

# Public Document Pack



To: Councillor Wheeler, Convener; Councillor Lesley Dunbar, Vice Convener; Councillors Boulton, Cameron, Copland, Duncan, Flynn, Greig, Henrickson, Hutchison, Imrie, Laing, Lumsden, Catriona Mackenzie, Malik, Nicoll, Samarai and Jennifer Stewart and Mrs Stephanie Brock (Third Religious Representative), Mrs Louise Bruce (Parent Representative (Primary Schools)), Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative), Mr Colm O'Riordan (Parent Representative (Secondary Schools)), Mr Mike Paul (Teacher Representative (Secondary Schools)), Miss Pamela Scott (Teacher Representative (Primary Schools)) and Reverend Hutton Steel (Church of Scotland Representative).

Town House,  
ABERDEEN 17 January 2018

## **EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE**

The Members of the **EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE** are requested to meet in **Council Chamber - Town House** on **THURSDAY, 25 JANUARY 2018 at 2.00 pm.**

FRASER BELL  
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

### **B U S I N E S S**

#### **DETERMINATION OF URGENT BUSINESS**

1.1 There are no items of urgent business at this time.

#### **DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS**

2.1 Members are requested to determine that any exempt business be considered with the press and public excluded

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 Members are requested to intimate any declarations of interest (Pages 5 - 6)

## **REQUESTS FOR DEPUTATION**

- 4.1 There are no requests for deputation at this time

## **MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

- 5.1 Minute of the Meeting of 16 November 2017 - for approval (Pages 7 - 22)

## **COMMITTEE BUSINESS STATEMENT, TRACKER AND MOTIONS LIST**

- 6.1 Committee Business Statement (Pages 23 - 28)

- 6.2 Committee Report Tracker (Pages 29 - 30)

## **NOTICES OF MOTION**

- 7.1 There are no reports under this heading.

## **REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL. COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES**

- 8.1 There are no reports under this heading.

## **FINANCE, PERFORMANCE, RISK AND SERVICE WIDE ISSUES**

- 9.1 Education and Children's Services Performance Report - ECS/18/004  
(Pages 31 - 82)

- 9.2 E&CS Financial Performance - Quarter 2, 2017/18 - ECS/18/009 (Pages  
83 - 90)

## **GENERAL BUSINESS - EDUCATION**

- 10.1 Parental Involvement Strategy - ECS/18/001 (Pages 91 - 110)

- 10.2 Aberdeen City Play Policy and Strategy 2018 - ECS/18/003 (Pages 111 -  
126)

- 10.3 Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan (Pages 127 - 172)

- 10.4 Cordyce School Closure Consultation - ECS/18/002 (Pages 173 - 192)

- 10.5 Removal of Sites from Education and Children's Services Property Portfolio (Pages 193 - 198)
- 10.6 Lochside Academy Transport Arrangements: Hours of Operation of Free School Transport - to follow

**AT THIS JUNCTURE, EXTERNAL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WILL DEPART**

**GENERAL BUSINESS - CHILDREN'S**

- 11.1 Carers Strategy Consultation - ECS/18/006 (Pages 199 - 236)
- 11.2 Update on the Implementation of Reclaiming Social Work - ECS/18/011 (Pages 237 - 244)

**EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

- 12.1 There are no reports under this heading.

EHRIA's related to reports on this agenda can be viewed at  
[Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments](#)

To access the Service Updates for this Committee please use the following link:  
<https://committees.aberdeency.gov.uk/ecCatDisplayClassic.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13450&path=0>

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# Agenda Item 3.1

You must consider at the earliest stage possible whether you have an interest to declare in relation to any matter which is to be considered. You should consider whether reports for meetings raise any issue of declaration of interest. Your declaration of interest must be made under the standing item on the agenda, however if you do identify the need for a declaration of interest only when a particular matter is being discussed then you must declare the interest as soon as you realise it is necessary. The following wording may be helpful for you in making your declaration.

I declare an interest in item (x) for the following reasons .....

*For example, I know the applicant / I am a member of the Board of X / I am employed by...*  
and I will therefore withdraw from the meeting room during any discussion and voting on that item.

**OR**

I have considered whether I require to declare an interest in item (x) for the following reasons ..... however, having applied the objective test, I consider that my interest is so remote / insignificant that it does not require me to remove myself from consideration of the item.

**OR**

I declare an interest in item (x) for the following reasons ..... however I consider that a specific exclusion applies as my interest is as a member of xxxx, which is

- (a) a devolved public body as defined in Schedule 3 to the Act;
- (b) a public body established by enactment or in pursuance of statutory powers or by the authority of statute or a statutory scheme;
- (c) a body with whom there is in force an agreement which has been made in pursuance of Section 19 of the Enterprise and New Towns (Scotland) Act 1990 by Scottish Enterprise or Highlands and Islands Enterprise for the discharge by that body of any of the functions of Scottish Enterprise or, as the case may be, Highlands and Islands Enterprise; or
- (d) a body being a company:-
  - i. established wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing services to the Councillor's local authority; and
  - ii. which has entered into a contractual arrangement with that local authority for the supply of goods and/or services to that local authority.

**OR**

I declare an interest in item (x) for the following reasons.....and although the body is covered by a specific exclusion, the matter before the Committee is one that is quasi-judicial / regulatory in nature where the body I am a member of:

- is applying for a licence, a consent or an approval
- is making an objection or representation
- has a material interest concerning a licence consent or approval
- is the subject of a statutory order of a regulatory nature made or proposed to be made by the local authority.... and I will therefore withdraw from the meeting room during any discussion and voting on that item.

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## EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 16 November 2017. Minute of Meeting of the EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Wheeler, Convener; Councillor Lesley Dunbar, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Allan (as a substitute for Councillor Laing), Boulton, Cameron, Copland, Councillor Alan Donnelly, the Depute Provost, Flynn, Graham (as a substitute for Councillor Duncan for article 16 only), Greig, Henrickson, Houghton (as a substitute for Councillor Boulton for article 16 only), Imrie, Lumsden, McLellan (as a substitute for Councillor Hutchison), Catriona MacKenzie, Malik, Nicoll, Samarai, Sellar (as a substitute for Councillor Imrie for article 16 only), and Jennifer Stewart. External Members (to article 16 only):- Mrs Stephanie Brock (Third Religious Representative), Mrs Louise Bruce (Parent Representative (Primary Schools and ASN)), Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative), Mr Colm O'Riordan (Parent Representative (Secondary Schools) and Miss Pamela Scott (Teacher Representative (Primary School and ASN)).

**The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located at the following link:-**

**<https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=504&MId=5984&Ver=4>**

**Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.**

### ABERDEEN CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE PRESENTATION

1. The Committee received a presentation regarding Aberdeen Care Experienced (ACE) which gave young people a voice to share what had been good and bad through their time in care at their Champions Board which was set up in 2014 and relaunched in November 2016.

**The Committee resolved:**

to thank the young people for the informative presentation.

### DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

2. The Committee was requested in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to determine that items 12.1 (Early Learning and Childcare Financial Template - Exempt Appendix), 12.2 (Subsidised Transport and Safe Walking Routes to Lochside Academy - Exempt Appendix), 12.3 (Garthdee Alpine Sports – Internal Audit Report) and 12.4 (Aberdeen International Youth Festival Updated Business Plan 2017-2020) on today's agenda be considered with the press and public excluded.

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**The Committee resolved:**

in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of items 12.1 (Early Learning and Childcare Financial Template - Exempt Appendix), 12.2 (Subsidised Transport and Safe Walking Routes to Lochside Academy - Exempt Appendix), 12.3 (Garthdee Alpine Sports – Internal Audit Report) and 12.4 (Aberdeen International Youth Festival Updated Business Plan 2017-2020) so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in paragraphs 6 and 8 of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3. Members were requested to intimate any declarations of interest in respect of the items on today's agenda.

Thereafter, the following declarations of interest were intimated:

- (i) Councillor Nicoll declared an interest in relation to item 12.3 (Garthdee Alpine Sports – Internal Audit Report) by virtue of his position as a Council appointed Director to the Board of Garthdee Alpine Sports but chose to remain in the meeting as Garthdee Alpine Sports was a body being a company established wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing services to the local authority, and which had entered into a contractual arrangement with the local authority for the supply of goods and/or services to the local authority, as set out in paragraph 5.18(2)(d)(i) and (ii) of the Councillors' Code of Conduct;
- (ii) Councillor Lumsden declared an interest in relation to item 12.3 (Garthdee Alpine Sports – Internal Audit Report) by virtue of being proposed as a Director to the Board of Garthdee Alpine Sports but chose to remain in the meeting;
- (iii) Councillors Boulton, Donnelly, Duncan and Imrie declared interests in relation to item 12.4 (Aberdeen International Youth Festival Updated Business Plan 2017-2020) by virtue of their position as Council appointed members of the Aberdeen International Youth Festival Trust, and all chose to leave the meeting prior to consideration of the report; and
- (iv) Mrs Stephanie Brock declared an interest in relation to item 11.3 (St Peter's School – Long Term Educational Provision) by virtue of being a member of the St Peter's School Parent Council and having children attending the school but chose to remain in the meeting.

**REQUESTS FOR DEPUTATION**

4. The Committee had before it a number of requests for deputation as follows:
- 1. Request by Ms Lesley-Anne Yeats, Walker Road Parent Council, in relation to item 11.2 (Subsidised Transport and Safe Walking Routes to Lochside Academy);
  - 2. Request by Ms Julie Pose, in relation to item 11.2 (Subsidised Transport and Safe Walking Routes to Lochside Academy);



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3. Request by Mr Andy Finlayson, in relation to item 11.2 (Subsidised Transport and Safe Walking Routes to Lochside Academy); and
4. Request by Ms Anna Rist, St Peter's School Parent Council, in relation to item 11.3 (St Peter's School – Long Term Educational Provision).

**The Committee resolved:**

- (i) to agree to hear deputations 1, 2 and 3 detailed above immediately prior to consideration of the report on the agenda; and
- (ii) to note that the request for deputation from Ms Anna Rist, St Peter's School Parent Council had been withdrawn.

**MINUTE OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF 14 SEPTEMBER 2017**

5. The Committee had before it the minute of its meeting of 14 September 2017, for approval.

**The Committee resolved:**

to approve the minute as a correct record.

**COMMITTEE BUSINESS STATEMENT**

6. The Committee had before it a statement of pending and outstanding committee business which had been prepared by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

**The Committee resolved:**

- (i) to delete items 2 (Children and Young People (Scotland) Act), 3 (New Primary School Provision with Early Education and Childcare Facilities in Tillydrone), and 5 (ALEO Funding 2017/2018), 8 (Feasibility Study on a Safe Route to the New Lochside Academy); 9(i) (Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan) subject to the decisions taken later on the agenda; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the updates provided.

**COMMITTEE REPORT TRACKER**

7. The Committee had before it a tracker of future committee business.

**The Committee resolved:**

to note the information contained in the committee report tracker.

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**EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT REPORT - ECS/17/059**

8. With reference to article 6 of the minute of the meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee of 14 September 2017, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Education and Children's Services which provided (a) a briefing paper in respect of the first release Insight data relating to the 2017 SQA examination diet, and (b) a summary of the Education and Children's Services (E&CS) Directorate performance improvement measures.

**The report recommended –**

that the Committee

- (a) acknowledge the hard work and dedication of pupils and staff which had resulted in continued progress and successes in 2017, as reflected in the report content; and
- (b) note the content of the report.

**The Committee resolved:**

- (i) to approve the recommendations;
- (ii) with regards to the percentage of looked after children with an allocated social worker to request that narrative on the wider context of the allocation be included in future performance reports; and
- (iii) to request the Head of Children's Services to clarify to the Committee by way of email the figures for the number of looked after children over the year.

**EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE FINANCIAL TEMPLATE – ECS/17/057**

9. With reference to article 9 of the minute of the meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee of 14 September 2017, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Education and Children's Services which presented an updated Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan including the completed indicative financial template.

**The report recommended –**

that the Committee

- (a) note the content of the current version of the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan including the indicative financial template contained at the exempt appendix to the report;
- (b) instruct the Head of Education and Inclusion to present a further updated Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan to the appropriate Committee once notification of capital and revenue grants were received from Scottish Government;
- (c) endorse the interim Memorandum of Understanding between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council in relation to the provision of Early Learning and

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Childcare for Cross Border Split Placements as detailed at section 3.8 of the report; and

- (d) delegate authority to the Head of Education and Inclusion to allocate the 17/18 early years expansion revenue and capital grants, and in utilising the grant to instruct the Head of Education and Inclusion to ensure that the many assumptions made in the financial template were rigorously tested to support more accurate financial planning.

**The Committee resolved:**

to approve the recommendations.

**SUBSIDISED TRANSPORT AND SAFE WALKING ROUTES TO LOCHSIDE ACADEMY- ECS/17/060**

**10.** In accordance with article 4 of this minute, the Committee heard the following deputations:

(A) The Committee received a deputation from Ms Lesley-Anne Yeats, Walker Road Parent Council.

Ms Yeats advised of the Walker Road Parent Council's participation to date in the consultation events regarding the school and that throughout this period they had continuously campaigned for it to be recognised that from their view the only safe route to Lochside Academy from Torry was free, dedicated transport.

She referred to Section 51 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 which stated "make arrangements for the provision of school transport for pupils attending their schools and to have regard to the safety of those pupils" and therefore the Parent Council was of the view that the Council had a duty of care to provide free transport from Torry to Lochside Academy.

She went on to advise of their concerns regarding the safety of the proposed safe walking route from Torry and advised that in order to address these concerns, the Parent Council wished the Committee to:

1. Approve Free Transport to Lochside Academy from Torry;
2. Request amendments to further investigate that free bus provision whether it be through:
  - a) a dedicated service; or
  - b) fully supported service picking up all Torry children within the community and dropping off within the school grounds; and
3. Request an amendment to further investigate available funding to ensure the accessibility of the school and community facilities outwith the proposed recommended 7am-6pm bus pass provision.

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(B) The Committee received a deputation from by Ms Julie Pose, Chair of the Charleston Primary School Parent Council.

Ms Pose advised of concerns regarding the safety of the proposed walking route to the new Academy from Cove, advising that she did not consider that a reasonable or safe walking route had been identified. In particular she highlighted the concerns the Parent Council had for pupils crossing the dual carriageway and stated that they did not accept that the central reservations available were sufficient. In this regard she referred to the safe walking and cycling route which was agreed by the Planning Development Management Committee in 2015, wherein the addition of a toucan crossing on Wellington Road was agreed, including the said route along the A956 dual carriageway along which there were no safety barriers other than at the Sainsbury's junction. She did not believe that this was either reasonable or safe as a designated safe route for children to walk or cycle along at any time. She also highlighted that Cove children would need to cross a crossing which did not currently exist and therefore had not been tested as fit for purpose and walk along the A956 which had no safety barriers along its entire length other than at its junctions. Therefore, she felt that Cove parents would have to hope that the route would be safe for their children and she did not believe that this was acceptable.

She then referred to Section 3.3.6 of the report which stated that authorities had a duty to carry out school education functions in a way which was designed to reduce inequalities of outcome for those pupils experiencing them as a result of socio-economic disadvantage. She explained that in her view excluding Cove families from the possibility of any free bus transport was creating inequality rather than addressing it and that she felt this was very unfortunate given the work between the current catchment schools to create a collective and inclusive transition for all of the future pupils of Lochside Academy. Also in respect of Section 51 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 which stated that authorities could charge parents for using school transport if they felt that the charge could be paid by the parent without undue hardship, she felt that there was an assumption that all parents in the Cove area would not experience the undue hardship that all parents in Torry and Kincorth would.

She also questioned whether the distance to walk for the children living at the far coast end of Cove, where the distance to school was much greater than those children living in Charleston, and the crossing of Wellington Road had been taken into consideration.

(C) The Committee received a deputation from Mr Andy Finlayson.

Mr Finalyson advised of his concerns regarding the identified safe walking route for pupils from Cove attending Lochside Academy, in particular highlighting his continued concerns for the safety of children crossing the A956 dual carriageway. In his view the current proposal was not acceptable and he explained why he did not feel that the proposed traffic management measures were sufficient.

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In light of his concerns for the safety of pupils walking from Cove to the new Academy, Mr Finlayson requested that the Committee agree as a part of the safe walking route for pupils from Cove attending Lochside Academy to provide an overbridge or underpass for the crossing of Wellington Road and instruct officers to report to the appropriate Committee for consideration of the implementation of this measure.

(D) With reference to article 12 of the minute of the meeting of the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee of 29 August 2017, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Education and Children's Services which (a) set out options for providing subsidised or free transport to school for pupils attending the new Lochside Academy from August 2018; and (b) presented a report on the outcomes of a feasibility study regarding safe walking routes to the school.

