part of their financial care plan.</p> <p>Discuss with Community Planning Partners the best way to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help people identify issues at an early stage; • Develop Early intervention and prevention approach; and • Promote services available. 	Isobel Kelly	March 2015	<p>Review of debt and money advice services has commenced.</p> <p>Initial proposals will be considered by Social Services Senior Management Team.</p>
The Council to reaffirm its own debt collection practices, corporate debt policy and ensure its procedures do not exacerbate people's financial difficulties.	Lesley Aird	Complete	<p>All relevant policies are Equality Impact Assessed (EIA) when they are initially drafted. These are then subsequently updated for any legislative or statutory changes as required. The Council has a rolling 3 year programme of EIA reviews for all policies.</p>

Non Standard Lending Action Plan			
Recommendation/Action	Lead	Target Date	Status/Progress
			<p>An additional review of the Sundry Debtors and Debt Management & Recovery policies and relevant paperwork was carried out in January 2015. No policy changes are recommended at this time.</p> <p>A review of the wording of all debt recovery notices and standard letters was also carried out. Some minor adjustments are being made to improve our communication.</p>
Community Planning Partnerships Community partners to be invited to consider supporting some or all of the recommendations outlined in the report.	Laura Friel	Awaiting Cabinet approval of actions	CPP to be advised of the recommendations once they are approved by Cabinet and asked to support some or all of them.
Advanced payment of earnings Investigate how North Ayrshire Council could make advanced payment of earnings to its employees.	Lesley Aird	Complete	<p>Work is in progress to review the approach of other public sector organisations. As part of this all other Scottish authorities were contacted. Seventeen authorities responded and all seventeen confirmed they do not offer personal loans to staff or advanced payment of earnings for staff experiencing financial hardship.</p> <p>The final outcome of the findings will be reported in the next update to Cabinet.</p>

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 11

24 February 2015

Cabinet

Subject: **Physical Environment Advisory Panel held on 26 January 2015**

Purpose: To submit the minute of the Physical Environment Advisory Panel held on 26 January 2015

Recommendation: That the Cabinet note the minute attached at Appendix 1.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Physical Environment Advisory Panel is one of two Advisory Panels within the Council.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 A meeting of the Physical Environment Advisory Panel was held on 26 January 2015. At it's meeting the Panel provided with updates in respect of:

- B714 Saltcoats/Dalry Route Improvements
- Irvine Leisure Centre & Townhouse
- Major Projects

3. Proposals

- 3.1 The Cabinet is invited to note the minutes attached at Appendix 1.

4. Implications

Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications.

Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are no financial implications.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 There are no legal implications.

Equality Implications

- 4.4 There are no equality implications.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 4.5 There are no environmental and sustainability issues.

Implications for Key Priorities

- 4.6 None.

Community Benefit Implications

- 4.7 There are no community benefit implications.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 No consultations have been undertaken in the formation of this report.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The attached minutes are submitted for information.



CRAIG HATTON
Executive Director (Place)

Reference : CH/LB

For further information please contact Craig Hatton, Executive Director
(Place) on 01294 324312

Background Papers

x

At a meeting of the Physical Environment Advisory Panel of North Ayrshire Council held on 26th January 2015 at 2.00pm in The Council Chambers Cunninghame House, Irvine.

Members Present:

Councillors Robert Barr, Marie Burns, Ian Clarkson, Anthea Dickson, Alex Gallagher, Jean Highgate, Donald Reid

In Attendance:

Craig Hatton, Executive Director (Place), Yvonne Baulk, Head of Service (Physical Environment), Audrey Sutton, Head of Service (Connected Communities), David Tate, Senior Manager (Property Management & Investment), Crawford Forsyth, Assistant Transportation Manager, Loraine Barr, PA to Executive Director (Place)

Chair

Councillor Anthony Gurney

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors John Bruce, John Easdale, Tom Marshall, Ruth Maguire

1. Minute of Previous Meeting (15 December 2014)

The minute was agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Councillor Reid raised that in respect of the consultation process and in particular survey letters issued to Community Councils, feedback has been negative. The letter is not considered to be clear and does not provide the right information to allow them to comment.