**The report recommended –**  
that the Committee

- (a) note that the Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment would proceed to implement an at-grade Toucan crossing over the A956 Wellington Road, as originally stipulated in the planning consent, as it was the most suitable option in terms of providing a safe route to the new Lochside Academy for pupils, and to endorse this measure for their interest;
- (b) in order to support the transition to the new school, approve Option 2a in the report, to provide free-of-charge transport (using public transport services) to the new Lochside Academy, for pupils living in Torry and Kincorth only (i.e. those pupils whose home address included one of the Torry or Kincorth postcodes listed at Appendix 4), to take effect from August 2018 and initially for a period of three years, subject to approval of the appropriate funding by the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee;
- (c) subject to approval of the required funding of option 2 by the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee: (1) approve the total estimated expenditure per annum (as detailed in the exempt appendix) for a maximum period of three years as detailed in the report; (2) delegate authority to the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development following consultation with the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services, to undertake a tender process for the procurement and thereafter award of a contract for the delivery of a supported bus service to operate between Deeside Bae, Leggart, Balnagask and Lochside Academy, from August 2018; and (3) delegate authority to the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services, to conclude a contract with the successful bidder;
- (d) refer the financial implications of the above recommendation (b) (as detailed in the exempt appendix) to the next meeting of the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee, in order to seek approval from that Committee for the allocation of the appropriate budget to support the agreed arrangements for pupil transport to the new school, to commence from August 2018 and initially for a period of three years; and
- (e) instruct the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources to undertake a review of the arrangements for subsidised transport to Lochside Academy after three years of its operation, and subsequently to present a report to the appropriate

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Committee with any necessary recommendations for ending or changing these arrangements.

**The Committee resolved:**

- (i) to approve recommendation (a) and (d) as contained in the report;
- (ii) in order to support the transition to the new school, to approve Option 2a as detailed in the report with the addition of the provision of a supported bus service between Cove and Lochside Academy with pupils paying a fare to use the service to take effect from August 2018 and initially for a period of 3 years subject to approval of appropriate funding by the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee and to instruct the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development to report to the appropriate Committee on the proposed fare to be paid by pupils from Cove for approval;
- (iii) to note the concerns of parents from Torry, Kincorth and Cove expressed at the consultation meetings about the safety of pupils leaving service buses at stops on Wellington Road rather than on the quieter Wellington Circle and therefore instruct the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development to discuss such adjustments to the routes of service buses 3/3G, 18 and the new supported public services detailed in (iv) below as were necessary to ensure that Lochside Academy pupils were dropped off on Wellington Circle (or in the schools grounds if appropriate) at the start of the school day and picked up from Wellington Circle (or in the schools grounds if appropriate) at the end of the normal school day and to report back on the outcome of those discussions to the appropriate Committee;
- (iv) subject to approval of the required funding of amended Option 2a as detailed in (ii) above by the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee to (1) approve the total estimated expenditure per annum (as detailed in the exempt appendix as amended to include the costs of the supported bus service between Cove and Lochside Academy) for a period of 3 years as detailed in the report (2) delegate authority to the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development following consultation with the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services, to undertake a tender process for the procurement and thereafter award for the delivery of a supported bus service to operate between Deeside Brae, Leggart, Balnagask and Lochside Academy from August 2018 and (3) delegate authority to the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services to conclude a contract with the successful bidder;
- (v) to note the concerns expressed by Cove parents during the consultation meetings about the safety of the identified safe routes to school for the approximately 265 Cove Lochside Academy pupils;
- (vi) to instruct the Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment to carry out a study and option appraisal and budget analysis for the following measures in respect of safe walking routes to school for pupils residing in Cove and to report the outcome to the appropriate Committee to ensure that these works, if approved, were implemented prior to the opening of Lochside Academy:

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- (a) Puffin crossing at an estimated cost of £30-35k<sup>1</sup> on Cove Road to ensure the safety of pupils crossing this road with the location of the crossing determined in consultation with local Elected Members, Parent Councils and the Community Council;
  - (b) Puffin crossing in the vicinity of Langdykes Road at an estimated cost of £30-35k<sup>1</sup> to ensure the safety of pupils crossing this road with the location of the crossing determined in consultation with local Elected Members, Parent Councils and the Community Council;
  - (c) Investigate the adoption of the land between Charleston Drive and Charleston Crescent and the subsequent upgrading and lighting of the footpath at an estimated cost of £30-35k<sup>1</sup> (works only not inclusive of the purchase of any land) as a route away from vehicular traffic for pupils to use travelling to and from the new Lochside Academy;
  - (d) Resolve drainage issues, and delivery of upgraded lighting, on South Loirston Road as an identified safe route to the New Lochside Academy at an estimated cost of £25k<sup>1</sup> (street lighting only);
  - (e) Consider the installation of barriers between the pavement and road on Wellington Road, between Souter-Head Roundabout and the junctions of both Charleston Road North and Wellington Circle.
- (vii) to note the concerns expressed by parents in Torry, Kincorth and Cove about speeding on roads identified as safe walking routes to Lochside Academy and further note that enforcement of speeding restrictions was the responsibility of Police Scotland;
  - (viii) to instruct the Head of Education and Inclusion to facilitate a meeting between representatives of the parent councils in Kincorth, Torry and Cove with appropriate representatives from Police Scotland to provide a greater understanding of the community concerns about speeding on the safe routes to Lochside Academy and discuss the measures that could be taken to address those concerns and to report back to the appropriate Committee on the outcomes from that meeting;
  - (ix) to instruct the Head of Education and Inclusion to provide support to Lochside Academy's six associated group primary schools to ensure appropriate road safety programmes were in place in those schools for P4-7 prior to Lochside Academy opening in August 2018 and to report back to the appropriate Committee on the need for additional road safety programmes in the associated group primaries thereafter;
  - (xii) to agree that it was not the Committee's view that a suitable safe walking route had been identified for pupils from Torry;
  - (xiii) to instruct the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development to concurrently enter into discussions with bus providers with a view to re-routing services in Torry to ensure that pupils were picked up from safe locations and to report back on the outcome of the discussions to the appropriate Committee;
  - (xiv) to instruct the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development and Head of Policy, Resources and Performance to enter into discussions with the school

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<sup>1</sup> All estimated costs advised by officers

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- Senior Management Team to ascertain whether the bus pass should be valid beyond the current hours of 07:00 to 18:00 to ensure pupil access to school related extra-curricular activities – with a report to be submitted to the next meeting of Education and Children’s Services Committee;
- (xv) to instruct the Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment to upgrade, as per planning conditions, the path which runs from the south end of Boyd Orr Avenue in a south east direction to Redmoss Road (noted as Core Path 82 on page 122 of the report) to improve the safe walking route from the southern end of Kincorth;
- (xvi) to request the Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment to report to the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee for approval to undertake the necessary legal process to implement a loading ban in Wellington Circle to ensure traffic restrictions were in place between Lochside Academy and Wellington Road; and
- (xvii) to instruct the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development and the Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment to undertake annual updates reviewing the success of the provision of the free bus travel and the safe routes to school, with the first review to be end undertaken in March 2019 and thereafter annually at the end of the third school term with the outcome of each review to be reported to the relevant Committee at the earliest possible opportunity prior to the end of the fourth school term each year.

**ST PETER’S SCHOOL – LONG TERM EDUCATIONAL PROVISION- ECS/17/062**

**11.** With reference to article 12 of the minute of the meeting of the Education and Children’s Services Committee of 1 June 2017, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Education and Children’s Services which provided details and conclusions of the option appraisals carried out in relation to the planning of future options to be considered for the delivery of the long term education provision at St. Peter’s Roman Catholic School in Aberdeen.

**The report recommended –**  
that the Committee

- (a) consider the outcome of the option appraisal work to date which concluded that:
- the current Riverbank School site was the most viable site for a new build replacement for St. Peter’s School, and;
  - the current Riverbank School building was the most suitable existing school building for the long term delivery of RC educational provision at St. Peter’s, and that within currently available resources this was the most viable option for the future of St Peter’s School.
- (b) instruct the Director of Education and Children’s Services to commence a programme of formal consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and section 22D of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 regarding the proposal to relocate St.



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- Peter's RC School to the current Riverbank School building, once the New Tillydrone Primary School became operational, and
- (c) instruct the Director of Education and Children's Services to report back to a future meeting of the Committee regarding the outcome of the consultation, which would take place in early 2018.

The Convener, seconded by Councillor Cameron moved:-  
that the Committee

- (a) note the outcome of the option appraisal work to date; and
- (b) instruct the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources to undertake a feasibility study to identify improvements to Riverbank School and the associated costs, including the costs of bringing up to category A and to report to the Committee at its meeting in January 2018.

Councillor Greig, seconded by Councillor Samarai moved as an amendment:-  
that the Committee –

- (1) note the outcome of the option appraisal work to date; and
- (2) instruct the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources to undertake a feasibility study to identify: (1) improvements to Riverbank School and the associated costs, including the costs of bringing up to category A; and (2) the cost of a new build replacement school for St Peters on the cleared Riverbank School site, and to report to the Committee at its meeting in January 2018 with the view to considering what option(s) goes to out to statutory consultation.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (23) – the Convener; the Vice Convener and Councillors Allan, Boulton, Cameron, Copland, Donnelly, Flynn, Greig, Henrickson, Imrie, Lumsden, McLellan, Catriona Mackenzie, Malik, Nicoll, Samarai, Jennifer Stewart, Mrs Stephanie Brock, Mrs Louise Bruce, Mr John Murray, Mr Colm O'Riordan, and Miss Pamela Scott; and for the amendment (1) – Councillor Greig.

**The Committee resolved:**

to adopt the motion

**In accordance with the decision taken at article 2 of this minute, the Committee considered the following four items of business with the press and public excluded.**

**EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE FINANCIAL TEMPLATE – ECS/17/057 – EXEMPT APPENDIX**

**12.** The Committee had before it an exempt appendix presenting the indicative early learning and childcare financial template referred to at article 9 of this minute.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE  
16 November 2017

**The Committee resolved:**

to note the indicative financial template contained in the exempt appendix.

**SUBSIDISED TRANSPORT AND SAFE WALKING ROUTES TO LOCHSIDE ACADEMY- ECS/17/060 – EXEMPT APPENDIX**

13. The Committee had before it an exempt appendix detailing the estimated expenditure of the proposal contained in the subsidised transport and safe walking routes to Lochside Academy report referred to at article 10 of this minute.

A further exempt appendix detailing the estimated cost of the proposal approved by the Committee at article 10 of this minute in respect of the decision approved by the Committee in relation to the subsidised transport and safe walking routes to Lochside Academy report was tabled.

**The Committee resolved:**

to note both exempt appendices.

**GARTHDEE ALPINE SPORTS – INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - ECS/17/054**

14. The Committee had before it a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which sought approval of the Aberdeen Performing Arts (APA) 2018-2021 Business Plan.

**The report recommended –**

that the Committee

- (a) note the contents of the Internal Audit report which was attached as Appendix 1 of the report;
- (b) note that a report would be submitted to the 22 February 2018 meeting of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee providing an update on the organisation's response to the Internal Audit findings;
- (c) note that a report would be submitted to the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee meeting of 1 December 2017 which reviewed the future management arrangements of Garthdee Alpine Sports and other sports providers; and
- (d) otherwise note the content of the report.

**The Committee resolved:**

to approve the recommendations.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE  
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**SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 37.2 (LENGTH OF MEETINGS)**

15. The Convener proposed that the Committee suspend Standing Order 37.2 (Length of Meetings) to enable the meeting to continue beyond four hours.

**The Committee resolved:**

to agree to suspend Standing Order 37.2 (Length of Meetings).

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with article 3 of this minute, Councillors Boulton, Donnelly, Duncan and Imrie left the meeting prior to consideration of the following item of business. Councillor Sellar substituted for Councillor Imrie for this item only. Councillor Houghton substituted for Councillor Boulton for this item only. Councillor Graham substituted for Councillor Duncan for this item only.

During consideration of the following item Councillor Catriona Mackenzie declared an interest by virtue of her position as a Council appointed Director to the Board of Aberdeen Performing Arts but chose to remain in the meeting as Aberdeen Performing Arts was a body being a company established wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing services to the local authority, and which had entered into a contractual arrangement with the local authority for the supply of goods and/or services to the local authority, as set out in paragraph 5.18(2)(d)(i) and (ii) of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

**ABERDEEN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL UPDATED BUSINESS PLAN 2017-2020 - ECS/17/066**

16. With reference to article 25 of the minute of the meeting of Council of 21 June 2017, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Education and Children's Services which presented the Aberdeen International Youth Festival (AIYF) 2017-2020 Business Plan including their plans for transitioning to a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) and also reports on current festival activity.

**The report recommended –**  
that the Committee

- (a) note the AIYF draft Business Plan and additional documents submitted to the Head of Education and Inclusion on 29 September 2017 and ask that the final Business Plan was re-submitted to the Head of Education and Inclusion once approved by the Board of Trustees; and

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE  
16 November 2017

- (b) request the Head of Education and Inclusion to consider the documents referred to in (a) above in the context of the annual cultural programme as part of the Council's 2018/19 budget setting process.

**The Committee resolved:**

- (i) to note that the Committee was not supportive of funding being allocated to Aberdeen International Youth Festival as part of the financial year 18/19 budget setting process;
- (ii) to note that the Committee was supportive of funding of £100,000 from contingencies or reserves being approved by the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting to be held on 1 December 2017 for a Year of Young People funding Award Programme for the financial year 18/19 for groups and organisations to apply for funding for the delivery of youth led cultural projects and events in Aberdeen to celebrate the Year of Young People;
- (iii) subject to the funding being approved by the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee on 1 December 2017:
1. to instruct the Head of Education and Inclusion, following consultation with the Head of Finance, to set up a Year of Young People funding Award Programme for the financial year 18/19 for groups and organisations to apply for funding for the delivery of youth led cultural projects and events in Aberdeen to celebrate the Year of Young People;
  2. to delegate authority to the Head of Education and Inclusion, following consultation with the Convener and Vice Convener of the Education and Children's Services Committee, to set the criteria for the awarding of funding from the Award Programme;
  3. to delegate authority to the Head of Education and Inclusion to review and allocate the awards accordingly;
- (iv) subject to approval of recommendation (ii), to refer the approved recommendations in the report together with appropriate background detail by way of a report to the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting to be held on 1 December for consideration of funding allocation for the Award Programme, with the recommendation that (1) a sum of £100,000 from contingencies or reserves be allocated to the Award Programme for a one year period; and (2) that the Head of Finance be delegated the power to account for this funding as appropriate; and
- (v) to instruct the Head of Finance and Head of Education and Inclusion to report to the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee on 1 December 2017 as part of the report approved at (iv) above detailing all of the in-kind support and non-core funding provided to Aberdeen International Youth Festival.

**At this juncture, the external members of the Committee departed.**

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE  
16 November 2017

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2014 - ECS/17/058**

17. With reference to article 18 of the minute of the meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee of 17 November 2016, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Education and Children's Services which provided an update on the anticipated financial and service implications of the implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 as it affected children's social work.

**The report recommended –**  
that the Committee

- (a) note how children's social work had taken forward the implementation of the new duties contained within the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014; and
- (b) note the request by the Education and Children's Services Committee in June 2017 to provide a report in March 2018 on the project costs of implementing Part 11 – Continuing Care.

**The Committee resolved:**  
to approve the recommendations.

**VALEDICTORY – GAYLE GORMAN**

17. The Convener reminded members that this would be Mrs Gayle Gorman, the Director of Education and Children's Services last meeting before taking up her new post as Chief Inspector of Education for Scotland. He thanked Mrs Gorman for her hard work, passion and commitment to improving all areas within the Service's remit and for her support to the Committee throughout her tenure.

**The Committee resolved:**  
to concur with the Convener's comments.  
- **COUNCILLOR JOHN WHEELER, Convener**

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE  
16 November 2017

**EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**25 JANUARY 2018**

Please note that this statement contains a note of every report which has been instructed for submission to this Committee. All other actions which have been instructed by the Committee are not included, as they are deemed to be operational matters after the point of committee decision.

Reports which are overdue are shaded.

	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>
1.	Education and Children's Services Committee 8 September 2016, article 16	<p><b><u>Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014</u></b></p> <p>The Committee resolved, amongst other things, to note the Scottish Government's programme for Scotland 2016/2017; further note the financial implications as set out in paragraph 3; and instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, asking for a guarantee that the funding provided by Scottish Government for the implementation of delivering the new statutory duties imposed by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 would be sufficient to cover the costs imposed by statute and for the Chief Executive to report back on the response received.</p>	A letter was sent on 16 August 2017, and a response is awaited.	Head of Education and Inclusion	On receipt of response.

2.	Education and Children's Services 1/6/17 article 14	<p><b><u>Future Plans For Pupil Support Services and Cordyce School</u></b></p> <p>The Committee resolved, amongst other things, to instruct the Head of Inclusion to report to the Committee on the outcome of the statutory consultation at the November meeting of the Committee to enable a decision on the future of the school specified in section 3 of the report to be made.</p>	<p>At its meeting on 14 September 2017, the Committee agreed to the amended timetable for the statutory public consultation on the proposal to close Cordyce School, and to instruct the Head of Education to report to the Committee on the outcome of the consultation at its meeting in January 2018.</p> <p><b>A report is on the agenda.</b></p>	Head of Education and Inclusion	25/01/18
3.	Education and Children's Services 1/6/17 article 21	<p><b><u>Allocation of Work in Children's Social Work</u></b></p> <p>The Committee resolved, amongst other things, to instruct the Head of Children's Services to submit a report on the implementation of Reclaiming Social Work to the Committee by the end of 2017.</p>	<p>The Committee on 1 June 2017 received an update on Reclaiming Social Work that described the hybrid team unit that the Service had implemented due to recruitment issues. The Service is now in the process of consulting with staff, HR and Trades Unions on a model that would see the full implementation of units rather than the interim position of hybrid teams. In light of the ongoing consultation, the Service is not in a position to provide a comprehensive picture on the implementation of the Reclaiming Social Work for the Committee's meeting on 16 November 2017, however will report to the Committee's meeting on 25 January 2018 in this regard.</p> <p><b>A report will be submitted to the Committee's meeting on 25 January 2018.</b></p> <p><b>A report is on the agenda.</b></p>	Head of Education and Inclusion	16/11/17
4.	Education and Children's Services 1/6/17 article 22	<p><b><u>Continuing Care</u></b></p> <p>The Committee resolved, amongst other things, to request the Head of Children's Services to submit a report to the Committee in March 2018 detailing the costs of continuing care during the first full year of implementation of Part 11 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.</p>	<p>At its meeting on 16 November 2017, the Committee its request in June 2017 to provide a report in March/April 2018 on the projected costs of implementing Part 11 – Continuing Care.</p>	Head of Education and Inclusion	March/April 2018



5.	Education and Children's Services 14/9/17 article 9	<p><b><u>Early Learning And Childcare Delivery Plan</u></b> The Committee resolved, amongst other things:</p> <p>(i) to note that the Director of Education and Children's Services would submit a further version of the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan to Committee in 2018 following the period of scrutiny by the Scottish Government; and</p> <p>(ii) to instruct the Director of Education and Children's Services to submit a report to the Committee in 2018 providing an update on progress and plans for workforce planning for early learning and childcare.</p> <p>The Committee resolved, amongst other things, to instruct the Head of Education and Inclusion to present a further updated Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan to the appropriate Committee once notification of capital and revenue grants were received from Scottish Government.</p>		Head of Education and Inclusion	March/April 2018
	Education and Children's Services 16/11/17 article 9			Head of Education and Inclusion	March/April 2018
6.	Finance, Policy and Resources 20/9/17 article 27	<p><b><u>Condition &amp; Suitability 3 Year Programme/ Braeside School Maintenance - CHI/17/227</u></b></p> <p>The Finance, Policy and Resources Committee resolved, amongst other things, that maintenance concerns in relation to Braeside School including the overgrown condition of the playground be remitted to the Education and Children's Services Committee for consideration.</p>	<b>Work on identifying options in respect of the maintenance requires further investigation. A report will be submitted to the appropriate Committee in April.</b>	Head of Policy, Performance and Resources	25/01/18

7.	Education and Children's Services 16/11/17 article 10	<p><b><u>Subsidised Transport and Safe Walking Routes to Lochside Academy</u></b></p> <p>The Committee resolved, amongst other things:</p> <p>(i) to note the concerns of parents from Torry, Kincorth and Cove expressed at the consultation meetings about the safety of pupils leaving service buses at stops on Wellington Road rather than on the quieter Wellington Circle and therefore instructs the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development to discuss such adjustments to the routes of service buses 3/3G, 18 and the new supported public services detailed in (iv) as were necessary to ensure that Lochside Academy pupils were dropped off on Wellington Circle (or in the schools grounds if appropriate) at the start of the school day and picked up from Wellington Circle (or in the schools grounds if appropriate) at the end of the normal school day and to report back on the outcome of those discussions to the appropriate Committee; and</p> <p>(ii) to instruct the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development and Head of Policy, Resources and Performance to enter into discussions with the school Senior Management Team to ascertain whether the bus pass should be valid beyond the current hours of 07:00 to 18:00 to ensure pupil access to school related extra-curricular activities – with a report to be submitted to the next meeting of Education and Children's Services Committee.</p>	<p><b>A report is on the agenda.</b></p>	<p>Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development</p> <p>Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development/ Head of Policy, Resources and Performance</p>	<p>April 2018</p> <p>25/01/18</p>
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8.	Education and Children's Services 16/11/17 article 11	<p><b><u>St Peter's School – Long Term Education Provision</u></b></p> <p>The Committee resolved, amongst other things, to instruct the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources to undertake a feasibility study to identify improvements to Riverbank School and the associated costs, including the costs of bringing up to category A and to report to the Committee at its meeting in January 2018.</p>	<p>This report will be submitted to the April 2018 Committee meeting due to the tight timescale in pulling together this work. The Design Team are unable to meet the timescales for this work.</p> <p><b>A report will be submitted in April 2018</b></p>	Head of Policy, Resources and Performance	25/01/18
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**Annual Reports**

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CYCLE 1 - COMMITTEE STATISTICS					
The Tracker Shows the Reports Which are Expected to be Submitted to Future Committee Meetings					
Report Title	Committee date	Report author	Head of Service	Purpose of Report	Explanation if delayed or withdrawn
Cordyce School	25/01/2018	Andrew Jones	Euan Couperwhite	The Committee on 14/9/17 agreed to the amended timetable for the statutory public consultation on the proposal to close Cordyce School, and instruct the Head of Education to report to the Committee on the outcome of the consultation at its meeting in January 2018	
Parent Involvement Strategy	25/01/2018	Donna Cuthill	Helen Shanks	Provide Elected Members with a copy of the new Parental Involvement Strategy.	
Maintenance of Braeside School	25/01/2018	Andrew Jones	Euan Couperwhite	The Finance, Policy and Resources Committee on 20/9/17 agreed that maintenance concerns in relation to Braeside School including the overgrown condition of the playground be remitted to the Education and Children's Services Committee for consideration.	Delayed: Work on identifying options in respect of the maintenance requires further investigation. A report will be submitted to the appropriate Committee in April
Education and Children's Services Performance Report	25/01/2018	Alex Paterson	Euan Couperwhite	To report the Service's performance for the specified reporting period.	
Carer's Strategy	25/01/2018	Dave Bliss	Bernadette Oxley	Consideration of the Carer's Strategy	
Aberdeen Childcare Services - Out Of School Care Fees Review	25/01/2018	Sacha Will and Justyna Juska	Helen Shanks	Review of Out of School Care Fees	Withdrawn. To be reported via the budget process.
Aberdeen Play Policy	25/01/2018	Louise Beaton	Helen Shanks	The plan is to launch the new Aberdeen Play Policy in spring 2018 as part of the Year of Young People events in Aberdeen.	
St Peter's School - Long Term Educational Provision	25/012018	Maria Thies	Euan Couperwhite	ECS Ctte 16th Nov ' 17 - to instruct the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources to undertake a feasibility study to identify improvements to Riverbank School and the associated costs, including the costs of bringing up to category A and to report to the Committee at its meeting in January 2018.	DELAYED. TThis report will be submitted to the April 2018 Committee meeting due to the tight timescale in pulling together this work. The Design Team are unable to meet the timescales for this work.

Report Title	Committee date	Report author	Head of Service	Purpose of Report	Explanation if delayed or withdrawn
Subsidised Transport and Safe Walking Routes to Lochside Academy	25/01/2018	Andrew Jones	Euan Couperwhite	TBC - ECS Ctte 16th Nov ' 17 - instruct the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development and Head of Policy, Resources and Performance to enter into discussions with the school Senior Management Team to ascertain whether the bus pass should be valid beyond the current hours of 07:00 to 18:00 to ensure pupil access to school related extra-curricular activities – with a report to be submitted to the next meeting of Education and Children's Services Committee;	
Reclaiming Social Work Update (Allocation of Work in Children's Social Work)	25/01/2018	Graeme Simpson	Bernadette Oxley	E&CS Committee - 1/6/17 article 21 - instruct the Head of Children's Services to submit a report on the implementation of Reclaiming Social Work to the Committee by the end of 2017.	
Corporate Child Protection Policy and Procedure	25/01/2018	Graeme Simpson	Bernadette Oxley	To advise the Committee of the updated Child Protection - Corporate Policy and Procedure and its implications for all council staff and elected members	Withdrawn from E&CS Committee as a corporate policy and therefore being reported to the F,P&R Committee.
ECS Finance Report	25/01/2018	Brian Dow	Steve Whyte	1.1 To provide the full year forecast position of Education & Children's Services for the financial year 2017/18.	
Northern Alliance: Regional Improvement Plan	25/01/2018	Aisling MacQuarrie	Helen Shanks	To advise the committee of the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan	
Removal of sites from Education and Children's Services property portfolio	25/01/2018	Andrew Jones	Helen Shanks	This report provides details of a number of Education and Children's Services sites which are considered as surplus to requirement, and makes recommendations for removing these from the service property portfolio.	

COMMITTEE	<b>Education and Children's Services</b>
DATE	<b>25<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>
TITLE OF REPORT	<b>Education and Children's Services Directorate Performance Improvement Report</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/18/004</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Bernadette Oxley/ Helen Shanks (Acting)</b>
REPORT AUTHOR	<b>Reyna Stewart</b>

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of the report is to provide Elected Members with a summary of the Education and Children's Services (E&CS) Directorate performance improvement measures and outcome data from 1<sup>st</sup> July up to and including 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Committee is asked to note the content of the report

### **3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

3.1 The Committee, at the meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017, instructed that further detail relating to the metric covering the percentage of Looked After Children with an allocated social worker, be provided in this report.

3.2 As a result, the Directorate has materially reviewed collation and presentation of this information, along with that relating to the similar measure for children supported by the Children's Social Work Service. The context of this review is reflected in Appendix A.

3.3 The detail contained within Appendix B relates to a core selection of Improvement Indicators, reflecting outcomes aligned with the Education and Children's Services Directorate Improvement Plan 2017-18, and Directorate performance measures linked to Shaping Aberdeen themes.

3.4 Appendix C provides drill-down narrative and comparative table relating to the above indicators and measures (where identified in Appendix B).

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

- 6.1 Consistency and transparency of performance reporting to Elected Members and in the public domain forms part of the Directorate's approach to risk mitigation through enhancing scrutiny and accountability against the delivery of services to the community.

- 6.2 The report identifies areas of performance improvement which are aligned to the delivery of Directorate priorities. This delivery is subject to the assessment and management of risk identified below:

- 6.3 Risk Mitigation Assessment

- 6.4 Financial Resources

- 6.4.1 Proper reporting of performance information provides assurance to elected Members, and the public, that the Directorate is managing its resources efficiently in order to deliver its commitments and service improvements as effectively as possible.

Risk Level: Low

- 6.5 Employees

- 6.5.1 The report contains information relating to the Directorate commitment to improving the staff experience.

Risk Level: Low

- 6.6 Customers / Citizens / Stakeholders

- 6.6.1 The report contains information to support the Directorate's commitment to improving customer experience, as well as delivering outcome improvements in accordance with its strategic priorities. The report also provides the Directorate's other stakeholders, including partners and Government agencies, with evidence on the rate of progress in these areas.

Risk Level: Low

- 6.7 Environment

- 6.7.1 Risk Level: No risks have been identified against this theme

- 6.8 Reputation



- 6.8.1 The Council's reputation could be at risk of damage if timely, relevant on the management of resources and the delivery of service improvement is not adequately reported. This report mitigates that risk.

Risk Level: Low

## 6.9 Legal

### 6.9.1 (i) Public Performance Reporting

Public performance reporting is a statutory duty placed on local authorities.

This report therefore serves to mitigate the risk that this duty is not met.

Risk Level: Low

### 6.9.2 (ii) Duty of Due Regard

- 6.9.3 As of August 1st 2017, all Education Authorities must consider and evidence how strategic decisions will help to reduce the poverty related attainment gap.

- 6.9.4 This legal duty is demonstrated through consultation and the analysis of available evidence. In effect, the duty requires that education authorities continually consider whether they can do more to help those pupils impacted by socio-economic disadvantage to achieve equality of outcome and to give due weight to the outcome of those considerations when delivering school education.

- 6.9.5 Through the provision, analysis and reporting of comparative detail of the current outcomes and experiences of children and young people across all SIMD deciles, this Report supports the arrangements for monitoring the standards and quality of school education in given areas.

- 6.9.6 This information also assists the Directorate in the identification of improvement activity designed to raise standards and address known challenges across an education authority area, such as those priorities set out in the National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan.

Risk Level: Low

## 7. **IMPACT SECTION**

- 7.1 The outcomes and measures contained within this Report are materially aligned, through the ECS Directorate Improvement Plan, with the strategic improvement themes from the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026, and Aberdeen City Council Strategic Business Plan, 2017-18 Refresh.

- 7.1.1 Performance measures relating to the Directorate's delivery of Service are linked directly to the respective 'Shaping Aberdeen' impacts.

- Improving Customer Experience
- Improving Staff Experience
- Improving our Use of Resources

## 7.2 **Economy**

7.2.1 The Directorate takes cognisance of the positive impact that effective delivery of its services can impart to the Council and the Community in terms of transforming its provision and facilitating greater access to the benefits of economic stability and employment for those the Directorate supports.

## 7.3 **People**

7.3.1 The Directorate is committed to improving the key life outcomes of all people in Aberdeen, with a specific focus on our children and young people, taking cognisance of the importance of promoting equality and diversity as a foundation for improvement.

Within the report, this is recognised in terms of the Directorate's focus on

- increased access to, and quality within, childcare and education settings, providing our children with the best start in life.
- enhancing the employment outcomes for our young people.
- providing enhanced and sustained support of children, young people and families from communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, through improved educational outcomes and experiences
- offering encouragement, support and protection for our most vulnerable children and young people

The report is designed for information purposes only and no Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been prepared.

## 7.4 **Place**

7.4.1 The report identifies outcomes which contribute to an enhanced sense of Place by improving personal resilience, protecting individuals and the community from harm, and enabling citizens to both understand and contribute to their communities.

7.4.2 Alongside the direct 'intervention and education' role that the Directorate delivers, the Report content evidences that the Directorate is improving the experience of the City's residents and visitors through enhanced recreational and cultural provision.

## 7.5 **Technology**

- 7.5.1 The Directorate, through its Improvement Plan, recognises that technology is central to innovative, integrated and transformed public services.
- 7.5.2 In this context, the Directorate has a direct role to play in the application of technology and also in terms of developing the future skills infrastructure necessary to engage with, and support use of, technology both in the workplace, and as a means of increasing public access to services.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026

Education and Children's Services Directorate Improvement Plan 2017-18

Education and Children's Services Directorate Health and Safety Improvement Plan 2017-18

## **9. APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Directorate Performance Improvement Report Addendum

Appendix B: Directorate Performance Improvement Report Scorecard, Quarter 2, 2017

Appendix C: Directorate Performance Improvement Report Trendcharts, Quarter 2, 2017

## **10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

Co-ordinated by

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Service Manager (Policy and Performance)  
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## **11. HEAD OF SERVICE DETAILS**

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**APPENDIX A**  
**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL**

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COMMITTEE	<b>Education and Children's Services</b>
DATE	<b>25<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>
TITLE OF REPORT	<b>Education and Children's Services Directorate Performance Improvement Report - ADDENDUM</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/18/004</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Bernadette Oxley and Helen Shanks (Acting)</b>
ADDENDUM AUTHOR	<b>David Bliss</b>

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**1. PURPOSE OF ADDENDUM**

- 1.1 The purpose of this Addendum is to provide Elected Members with additional information about the performance report in relation to Children's Social Work and, in particular, to the percentage of looked after children with an allocated social worker.

**2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the content of the Addendum along with the Report to which it refers.

**3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 Scrutiny of the Performance Report by Elected Members at the last Education & Children's Services Committee highlighted the lower proportion of looked after children with an allocated social worker (85%), compared to the proportion of all children known to social work with an allocated social worker (93%).
- 3.2 This apparent anomaly was further investigated as it did not reflect the Service's commitment to supporting looked after children and ensuring that their needs are appropriately planned for and met.
- 3.3 This investigation has discovered that the reported statistic has in fact been inappropriately calculated over a number of previous quarters. Rather than identifying the number of looked after children at the reporting period and calculating the percentage of those children with an allocated social worker, the report instead identified the number of unique placements made of looked after children. As some children move placements during the reporting period, the number of placements will always exceed the number of children looked after.
- 3.4 Consequently, the Report of the percentage of looked after children with an allocated social worker presented to Committee for this quarter has been re-

calculated to not only reflect an accurate figure for Quarter 2, but also for previous quarters. At Quarter 2, for example, the proportion of looked after children with an allocated social worker was 98%, which is more in line with the service's expectation. It also represents notably improved performance over the last year.