2. B714

Presentation by Craig Hatton, Executive Director (Place) and Crawford Forsyth, Assistant Transportation Manager to update the Panel in respect of the B714 Saltcoats/Dalry route improvement proposals and traffic study.

C Hatton explained that in terms of the Capital Plan, there was the requirement to identify investment for new projects and initiatives including the Irvine Enterprise Areas and therefore the B714 project had been re-profiled. C Hatton confirmed that the B714 is still within the Capital Plan, just at a later date.

Members asked that the following issues be considered:

- Vehicles to Kilwinning leaving the A737;
- Current weight restrictions at the Lynn Bridge, Dalry;

- Acceptable levels of traffic going through Kilwinning;
- Improvements required to the Saltcoats/Dalry Road prior to increased use.

Farmland between B714 and Dalry Bypass Roundabout - *Initial desktop studies identified extensive mine workings within the area and as a consequence those options will not be developed further at the present time.*

The Panel were advised that an Origin and Destination survey will be carried out on the A737 north of Beith. Transport Scotland also have an interest in the outcome of this study.

3. Leisure Centre Update

Presentation by David Tate, Senior Manager (Property Management & Investment) to update the Panel in respect of Irvine Leisure Centre & Townhouse.

Members then asked the following questions:

What was the original figure for the build of the Leisure Centre? *D Tate will confirm following the meeting.*

How many seats will be in the main hall? *D Tate advised that it will have seating capacity for approx. 300 although he would confirm following the meeting.*

Route for pedestrians, how wide do we expect this to be? *D Tate advised that he could not confirm this at present and we are currently working with Roads and at the early stage of design.*

What is the total number of jobs available? *D Tate will liaise with KA Leisure and confirm following the meeting.*

Members asked if there were still plans for a 5* Hotel and golf course at the Magnum site. C Hatton advised that he was not aware of any plans and that work will be undertaken with colleagues in Economic Development to link with Irvine Vision. At present the site will be demolished and returned to grass.

Councillor Burns would like to congratulate Officers on the community benefit work undertaken in respect of the construction contract for the new Leisure Centre.

Members asked if the public will have access to genealogy. A Sutton advised that the public will have direct access to genealogy facilities and there will be a combined Registrar/Librarian on-site.

Discussion took place surrounding public conveniences located within the Leisure Centre and would these be available for public use. Y Baulk advised that the Leisure Centre proposals came before a decision was made to withdraw automated public conveniences and in light of this a review will be undertaken.

Members asked if KA Leisure would operate the café. A Sutton advised that was not the intention at the moment and discussions are being held with other Council Services.

Members asked who would manage the Townhouse. A Sutton advised that it would be managed by Connected Communities and they are at present looking at the best use of staff from the Townhouse, HAC and Leisure Centre.

Discussion took place in relation to provision for cyclists. It was noted that cycle racks and shelters would be installed and full provision for cyclists will be located at the front of centre.

Members thanks D Tate for the presentation and advised that they were happy that we have reached this stage.

4. Major Projects Update

Report submitted by David Tate, Senior Manager (Property Management & Investment) to update the Panel in respect of major projects being undertaken.

Replacement Sheltered Housing Unit, Kiln Court, Irvine

Members asked if there was any further update in relation to the one-way system along East Road.

C Hatton confirmed that a discussion has taken place in relation to a one-way system and he would provide an update to the Panel following today's meeting.

Stevenston Institute, Largs

It was noted that the road closure in Lade Street will not affect the development and is scheduled for completion ahead of the programme.

Dickson Drive Regeneration, Irvine

Members raised the issue of litter due to the increased use of the car-park and asked that appropriate litter-picking measures are put in place.

Members asked why the container unit was still in-situ. D Tate will seek advice from Planning and report back to the Panel.

Garnock Campus

Members asked it was the intention for concrete slabs to be laid and left for a period of six months for foundations to settle. Y Baulk advised that she was not aware of this and contractors would continue to work on-site until December 2016. The Chair advised that he would look into this and confirm following the meeting.

5. AOCB

The Chair asked that the Panel continue to submit future items.

Councillor Reid asked that the Surplus Property Strategy be included as an item at a future meeting of the Panel.

6. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Monday 9th March 2015 at 2.00pm in the Council Chambers, Cunninghame House, Irvine.

The meeting ended at 3.35pm.