- 3.5 The explanation for the error in the way that this data had been previously incorrectly calculated is that it is a system generated report from Carefirst, the service's main recording system, and that when the report was first set up the wrong denominator was used. This has now been rectified for future reports.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no additional financial implications.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no additional legal implications.

#### **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

- 6.1 There are no additional implications.

#### **7. IMPACT SECTION**

##### **7.1 People**

The Directorate is committed to improving the key life outcomes of all people in Aberdeen, including looked after children, and ensuring that wherever possible such children have an allocated social worker remains a priority.

#### **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 There are no additional background papers.

#### **9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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01224 522048

#### **11. HEAD OF SERVICE DETAILS**

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## Appendix B – ECS Directorate Performance Improvement Scorecard - Quarter 2, July to September 2017

Report Author: Alex Paterson

Generated on: 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Performance Data Traffic Light	
Red	1
Amber	1
Green	7
Data Only	22

### Directorate Improvement Plan - Economy

Performance Measure	2016/17	July 2017	August 2017	September 2017	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	Q1 2017/18	Q2 2017/18	Status	Long Trend
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Number of visits to libraries - person	896,491	77,943	83,892	77,114	212,504	231,266	228,243	238,949		
Number of visits to museums - in person	104,407	13,983	15,851	10,635	20,412	19,121	28,818	40,469		



### Directorate Improvement Plan - People

Performance Measure	2016/17	July 2017	August 2017	September 2017	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	Q1 2017/18	Q2 2017/18	Status	Long Trend
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Percentage of Activity Agreement completers entering a positive destination	78.4%	Data not presented for months			55.6%	90.9%	81.8%	100%		


















% of positive evaluations of Quality Reference Indicators from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate inspection reports of publicly funded Early Learning Centres per financial year	96%	Data not presented for months	91%	95.0%	88.0%	94%		
Number of Looked After Children placements	Data not presented for months	Data not presented for months	659	675	671	689		
Looked After Children placements in at home settings (%)			19%	20%	19%	17%		
Number of Looked After Children placements looked after at home			126	136	128	116		
Looked After Children placements in Kinship settings (%)			21%	19%	20%	19%		
Number of Looked After Children placements looked after in Kinship			136	129	131	133		
Looked After Children placements in Foster Care settings (%)			44%	43%	45%	46%		
Number of Looked After Children placements looked after in Foster Care			289	293	299	320		

Directorate Improvement Plan – Enabling Technology										
Performance Measure	2016/17	July 2017	August 2017	September 2017	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	Q1 2017/18	Q2 2017/18	Status	Long Trend
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Number of visits to libraries - Virtual	581,215	49,795	51,129	46,751	141,277	146,191	141,058	147,675		
Number of visits to/usages of council funded or part funded museums - virtual	1,257,999	125,738	40,746*	15,980*	288,889	378,854	392,399	182,464		



Number of PC terminal and Wi-Fi access uses within Libraries and Library Learning Centres	228,890	18,270	20,545	18,797	53,199	56,590	57,378	57,612		
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### Shaping Aberdeen - Improving Customer Experience

Performance Measure	2016/17	July 2017	August 2017	September 2017	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	Q1 2017/18	Q2 2017/18	Status	Long Trend
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Percentage of complaints resolved within time	53.2%	Data not presented for months			47.8%	56.7%	79.3%	40%		
Percentage of complaints upheld against closed (Stage 1 & 2 combined)	36.7%				39.1%	56.7%	31.0%	40%		
The total number of complaints received per quarter	214				25	32	59	15		
Percentage of FOISA requests replied to within timescale - Education and Children's Services	89%	93%	100%	100%	88%	100%	97%	98%		
Percentage of MP/MSP Enquiries replied to within timescale - Education & Children's Services	72.7%	62.5%	66.7%	80.0%	70.3%	81.0%	54.2%	68.8%		
Percentage of Members' Enquiries responded to within timescale	74.1%	100%	100%	75%	70%	79.1%	81.4%	91.3%		
Percentage of late reports per quarter - Education & Children's Services	3.4%	Data not presented for months			NA	1.9%	6.6%	7.7%		
Percentage of supported children with an allocated social worker (average as at 30 <sup>th</sup> September)		Data not presented for months			91%	94%	93%	93%		
Number of supported children (average as at 30 <sup>th</sup> September)					1650	1717	1679	1630		

Percentage of Looked After Children with an allocated social worker ( average as at 30 <sup>th</sup> September)				93%	97%	98%	98%		
Number of Looked After Children ( average as at 30 <sup>th</sup> September)				577	586	589	589		












### Shaping Aberdeen - Improving Staff Experience

Performance Measure	2016/17	July 2017	August 2017	September 2017	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	Q1 2017/18	Q2 2017/18	Status	Long Trend
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Average number of days lost through sickness absence per employee in a rolling 12 month period ( Corporate Comparative Target)	8.2	9.1	8.4	8.4	Data not presented for quarters					
Average number of days long term absence per employee in a rolling 12 month period ( Corporate Comparative Target)	4.6	5.6	5.1	5.0	Data not presented for quarters					
Average number of days short term absence per employee in a rolling twelve month period ( Corporate Comparative Target)	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.4	Data not presented for quarters					
H&S Employee Non Reportable - Education and Children's Services	577	Data not presented for months			244	179	93	93		
H&S Employee Reportable Incidents - Education and Children's Services	1	Data not presented for months			1	0	0	0		

### Improving Our Use Of Resources

Performance Measure	2016/17	July 2017	August 2017	September 2017	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	Q1 2017/18	Q2 2017/18	Status	Long Trend
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Headcount of Agency Staff - Education & Children's Services (FTE)	199	18	21	17.27	54	55	18	56.27		

Legend – Narrative against data shaded in orange is provided within Appendix B. Figures shaded in grey are provided for background purposes only.

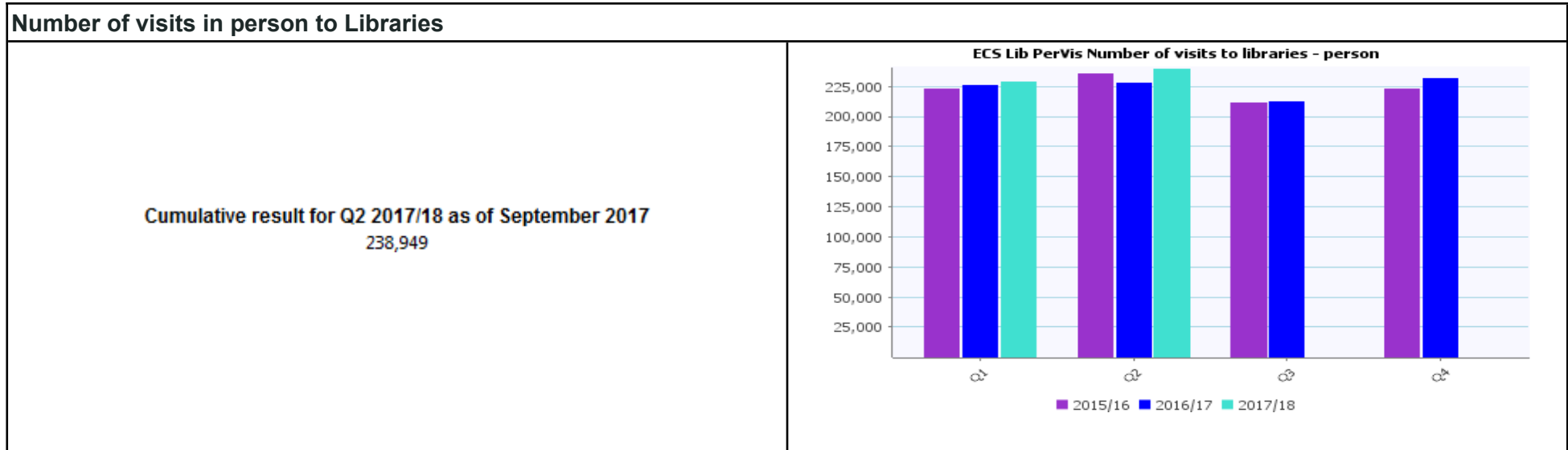
PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving/Increasing		Improving/Increasing
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse/Decreasing		Getting Worse/Decreasing
	Unknown				
	Data Only				

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Appendix C – ECS Directorate Performance Improvement Trendcharts

Directorate Improvement Plan - Economy

- 1. Improvement Objective - We will work with partners and the community to develop iconic tourism attractions to capitalise on non-business tourism and leisure markets, and stimulate diverse culture and creative offerings**



**Why is this important?**

The extent to which the City is able to offer an accessible and diverse public library provision, supporting cultural and learning activity in the community, is a 'foundation' service on which the potential for enhancing creativity and the attractiveness of the City as a place to live, has been built and will continue to be central to supporting wider strategic People, Economy and Place objectives

**Benchmark Information:**

The capacity for operational benchmarking of Library and Information Services outcomes and outputs at a national level is provided through an annual CIPFA publication which is released in March of each subsequent fiscal year.

Public libraries across Scotland continue to use the Strategic Aims set out in “Ambition and Opportunity: A National Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland” as a benchmarking tool and the SCoPL consortium also continues to be used as a benchmarking group to look at identifying service improvements and driving these forward.

The How Good is our Public Library Service (HGIOPLS) framework and assessment process have been fully revised and are now being used to assess our own performance against benchmarking indicators agreed across public library services within Scotland.

**Target:**

The number of visits to Libraries is a direct contributing metric towards the original 2016-17 Strategic Objective which aimed to increase attendances and visits to places of culture by 70,000 by 2017/18. In this instance, whilst no specific target for this lower level metric has been set, the Service seeks to increase active use of the Library and Information Service annually as an intermediate aim towards meeting of the above Objective.

**Intelligence:**

Visits in person to the Library and Information Service showed an increase (+4.6%) against the prior quarter and the figure of 238,949 was also above that recorded in Quarter 2 of 2016-17. (+5.1%).

This is the highest quarterly outcome in the 3 year tracking period and represents a fourth consecutive quarterly period where visits have improved on previous year figures which is re-assuring in the context of a national picture of reducing library in person use. The rolling 12 month outcome to Quarter 2 for visits was just under 911,000, in advance of both the rolling position at Quarter and the 2016-17 fiscal year, by 1.3% and 1.6% respectively.

The recently published 2016 Scottish Household Survey indicated that 28% of the City’s population (by sample size) had visited a library venue in the past 12 months, the same proportion as reflected at a national level. It was noted that, of this figure, 26% visited at least once a week (in comparison with the National Figure of 18%)

From the same publication, the levels of sampled responder satisfaction with library services in the community and by service users were 79.5%\* (an increase on the previous year of >8% points) and 94%\* (a static outcome against 2015) respectively. Both of these outcomes were above the national sample figures of 73.8%\* and 93%\* respectively.

**Responsible officer:**

Helen Shanks

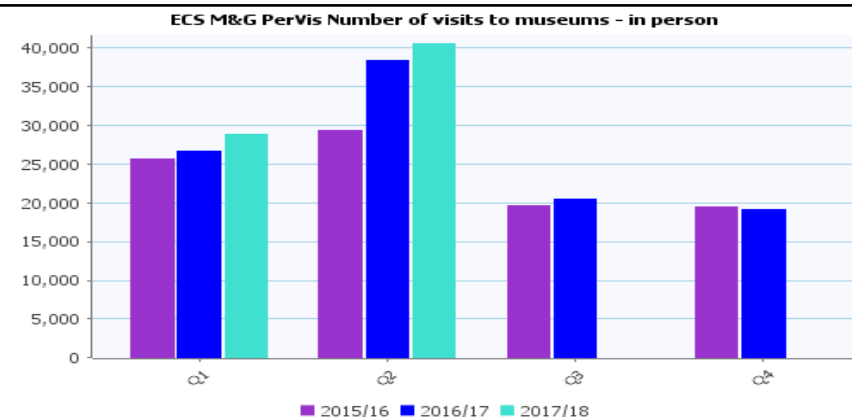
**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

- Excludes nil response survey outcomes

## Number of visits in person to Museum and Galleries venues

Cumulative result for Q2 2017/18 as of September 2017  
40,469



### Why is this important?

The Local Outcome and Directorate Improvement Plans contain the objective which aims to increase the overall number of visits to Museum and Galleries venues, whilst also contributing to the wider Economy and Place themes based on current provision.

### Benchmark Information:

The capacity for a degree of operational benchmarking of the Museums and Galleries Service outcomes and outputs against comparator authority and national levels is provided through an annual CIPFA publication normally released in June of each subsequent fiscal year.

Limited benchmarking of a restricted suite of measures relating to spend per visit is also published through the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework (SLGBF) with information linking to comparative user satisfaction being made available through release of the Scottish Household Survey outcomes. This information is normally released in January of the subsequent fiscal year,

Through the SLGBF Family Group network, local authorities are discussing development of a range of potential alternative measures which will better capture and enable reflection against comparative impacts delivered by museum and gallery services

### Target:

The number of visits to Museum is a direct contributing metric towards the original 2016-17 Strategic Plan Objective which aims to increase attendances and visits to places of culture by 70,000 by 2017/18. In this instance, whilst no specific target for this lower level metric has been set,

the Service seeks to increase active engagement annually as an intermediate aim towards meeting of the above Objective. The Directorate Improvement Plan 2017-18 contains a specific measure of improvement against annual visits to the Aberdeen Treasure Hub.

**Intelligence:**

Visits in person to the three museum venues noted a positive increase of around 2,100 attendances on the same quarter in 2016-17 with a total footfall of 40,469 (+6%) maintaining both short and long term improvement trends.

Underlying this figure, the Tolbooth recorded >10,500 visits, the Maritime Museum generated >28,900 visits, and the Treasure Hub just under 950. The two former outcomes are both improved on previous year visit figures, which are the highest and second highest quarterly outcomes for these respective venues in the five year recording period for this measure, whilst visits to the Treasure Hub, have already exceed the full year target of 1,000 visits by over 20%.

The recently published 2016 Scottish Household Survey noted the levels of satisfaction with museum services (by sample size), in the community and by service users, were 68.7%\* (an increase of 0.4% on the previous year) and 89%\*, an increase of 2% on 2015 survey figures. Both of these outcomes were marginally below the National Figures of 70.3%\* and 91%\* respectively.

**Responsible officer:**

Helen Shanks

**Last Updated:**

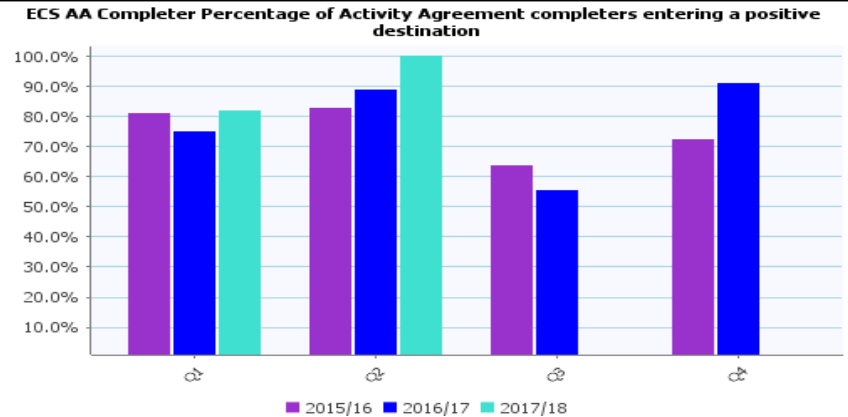
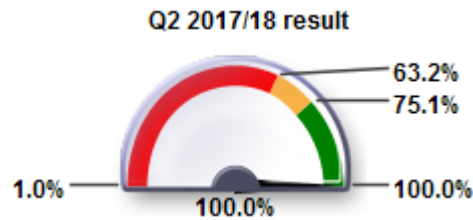
Q2 2017/18

- Excludes nil response survey outcomes



**1. Improvement Objective - We will deliver excellence and equity in order to raise attainment and close the outcome gap**

**Percentage of Activity Agreement Completers Entering a Positive Participation Destination**



**Why is this important?**

This is a core outcome which links directly to the National Performance Benchmark Participation Measure for education in Scotland, and the Aberdeen Guarantees agenda, evidencing the extent to which the local authority and partners, through direct intervention and support, can assist those who are identified at an early stage as being at risk of entering a negative destination on leaving formal education.

**Benchmark Information:**

Benchmarking of a range of leaver destination outcomes is provided through publication of Scottish Government data-sets covering initial, sustained and specific cohort outcomes on an annual basis. Presently, this information is published through several separate releases at different levels of detail by the Scottish Government <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/06/4523>

**Target:**

The 2017-18 Directorate Improvement objective is to increase the proportion of Activity Agreement completers in a positive destination in line with the wider Participation Measure, and to achieve a 2% point improvement over the course of the year, closing the gap to the participant’s age peer

group.

**Intelligence:**

Of the six participants engaged by the Activity Agreement team, and completing the Agreement term, over the course of Quarter 2, all individuals had achieved a positive destination at conclusion of the period, providing for an outcome of 81.8%, either moving on to further education or returning to school education. Each of these individuals was in receipt of aftercare support at the end of the quarter. This quarterly data provides for a rolling year to date outcome of 88.2% that is closely aligned with the 2016-17 National Participation Measure for all 16-19 year olds of 88.9%

**Responsible officer:**

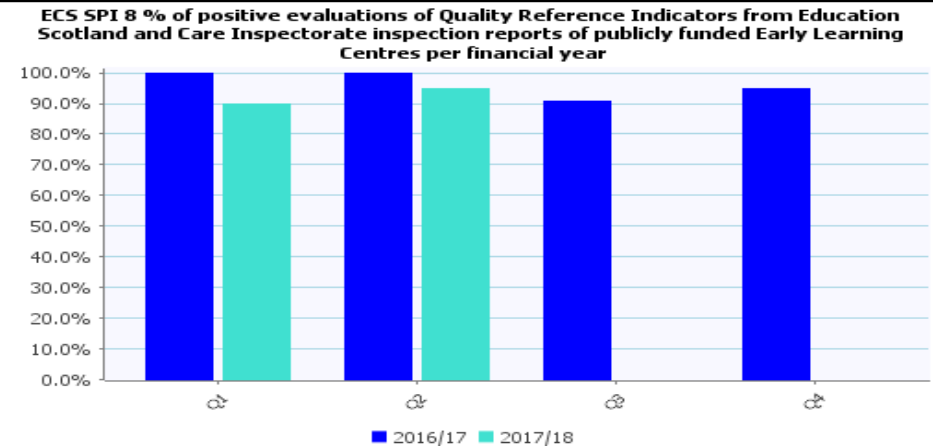
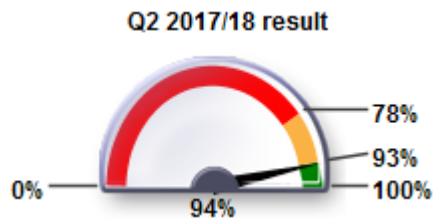
Helen Shanks

**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

**2. Improvement Objective - We will ensure continued quality of childcare provision**

**Percentage of positive evaluations of Quality Reference Indicators from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate inspection reports of publicly funded Early Learning Centres per financial year**



### Why is this important?

This measure serves as a formal indicator of the quality of education, support and care provision afforded to children within local authority and funded partner provider Early Years settings, through a combination of peer-based and self-evaluation evidence and links directly to Local Outcome and Directorate Improvement Plan Objectives under the People thematic.

### Benchmark Information:

There is presently no direct capacity for benchmarking of this combined measure although Education Scotland outcomes for schools and early years establishments in each academic year from 2012 onwards, including those for 2016, are compared with the national baseline and where made available, against the Authority's formal HMIE benchmark group. <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk>

Information relating to the drill-down national outcomes of Care Inspectorate work, which can be used as a point of comparison, is beginning to be shared with local authorities but has yet to be presented in a consistent publication format that is accessible enough to allow inter-authority comparison. <http://www.careinspectorate.com>

### Target:

The target for this measure, which combines outcomes from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate inspections of both local authority and partner provider early learning and childcare settings, is set at an averaged 98% for the 2017-18 academic year. The target figure for sub-indicators against each inspection regime, relating to local authority provision alone, is 100% for the current academic year.

The Scottish Government has announced that, as of April 2018, there will be an enhanced national programme of Education Scotland inspection which, once in place, will enhance the scope and value of this metric and support providers in planning for improvement.

### Intelligence:

The outcome of inspections for Quarter 2 was a rounded 94% which encompassed inspections of five early learning and childcare setting of local authority and partner provider Early Years and Childcare establishments by the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland over the three-month period, with 15 of the 16 Quality Reference Indicator areas reviewed receiving a positive evaluation.

At present, data from the small number of inspections conducted to date is too limited to establish a year-end forecast and the annual outcome will be heavily influenced by the next two quarterly periods, during which the majority of inspections are normally completed.

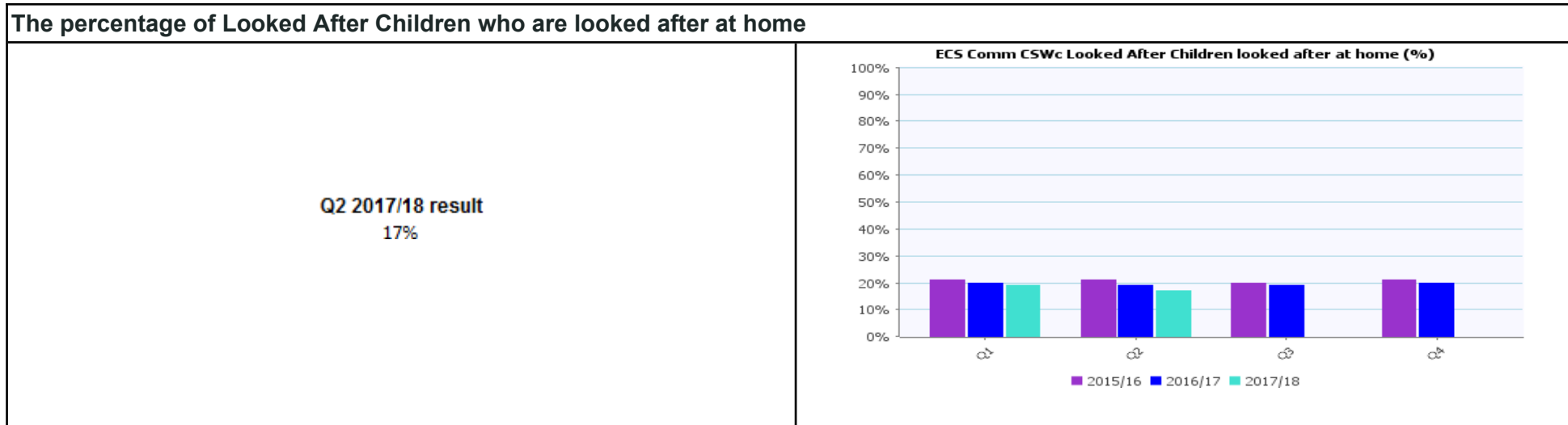
### Responsible officer:

Helen Shanks

### Last Updated:

Q2 2017/18

**3. Improvement Objective: - We will consolidate the implementation of Reclaiming Social Work**



**Why is this important?**

The principle of assisting families to remain together in a supported environment is key to delivery of the Directorate’s improvement objectives around the care and support of vulnerable children. However, the needs of the child are always prioritised and a child is kept at home with their family only when safe to do so.

**Benchmark Information:**

National benchmark data relating to looked after children are collated during July of each year. It is published during the course of the national information release through the Children’s Social Work Statistics report (often referred to as the CLAS return) in March of the following year.

**Target:**

There is no specific target for the percentage of looked after children at home, although in recognition of the potential benefits for children remaining in their own families, the Service aims to support parents and carers to be able to care for their children appropriately, where this is in the child’s interests

**Intelligence:**

Of the 689 children looked after placements made during Quarter 2, 116 (17%) were recorded as being looked after at home. The rate has remained relatively constant for the last six quarters, fluctuating between 1-3%. At July 2016, the CLAS return showed that the proportion of children placed at home was 25% across the country as a whole and 21% for Aberdeen. However, it should be acknowledged that not only is there an apparent downward trend locally, but, this has also been reflected nationally. For example, since CLAS returns in 2013, the proportion of children looked after at home has gone down from 30% across the country and from 28% in Aberdeen to the above rates.

**Responsible officer:**

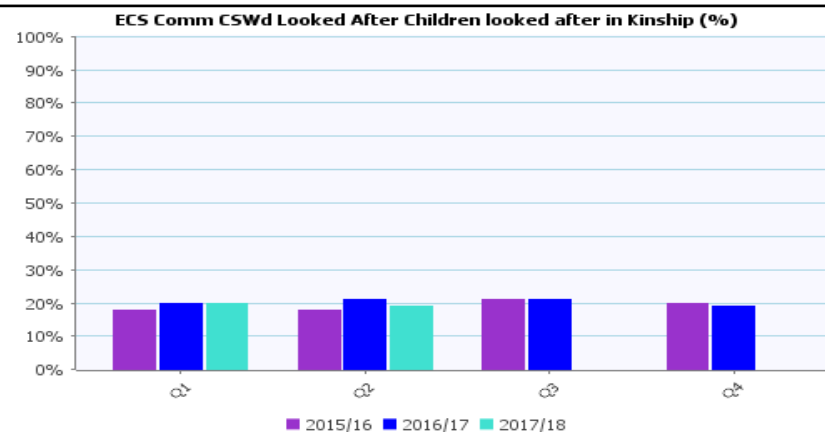
Bernadette Oxley

**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

**The percentage of Looked After Children who are looked after in a Kinship Care Arrangement**

**Q2 2017/18 result**  
19%



**Why is this important?**

Aberdeen City Council in collaboration with partners, the Scottish Government and CELCIS, is participating in the PACE (Permanence & Care Excellence) programme. This is aimed at improving the decision making for children who cannot be cared for by their parents.

**Benchmark Information:**

As above

**Target:**

There is no specific target for the percentage of looked after children living in a kinship placement. However, one of the intended outcomes of the PACE programme is that there will be fewer children accommodated in foster care and residential settings and that more remain with family, and/or in a kinship arrangement over the longer term.

**Intelligence:**

Over the course of Quarter 2, 133 looked after children were placed in a kinship care arrangement (i.e. with friend/relatives). This was 19% of the 689 placements during the quarter. This is 2% less than in the same period in 2016-17. However, in spite of this appearing to be a downward trend long term analysis shows that this proportion has fluctuated within 1-3% for several years in Aberdeen City and matches quarterly figures recorded since Q1 2011/12.

Comparison with CLAS statistics is difficult as these report friends/family and other community rather than kinship alone. However the proportion within these types of placements for the 2016 CLAS return was 28% nationally and 22% locally.

**Responsible officer:**

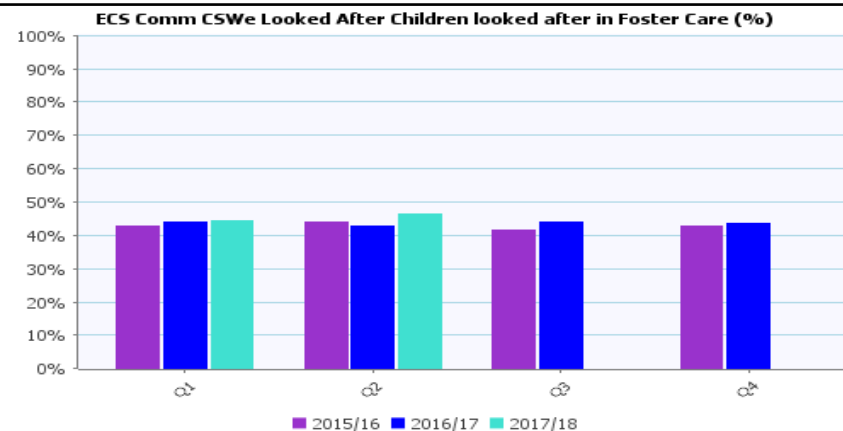
Bernadette Oxley

**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

**The percentage of Looked After Children who are looked after in foster care**

Q2 2017/18 result  
46%



#### Why is this important?

Statistically, the long term outcomes of looked after children who are embedded in a stable foster care setting appear significantly improved in comparison with those of their peer group who are cared for in other types of non-familial settings. Wherever possible and appropriate to the needs of the child, we would seek to place children who cannot be cared for at home or by kin, in a family –based placement.

#### Benchmark Information:

As above

#### Target:

There is no specific target for the percentage of looked after children in foster care, although in recognition of the potential benefits for those children placed in this type of provision, where staying at home with family or in kinship arrangements is not possible, the Service aims to ensure the accessibility of quality foster care within the community.

Against a background of increasing numbers of Looked After Children, the Service aims to increase the supply of local foster carers to ensure that, as appropriate to the circumstances, children are placed near to their family and communities, as a preferable staged response for children whose requirements and needs cannot, at the point of intervention, be met at home or in kinship, and also to maximise benefits in contrast to more costly alternative placement options.

#### Intelligence:

At Quarter 2, the proportion of looked after children who were placed in foster care was 46%, compared to 43% in the same quarter of the previous year. Of the total of 689 looked after children placements across the quarter, 320 were in foster care.

This performance maintains the long-term rising trend for the percentage of looked after children in foster care, albeit that this is increasingly being managed effectively in the context of locally delivered provision, as noted above. Two possible contributory factors to the increase in the number of children placed in foster care in Q2 are that there were higher numbers of babies being accommodated and that decision making processes have improved. However, further analysis will be carried out to confirm whether this is the case.

Foster care is measured alongside prospective adopters in the CLAS returns nationally so again not a direct comparison, but last reported period for 2016 gave a National proportion of 37% so Aberdeen City is well above that proportion

**Responsible officer:**

Bernadette Oxley

**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

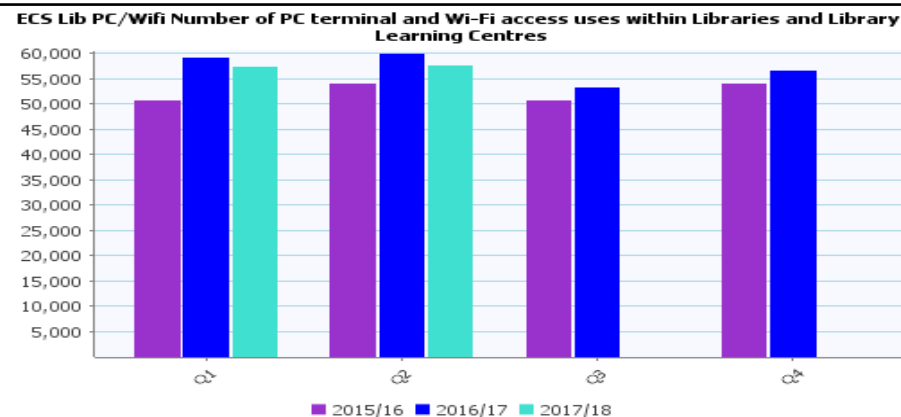
**Directorate Improvement Plan – Enabling Technology**

**1. Improvement Objective – Citizens have access to learning opportunities to develop their digital skills and literacy**

**Level of PC and Wi-Fi platform access use within Library Centres**



Cumulative result for Q2 2017/18 as of September 2017  
57,612



#### Why is this important?

This reflects the access to IT facilities that Library & Information Services deliver to the wider community of Aberdeen that supports literacy and learning and provides essential lifelines to employment, health information and access to government and community services, which are increasingly only available via use of digital technology.

#### Benchmark Information:

Public libraries across Scotland continue to use the Strategic Aims set out in “Ambition and Opportunity: A National Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland” as a benchmarking tool and the SCoPL consortium also continues to be used as a benchmarking group to look at identifying service improvements and driving these forward. The How Good is our Public Library Service (HGIOPLS) framework and assessment process have been fully revised and are now being used to assess our own performance against benchmarking indicators agreed across public library services within Scotland.

#### Target:

The Service aims to increase the scope and number of uses linked to digital engagement over the course of the next two years as a qualitative indicator evidencing improvement in the context of the national strategy and HGIOPLS evaluations, alongside the Directorate Improvement Plan objective to provide support against the Enabling Technology theme (see below)

#### Intelligence:

Although marginally below the outcome for Quarter 2 in 2016-17 (-4%) the level of usage linked to both PC and Wi-Fi supported engagement, at 57,612 uses, continues to demonstrate long term improvement with rolling year Wi-Fi use rising to c.58,500 ‘registrations’, growth that has been

being continuously sustained for 3 years at the quarter's end.

At the same time, PC usage, although similarly below the same period in the previous year, provides the overwhelming majority of recorded uses (42,900) over the quarter and shows only a limited reduction over time suggesting that transference from one mode of use to another is (a) not as substantive as might have been expected from expansion of the Wi-Fi infrastructure and (b) continues to be influenced by external issues such as the need for digital access linked to welfare reforms.

The recently released 2016 Scottish Household Survey indicated that 16% of the City's population did not have access to home internet which was unchanged from the previous year and that 3% of the population of internet users (approx. 6,200) access this directly through public libraries venues with a further proportion presumably being enabled access through the Wi-Fi infrastructure linked to these venues.

**Responsible officer:**

Helen Shanks

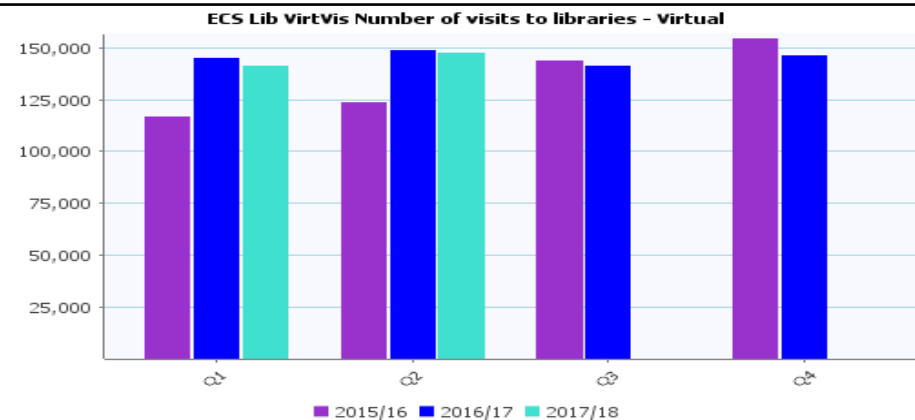
**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

**2. Improvement Objective – We will enhance the accessibility of digital cultural participation and learning platforms**

**Virtual Visits to the Library and Information Service**

Cumulative result for Q2 2017/18 as of September 2017  
147,675



### Why is this important?

This measure evaluates the extent to which the Service is providing widened digital access to its offering against the Enabling Technology theme - 'Enhancement of the accessibility of cultural participation and learning platforms within the Directorate' contained within the Directorate Improvement Plan and contributing to the Economy Outcome 3 - 'We will work with partners and the community to develop iconic tourism attractions to capitalise on non-business tourism and leisure markets and stimulate diverse culture and creative offerings'

### Benchmark Information:

Public libraries across Scotland continue to use the Strategic Aims set out in Ambition and Opportunity: A National Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland as a benchmarking tool and the SCoPL consortium also continues to be used as a benchmarking group to look at identifying service improvements and driving these forward. The How Good is our Public Library Service (HGIOPLS) framework and assessment process have been fully revised and are now being used to assess our own performance against benchmarking indicators agreed across public library services within Scotland.

### Target:

The Service aims to increase the scope and number of uses linked to digital engagement over the course of the next two years as a qualitative indicator evidencing improvement in the context of the national strategy and HGIOPLS evaluations, alongside the Directorate Improvement Plan objective to provide support against the Enabling Technology theme.

The number of visits to Libraries ( in person and virtual) is a direct contributing metric towards the original 2016-17 Strategic Plan Objective which aims to increase attendances and visits to places of culture by 70,000 by 2017/18. In this instance, whilst no specific target for this lower level metric has been set, the Service seeks to increase active engagement annually as an intermediate aim towards meeting of the above Objective

**Intelligence:**

The outcome for Quarter 2 reflects a relatively positive position against prior and more recent previous quarters with 147,675 visits, some 6,000 visits more than Quarter 1. This figure is 0.6% below the comparative quarter in 2016-17 but at the same time, the rolling year baseline for virtual visits, which offers a more robust oversight, is static. The Library Management team continue to monitor usage of the individual contributing web platforms to establish patterns that may be influencing these quarterly trend patterns.

**Responsible officer:**

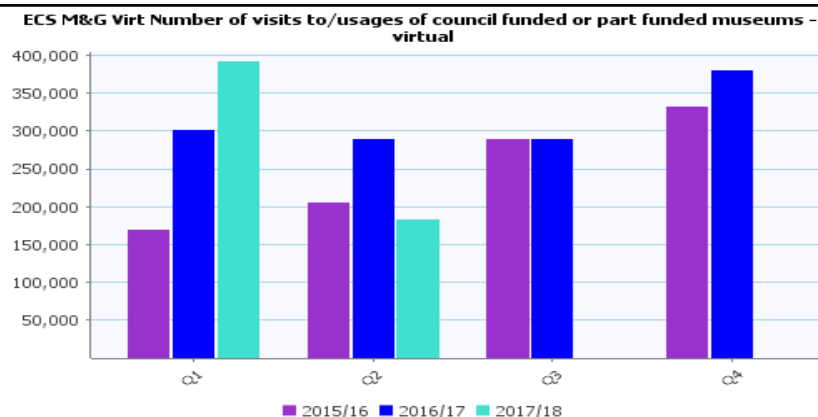
Helen Shanks

**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

## The number of Virtual Visits to the Museums and Galleries Service

Cumulative result for Q2 2017/18 as of September 2017  
182,464



### Why is this important?

The Local Outcome, and the Directorate Improvement, Plans contain objectives which aim to increase the overall number of visits ( including virtual) to Museum and Galleries venues whilst also contributing to the wider Economy and Place themes.

This measure also evaluates the extent to which the Service is providing widened digital access to its offering, supporting the current and future venue capacity to enhance use of the City's visitor attractions and tourism levels related to the above thematic, and also against the Enabling Technology objective - 'Enhancement of the accessibility of cultural participation and learning platforms within the Directorate'

### Benchmark Information:

The capacity for a degree of operational benchmarking of the Museums and Galleries Service outcomes and outputs against comparator authority and national levels is provided through an annual CIPFA publication normally released in June of each subsequent fiscal year.

Limited benchmarking of a restricted suite of measures relating to spend per visit is also published through the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework (SLGBF) with information linking to comparative user satisfaction being made available through release of the Scottish Household Survey outcomes. This latter information is normally released in December, and January of the subsequent fiscal year,

Through the SLGBF Family Group network, local authorities are discussing development of a range of potential alternative measures which will better capture and enable reflection against comparative impacts delivered by museum and gallery services

**Target:**

The number of visits to Museums ( in person and virtual) is a direct contributing metric towards the original 2016-17 Strategic Plan Objective which aims to increase attendances and visits to places of culture by 70,000 by 2017/18. In this instance, whilst no specific target for this lower level metric has been set, the Service seeks to increase active engagement annually as an intermediate aim towards meeting of the above Objective

**Intelligence:**

The Service has reverted to the external data analytics provider in respect of the figures for August and September as it appears that data against the Aberdeen Quest website has not been captured. It would be estimated, on the basis of the most recent 12 month pattern of visits that this would equate to c. 175,000-200,000 visits, suggesting that the true figure for Quarter 2 is in the range of 360,000-380,000. Recording of visits to the main Museums and Galleries websites and digital resources, are unaffected by this loss of data and continue, in the majority of cases, at levels similar to that of the past 2 quarterly periods, being ahead of the 2016-17 levels.

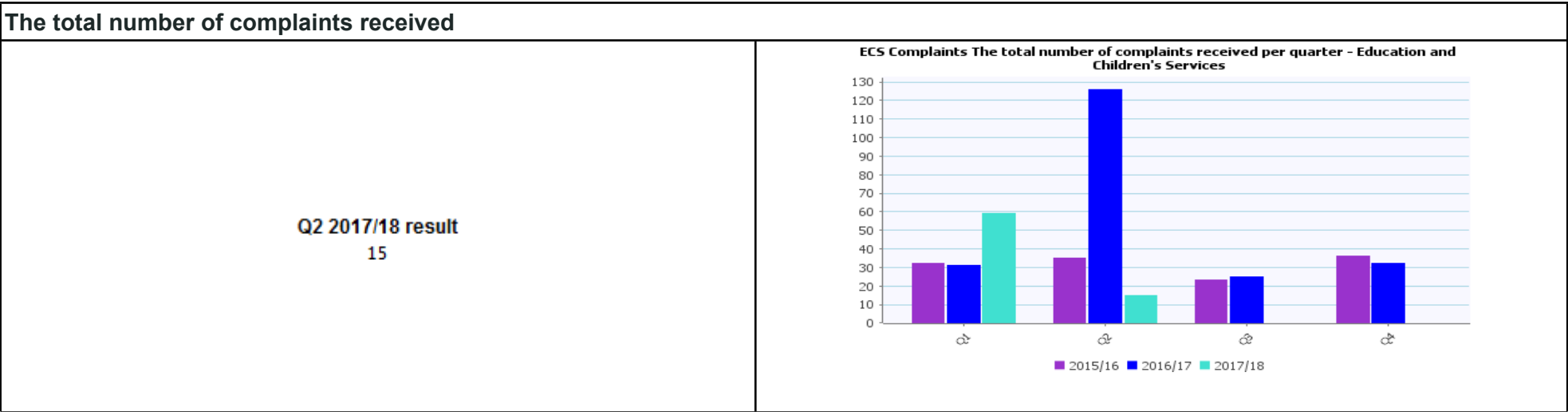
**Responsible officer:**

Helen Shanks

**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

**Shaping Aberdeen – Improving Customer Experience**



**Why is this important?**  
 The information provided by the corporate Complaints Handling process is used to inform service improvements and planning. It should be noted that this information excludes complaints addressed through formal statutory frameworks related to school education and children's social work

**Benchmark Information:**  
 The Scottish Complaints Handling Procedure specifies several measures including handling times, types of complaints and outcomes as well as lessons learned. It is presently not possible to identify relevant benchmark comparisons for the number of complaints for the Directorate outwith tracking of trend patterns.

**Target:**  
 The Directorate aims to minimise the number of complaints received as part of the engagement and communication frameworks reflected within its Improvement planning.

**Intelligence:**

There were a total of 15 complaints received by the Directorate over the period of Quarter 2, with 14 Stage 1 and one Stage 2 complaint being recorded. This figure is the lowest number of complaints recorded against the Directorate to date .

**Responsible officer:**

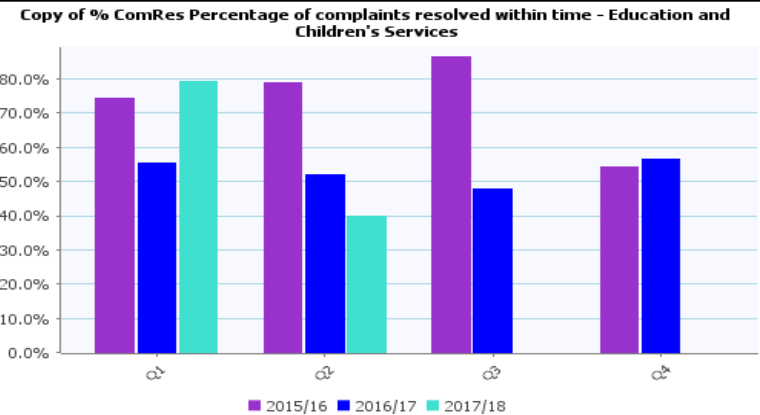
Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

**Percentage of submitted complaints resolved within time**

Q2 2017/18 result  
40.0%



**Why is this important?**

The Scottish Complaints Handling Procedure specifies that all complaints must be acknowledged within 3 working days. Frontline complaints (Stage 1) should be completed in 5 working days and Investigation complaints (Stage 2) within 20 working days.

**Benchmark Information:**

Where appropriate, the Directorate seeks to benchmark its performance against this measure in the context of trend analysis and through comparison with both Council and other Directorate performance

**Target:**

The Directorate aims to maximise the proportion of complaints which are resolved within the specified timescales for Stages 1 and 2



**Intelligence:**

Of the 15 complaints received, six (40%) were resolved within timescale which is the lowest quarterly outcome recorded by the Directorate. At the snapshot point three outstanding complaints were pending resolution, although these had not resulted in escalation to Stage 2 at that point in time.

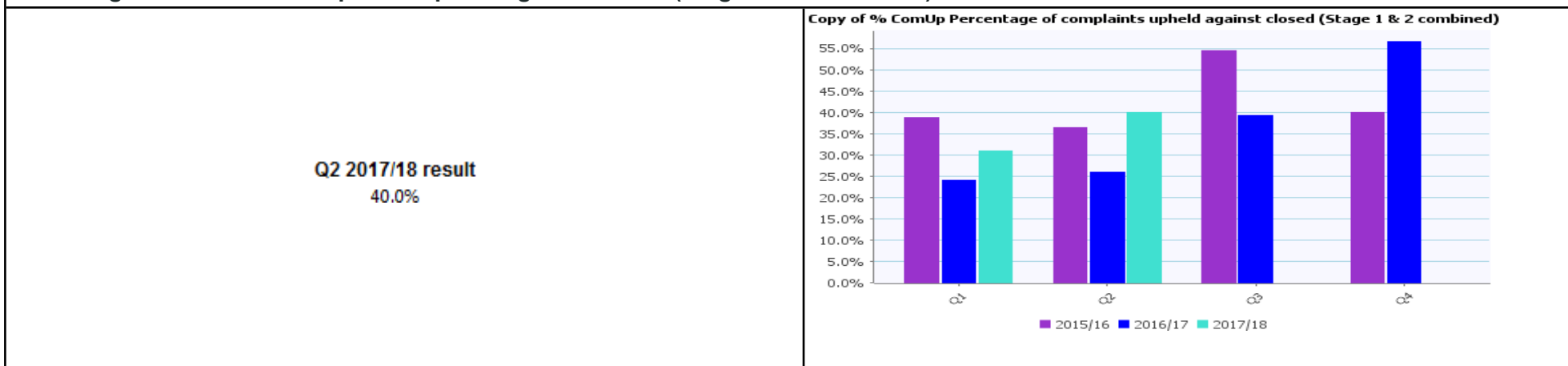
**Responsible officer:**

Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

**Percentage of submitted complaints upheld against closed (Stage 1 & 2 combined)**



**Why is this important?**

In combination with assessment of the number of complaints and timelines for the provision of responses, the proportion of complaints which are upheld is a measure of the extent to which the Council is meeting the provisions of the Scottish Handling Complaints Procedure and, more critically, the quality of service being provided

**Benchmark Information:**

Where appropriate, the Directorate seeks to benchmark its performance against this measure in the context of trend analysis and through comparison with both Council and other Directorate performance. In this context, the Quarter 2 outcome is ahead of both the corporate figure and the majority of other Directorates

**Target:**

The Directorate aims to minimise the proportion and number of complaints which are upheld at Stages 1 and 2 received as part of the engagement and communication frameworks reflected within its Service Business Plans

**Intelligence:**

The Directorate figure for the percentage of complaints upheld against closed for Stages 1 and 2 was 40%. In this context, the Quarter 2 outcome is ahead of both the corporate figure and the majority of other Directorates. Of the 15 complaints received, 6 were upheld or partially upheld, all of which were at Stage 1. The single escalated complaint received was not upheld.

**Responsible officer:**

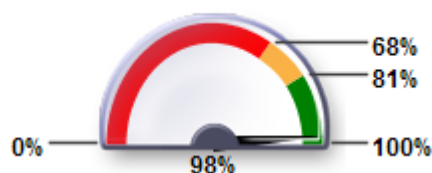
Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

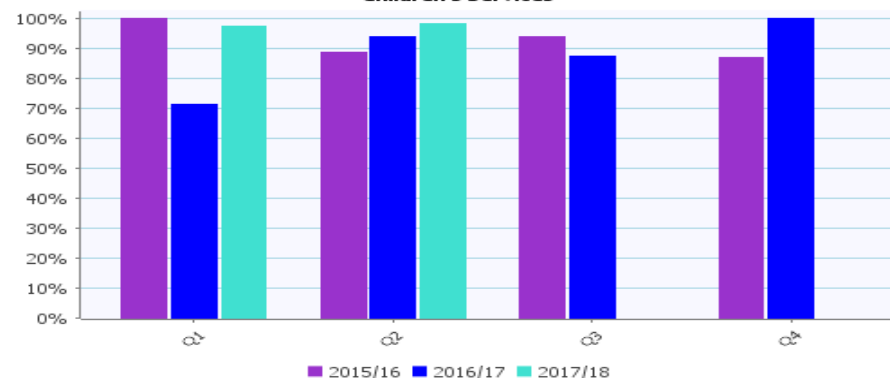
Q2 2017/18

**Percentage of submitted Freedom Of Information requests replied to within timescale**

Cumulative result for Q2 2017/18 as of September 2017



ECS FOISA Percentage of FOISA requests replied to within timescale - Education and Children's Services



**Why is this important?**

The purpose of this Indicator is to capture and reflect the Directorate's capacity for meeting the obligatory response timelines relating to the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act that requires responses to be provided within 20 working days

**Benchmark Information:**

At present, there is no suitable external benchmark information relating to the Directorate's performance although internal comparisons are made against both corporate level performance and that of other Directorates.

**Target:**

The Directorate level improvement aim is to deliver an annual outcome which improves on the annual 2016-17 figure of 89%.

**Intelligence:**

98% (51 from 52) of FOISA requests received by the Directorate were responded to within the specified timescale over the course of Quarter 2 with a monthly range of between 93% in July to 100% in August and September. This reflects the continued improvement against this measure with (a) both long and short term trend outcomes against both quarterly and annual outcomes moving positively and (b) a third consecutive period of quarterly growth.

**Responsible officer:**

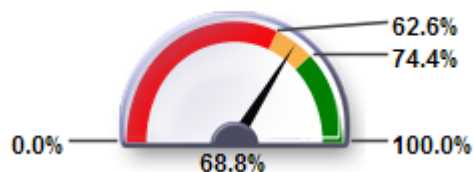
Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

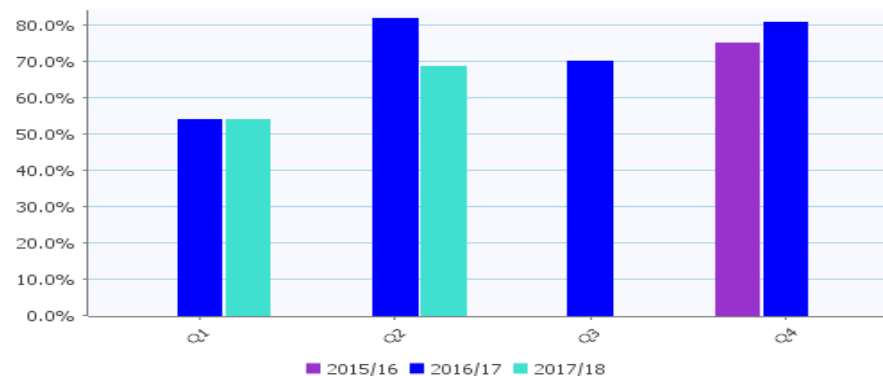
Q2 2017/18

**Percentage of submitted enquiries from MP's and MSP's responded to within the prescribed timescale**

Cumulative result for Q2 2017/18 as of September 2017



ECS % MP/MSP Enq Percentage of MP/MSP Enquiries replied to within timescale - Education & Children's Services



**Why is this important?**

The extent to which Members are enabled to be provided with accurate and timely responses to enquiries, either on behalf of constituents or in scrutinising the work of the Council, is an important measure of the effectiveness of the collaborative approach to information sharing.

**Benchmark Information:**

At present, there is no suitable external benchmark information relating to the Directorate's performance although internal comparisons are made against both corporate level performance and that of other Directorates.

**Target:**

2017-18 Directorate Improvement Target – 80%

**Intelligence:**

Although below the outcome from Quarter 2 in 2016-17, and that of most previous quarterly periods with 11 of 16 enquiries being responded to within the prescribed period, this represents a significant improvement on the Quarter 1 outcome.

The Directorate Leadership Team has been monitoring this figure closely and has discussed options for reducing delays in responding that might be resulting from distribution and processing of enquiries. These options are now being implemented in full and, as a result, the Directorate expects to see a more sustained improvement in this measure, notwithstanding that the number and complexity of Enquiries in each quarter will influence the short term outcomes.

**Responsible officer:**

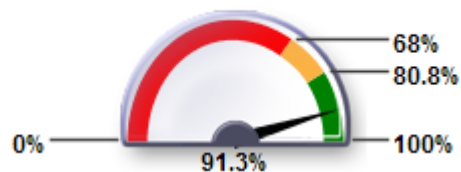
Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

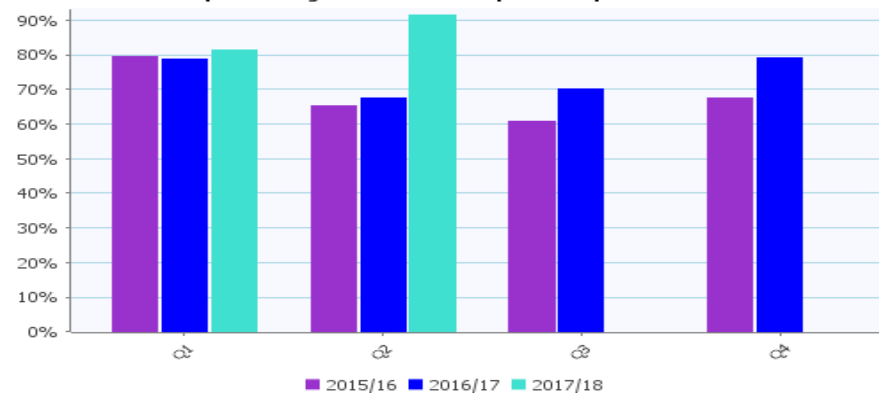
Q2 2017/18

## Percentage of Members' Enquiries responded to within timescale

Cumulative result for Q2 2017/18 as of September 2017



ECS Member Enq Percentage of Members' Enquiries responded to within timescale



### Why is this important?

The extent to which Members are enabled to be provided with accurate and timely responses to enquiries, either on behalf of constituents or in scrutinising the work of the Council, is an important measure of the effectiveness of the collaborative approach to information sharing.

### Benchmark Information:

Presently there is no direct formal capacity for inter-authority benchmarking of this measure. From desk-top research, it is understood that a number of Councils gather information which is related to this indicator although none consistently publish this information on a comparable basis.

### Target:

The Directorate aims to meet the corporate target for responses to Members' Enquiries, which is set at 85%, on a consistent basis

### Intelligence:

The outcome for Quarter 2 represents the highest proportion of responses within timescale to Members' Enquiries delivered by the Directorate to date and maintains a continuous period of improvement since July 2017. In total, of the 46 enquiries received, 42 (91.3%) were responded to within the required timeline with delays to responses arising during April being an influence. The Directorate is reviewing the monthly outcomes regularly to ensure that this trend is maintained and developed upon to meet the target figure of 85% on a consistent basis.

**Responsible officer:**

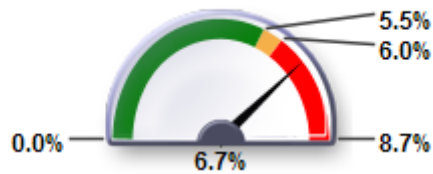
Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

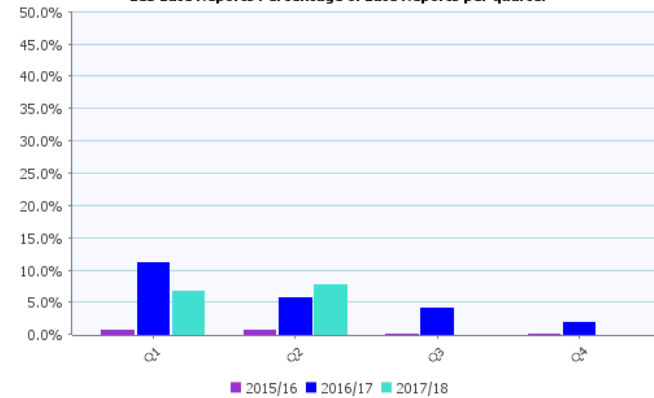
Q2 2017/18

**Percentage of Late Reports per quarter**

Cumulative result for 2017/18 as of Q2 2017/18



ECS Late Reports Percentage of Late Reports per quarter



**Why is this important?**

Receiving and issuing committee reports on time ensures that we are meeting our statutory responsibilities in terms of making copies of reports available and open to inspection by Elected Members and members of the public. It is essential for good governance and for the efficient and effective running of the Council. It also facilitates greater transparency, accountability and openness across the Council's decision making processes.

**Benchmark Information:**

Benchmarking has shown that information on this PI is not currently collected by our comparator authorities. However, it is proposed that, corporately, contact be made via the SOLAR group to ask that other authorities participate in a benchmarking exercise around late reports so that we can see how performance in Aberdeen compares to other local authorities.

**Target:**

Both education and children's services are experiencing an unprecedented level of legislative and policy change directed by Scottish Government's programme(s) often with multiple guidance and direction releases from Government which provide limited time for officers to evaluate and report

against these issues and which it is felt important that Members have detail against at the earliest stage given the impacts that these programmes may, or will, have on the Directorate’s financial and operational delivery.

Taking these influences into account, the Directorate has set an annual 2017-18 Directorate Improvement Target of 5% which reflects the intent to reduce the proportion of late reports over the course of 12 months, taking the Quarter 1 outcome as a baseline.

**Intelligence:**

During Quarter 2, there was a single Late Report recorded from a reduced number of reports submitted which, although resulting in a marginal increase in the cumulative percentage of Late Reports in comparison with the previous quarterly period, is viewed as an improving absolute position given that eight Late Reports were recorded in Quarter 1. The Directorate's cumulative year-to-date performance for this measure is 6.7%

The Duty of Due Regard, introduced through the Education Scotland Act 2016, is an additional influencing factor in the timescales for production of Reports to this Committee as this requires that material proposals, policies and strategies affecting children, are subject to a widened consultation cohort, including schools management and other providers. The Duty currently does not take specific account of school term schedules which can lead to extended consultation response times

**Responsible officer:**

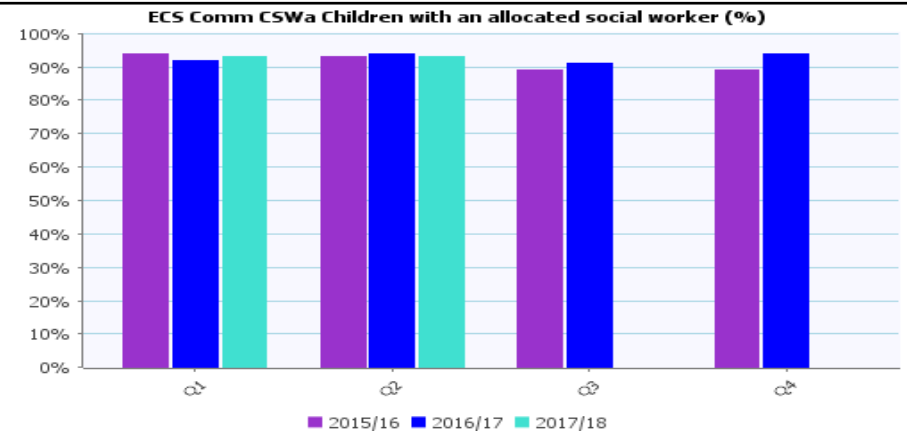
Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

**Percentage of children with an allocated social worker**

Average result for Q2 2017/18 as of September 2017  
93%



**Why is this important?**

The extent to which children under the oversight of CSW are supported by an allocated social worker is one of a suite of core customer experience measures reflecting (a) the Service's support of this population of vulnerable children and (b) enhancements in delivery arising from Reclaiming Social Work which in turn will facilitate meeting of the Directorate's strategic objectives linked to Children's Social Work

**Benchmark Information:**

National benchmark data relating to children under the remit of Children's Social Work services are collated during July of each year. It is published during the course of the national information release through the Children's Social Work Statistics report (often referred to as the CLAS return) in March of the following year.

**Target:**

The Service aims to maximise the percentage of children under its remit with an allocated social worker, taking into account changes in status and case transfer times at the snapshot point, which can result in minor (+/- 1-2%) variations in monthly and quarterly outcomes.

Due to staff turnover and operational circumstances, there will always be a small number of cases which do not have an allocated social worker although operational overview of these cases is maintained through Team Management and Consultant Social Workers. The Service continues to ensure that children with the greatest need and vulnerability are prioritised in terms of allocation

**Intelligence:**

An average of 93% of the 1620 children supported by Children's Social Work had an allocated social worker at the end of Quarter 2.

Looking across the past year, the proportion has remained consistent, with a quarterly range between 90% and 95% and a rolling year to date outcome of 93%. The figure for the comparative rolling year period across 2015-16 was 91% and early indications from the, as yet, incomplete Quarter 3 dataset, suggest that this measure will record a further increase by calendar year end.

**Responsible officer:**

Bernadette Oxley

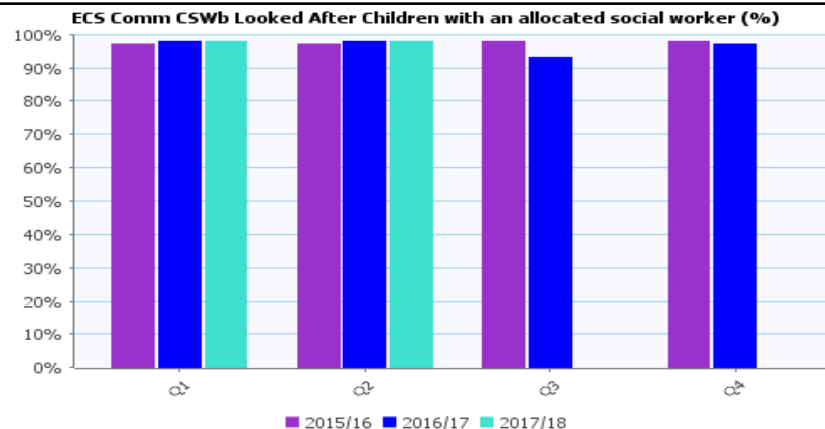
**Last Updated:**

Q 2 2017



**Percentage of Looked After Children with an allocated social worker**

Average result for Q2 2017/18 as of September 2017  
98%



**Why is this important?**

The extent to which Looked After Children are supported by an allocated social worker is one of a suite of core customer experience measures reflecting (a) the Service’s support of this population of vulnerable children and (b) enhancements in delivery arising from Reclaiming Social Work which in turn will facilitate meeting of the Directorate’s strategic objectives linked to Children’s Social Work

**Benchmark Information:**

National benchmark data relating to children under the remit of Children’s Social Work services are collated during July of each year. It is published during the course of the national information release through the Children’s Social Work Statistics report (often referred to as the CLAS return) in March of the following year.

**Target:**

The Service aims to maximise the percentage of Looked After Children with an allocated social worker. As with all children supported by the service, the aim is to ensure that children with the greatest need and vulnerability are always prioritised in terms of allocation to a social worker or within a social work unit to the Consultant Social Worker.

**Intelligence:**

At the Quarter 2 end, an average of 98% of looked after children were allocated to a social worker. This maintains the Service’s long term positive trend. This is in line with the aim set out above and apart from a dip in performance in Q3 of 2016-17 has remained consistent during the

implementation of the Reclaiming Social Work model. At this stage, early indications for the third quarter of the current year see the current trend being maintained.

N.B. See addendum report for additional detail

**Responsible officer:**

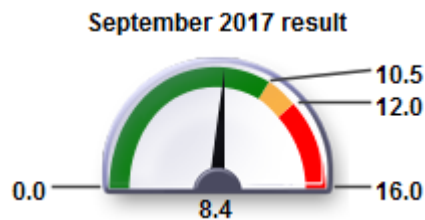
Bernadette Oxley

**Last Updated:**

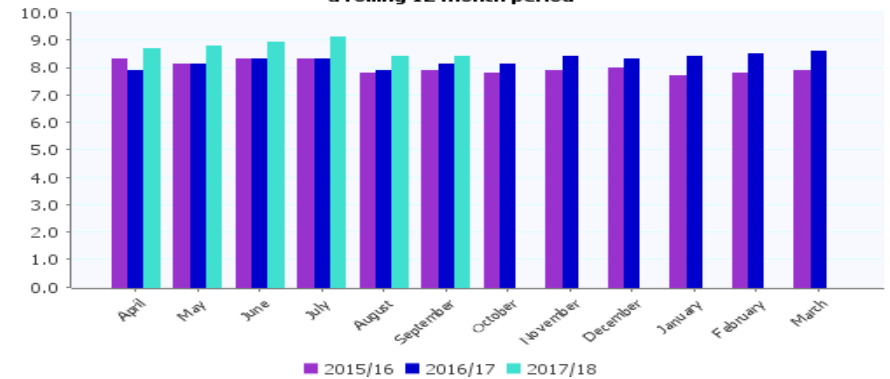
Q2 2017

**Shaping Aberdeen - Improving Staff Experience**

**Averaged number of days lost through sickness absence per employee**



**CR ECS Absence Average number of days lost through sickness absence per employee in a rolling 12 month period**



**Why is this important?**

The extent to which employee’s health and wellbeing is maintained and our staff are supported, through the application of Council policies, to prevent and mitigate against the impacts of ill-health, is central to the Council’s relationship with its employees. This measure is one of a suite of indicators on this theme which is captured in the Directorate’s general and Health and Safety Improvement Plans 2017-18

**Benchmark Information:**

The Directorate aims to consistently reduce the number of days lost through illness absence in comparison with previous patterns, the corporate target and other Directorates within the Council.

The Directorate benchmarks its detailed outcomes through reports submitted to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee:

<http://councilcommittees/documents/g4314/Public%20reports%20pack%2017th-Nov-2017%2010.00%20Corporate%20Health%20and%20Safety%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

**Target:**

The corporate target for the average number of days lost through illness is 10 days. At the end of this quarterly period, the corporate figure for the Council sits at 10.2 days

**Intelligence:**

At the snapshot point on 30th September, the Directorate recorded an average number of days lost per employee on a rolling 12 month period of 8.4 days which reverses the short and long term trend deterioration in this measure over the past months, although this is still above the 2016-17 mean figure of 8.2.

At this level, the outcome for the Directorate compares favourably against those Council services involved in 'front line delivery' and the wider corporate metric and is being driven by material improvement in the levels of short term absence (see below).

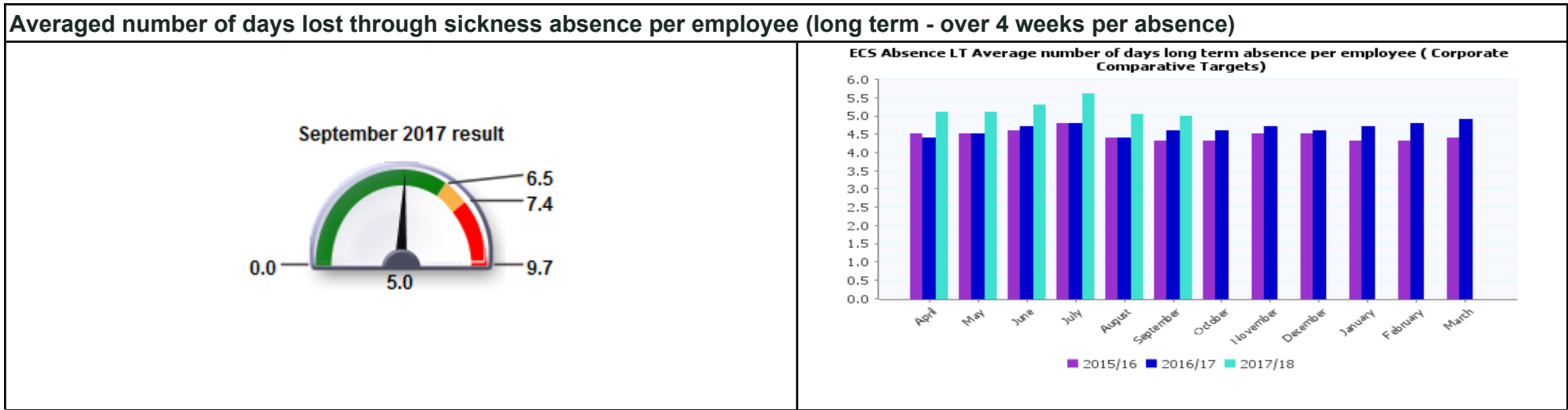
However, through the Directorate Health and Safety Improvement Plan, a focus continues to be placed on addressing absence related to three core areas ( gastro-intestinal, musculoskeletal and psychological) where effective interventions by the Directorate can materially assist and support employees and, in turn, reduce the number of absences arising from these conditions

**Responsible officer:**

Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

September 2017



**Why is this important?**

As above

**Benchmark Information:**

As above

**Target:**

The Directorate aims to align its Long Term Absence outcomes at a level which is below the Council average whilst reducing the overall figure over the course of each year. The Directorate is presently reviewing a variety of aims, measures and targets through the development of discrete and detailed Maximising Attendance Improvement planning

**Intelligence:**

The rolling outcome for September, at an averaged 5.0 days Long term Absence per employee, has yet to be materially influenced by the application of the Directorate’s Improvement planning which is at an early stage and, given the nature of the complexity of conditions that influence long term absence, is not unexpected.

Having noted this, the differential between monthly outcomes against the previous year has closed marginally and the figure compares well to the

corporate outcome of 6.2 days.

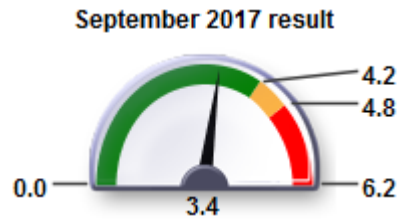
**Responsible officer:**

Euan Couperwhite

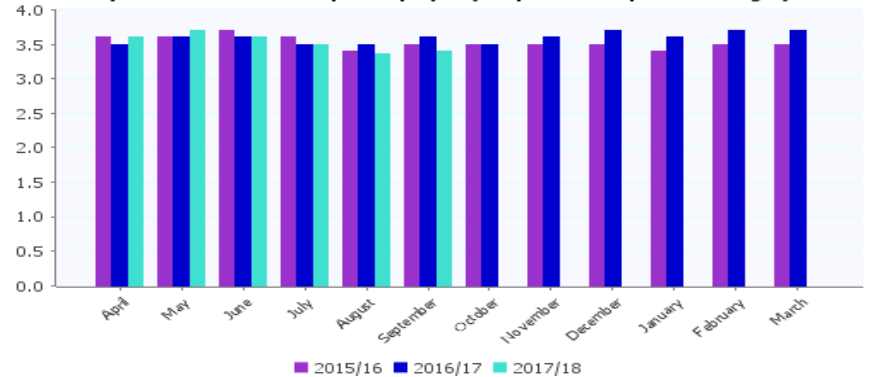
**Last Updated:**

September 2017

**Averaged number of days lost through sickness absence per employee (short term - under 4 weeks per absence)**



**ECS Absence ST Education and Children's Services - Service Wide - Average number of days short term absence per employee ( Corporate Comparative Target)**



**Why is this important?**

As above

**Benchmark Information:**

As above

**Target:**

As above

**Intelligence:**

Short term absence levels for September showed an averaged 3.4 days absence per employee that demonstrates an improving long and short term

trend and provides for a fiscal year-to-date figure of 3.5 days, just below the annual outcome for 2016-17 of 3.6 days. This is below the corporate figure of 4.0 days although the Directorate is aware that there had been some closing of the gap with this corporate figure which the Directorate Leadership Team are continuing to monitor closely.

**Responsible officer:**

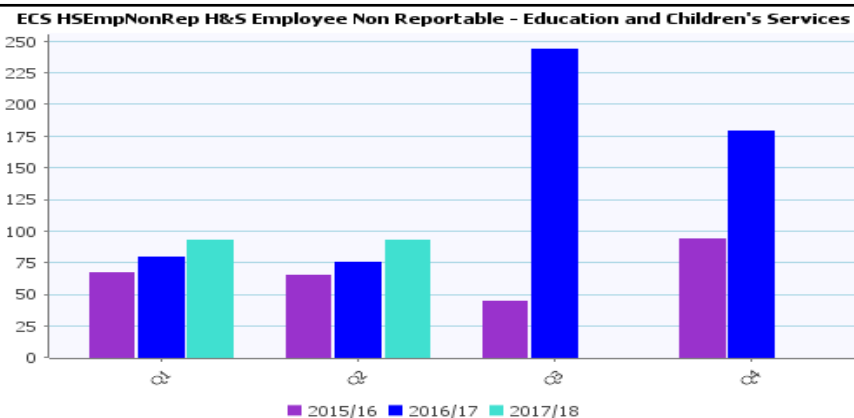
Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

September 2017

**H&S Employee Non Reportable by Directorate**

Q2 2017/18 result  
93



**Why is this important?**

The Directorate is committed to making health safety and wellbeing a high priority in all our activities and establishing a positive health and safety culture. This is reflected in a number of drivers and improvement measures within the Directorate's 2017-18 Improvement and Health and Safety Improvement Plans.

**Benchmark Information:**

The Directorate's extended suite of reportable and non-reportable accidents, incidents and near miss outcomes are considered and benchmarked through the Corporate Health and Safety Committee on a regular basis:  
<http://councilcommittees/documents/g4314/Public%20reports%20pack%2017th-Nov-2017%2010.00%20Corporate%20Health%20and%20Safety%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

**Target:**

The Directorate aims to minimise the number of non-reportable and near miss events on a consistent basis over the course of the next two years and establish the potential for additional benchmarking against comparator Services within other authorities. Through the Directorate Health and Safety Improvement Plan, Senior Management teams have identified particular measures and actions which are critical to delivering both improved outcomes and embedding an enhanced Health and Safety culture.

**Intelligence:**

The outcome for Quarter 2 records 93 non-reportable incidents, similar to the level in Quarter 1, and includes near-miss information which the Directorate has encompassed within this measure. Additional work has been undertaken across the Services to ensure increased consistency of near miss reporting and streamline the process of data gathering and analysis which will, in turn, allow the Directorate to better identify trends and put in place measures to reduce the number of incidents.

**Responsible officer:**

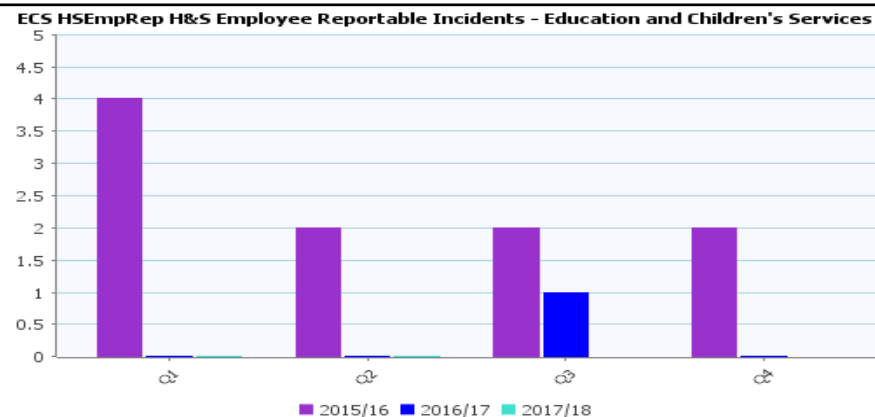
Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

**H&S Employee Reportable Incidents**

Q2 2017/18 result  
0



**Why is this important?**

As above

**Benchmark Information:**

As above

**Target:**

The Directorate aims to minimise the number of reportable events on a consistent basis over the course of the next two years and establish the potential for additional benchmarking against comparator Services within other authorities.

**Intelligence:**

There were no reportable incidents recorded during Quarter 2. Through the 2017-18 Directorate Health and Safety Improvement Plan, Senior Management teams have identified particular measures and actions which are critical to delivering both improved outcomes and embedding an enhanced Health and Safety culture.

**Responsible officer:**

Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

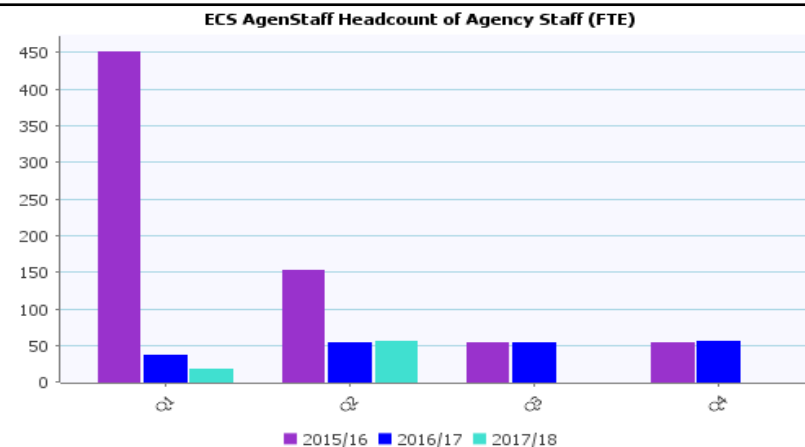
Q2 2017/18



Shaping Aberdeen - Improving Our Use Of Resources

Headcount of Agency Staff

Cumulative result for Q2 2017/18 as of October 2017  
56.27



Why is this important?

Use of external staff resource is sometimes unavoidable, for example where permanent employees are absent due to long-term ill-health. In general terms, however, use of external support should be minimised and more efficient methods of filling essential posts for prolonged periods found.

Benchmark Information:

At present, there is no comparable Directorate level benchmark information available against this measure. Corporately, efforts are being made to

identify peer- based opportunities for comparison with other authorities through the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework.

**Target:**

The Directorate is presently reviewing the relevance of applying a target figure for quarterly outcomes as some operational aspects of front line service delivery are impacted directly by seasonal influences which are most effectively addressed through use of short term agency employment. At this time, the Directorate aim is to minimise the use of agency employees as an average across each 12-month period.

**Intelligence:**

At the snapshot point in September, there were a total of 17.27 FTE posts which were covered by the use of agency staff. Over the course of Quarter 2, the cumulative number of agency positions was 56 placements with 18 and 21 being engaged in July and August respectively which reflected the seasonal influences noted above. Over the year-to-date, use of agency staff has reduced by just over 17% on the previous year. This use is exclusively limited to critical delivery functions which are central to the support of Directorate improvement programmes, e.g. Reclaiming Social Work, Early Years expansion

**Responsible officer:**

Euan Couperwhite

**Last Updated:**

Q2 2017/18

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	<b>Education &amp; Children's Services</b>
DATE	<b>25 January 2018</b>
REPORT TITLE	<b>E&amp;CS Financial Performance – Quarter 2, 2017/18</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/18/009</b>
LEAD OFFICER	<b>Steven Whyte, Head of Finance</b>
REPORT AUTHOR	<b>Brian Dow</b>

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-**

- 1.1 To provide the full year forecast position of Education and Children's Services for the financial year 2017/18.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee note:-

- The projected revenue and capital position for Education and Children's Services as detailed in Appendix 1.

### **3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 This report focuses the projected financial position for the full year for Education and Children's Services.

- 3.2 Quarterly reporting will evolve throughout the year to incorporate further changes such that the ultimate aim of a faster year end closedown and the production of the unaudited annual accounts by the end of April 2018 can be achieved. This means the Council would have produced its annual accounts two months earlier than the statutory deadline.

- 3.3 Emerging Issues

- 3.4.1 These are identified within the Appendix to this report.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The forecast full year financial position of the Education and Children's Services for the financial year 2017/18 is reflected in the Appendix to the report.

- 4.2 Following a positive financial performance in 2016/17, E&CS starts the financial year 2017/18 with a strong financial platform from which to operate. It is recognised that this will be another financially challenging year and that strong fiscal management coupled with financial restraint will be required to ensure that a balanced position against budget is achieved which in turn will continue to provide a strong balance sheet for future financial years.
- 4.3 Services continue to manage increased demand within the current service delivery model and structure within which the Council operates and this requires continued close fiscal management. Indeed, services are examining all areas of spend with a view to avoiding incurring expenditure except where absolutely necessary.
- 4.5 The Strategic Budget Review Group, referred to in Appendix 1, is continuing to develop budget options for initial review by services and consideration by the Corporate Management Team (CMT). Thereafter, proposed options will be taken through the proper governance process including consultation with Elected Members and reporting to committee for formal decisions where necessary.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 While there are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report, there are additional reporting requirements due to the LSE listing and issue of bonds.

## **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

### **Financial**

- 6.1 Every organisation has to manage the financial risks inherent in the operation of large and complex budgets. These risks are minimised by the regular review of financial information by services and corporately by Elected Members. This report is part of that framework and has been produced to provide an overview of the current operating position and so financial risk related to this report is considered to be low.
- 6.2 The main financial risk that the Council is managing is the increased demand on services. This is being mitigated through reviewing all areas of expenditure with a view to only incurring expenditure that is absolutely necessary.
- 6.3 In relation to capital projects there is a risk that following the procurement process, tendered costs will vary from that assumed at the time of project approval. This risk is mitigated through quantification and review of indicative project costs by suitably qualified staff or external body where appropriate.

### **Other**

- 6.2 Consideration has also been given to Employee, Customer / Citizen, Environmental, Technological and Legal risks, and no risks were identified.

## **Reputational**

- 6.7 The reputational risks to the Council are minimised by the regular review of financial information by services, CMT and Elected members throughout the Financial Year.

## **7. IMPACT SECTION**

### **Economy**

- 7.1 Investment in the city will have a positive impact on the economy.

### **People**

- 7.4 Robust management of the council's finances will ensure that council services can continue to be provided.

### **Place**

- 7.5 Investment will enhance the place by creating a better and more vibrant city in which to live.

### **Technology**

- 7.6 There are no direct implications on technology arising from the recommendations of this report

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

## **9. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Projected Financial Position –Revenue & Capital

## **10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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**ABERDEEN**  
**CITY COUNCIL**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**FOR THE QUARTER**  
**1 JULY 2017 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2017**

***PROJECTED FINANCIAL POSITION***

## EDUCATION &amp; CHILDREN'S SERVICES – CAPITALPROGRAMME

Programme Board	As at Period 6 2017/18 Education & Children's Services	Figures for Total Project			Figures for Current Year Only		
		Approved Budget	Expenditure to Date	Forecast Expenditure	Approved Budget	Expenditure to Date	Forecast Expenditure
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Asset Mgmt	New Brimmond School	12,679	12,707	12,707	0	(15)	(43)
Asset Mgmt	Orchard Brae (New ASN School - previously Raeden Centre project)	18,500	17,754	18,500	3,367	2,698	3,444
Asset Mgmt	Lochside Academy - ICT Infrastructure	1,000	0	1,000	0	0	0
Asset Mgmt	Lochside Academy - Infrastructure Improvements.	1,500	92	1,500	0	44	70
Asset Mgmt	New Milltimber Primary	13,000	0	13,000	0	0	0
Asset Mgmt	Kingsfield Childrens Home	1,550	1	1,550	1,550	0	420
Asset Mgmt	Greenbrae Primary Extension and Internal Works	4,631	4,139	4,631	495	3	495
Asset Mgmt	Stoneywood Primary	14,300	6,398	14,300	11,933	4,030	10,461
Asset Mgmt	Dyce 3G Pitch	748	717	748	31	0	10
Asset Mgmt	Refurbish Throughcare Facility - 311 Clifton Road	825	784	825	42	2	42
Asset Mgmt	Tillydrone Primary School	17,000	46	17,000	2,871	12	2,871
Asset Mgmt	Torry Primary School and Hub	20,000	26	20,000	2,983	9	2,983
Asset Mgmt	Northfield / Cummings Park Early Learning & Childcare Provision	500	0	500	500	0	0
CCMP	Art Gallery Redevelopment - Aberdeen Treasure Hub	6,140	6,137	6,140	3	0	3
CCMP	Art Gallery Redevelopment - Main Contract (HLF)	30,132	23,471	30,132	10,983	4,830	7,351
CCMP	Music Hall	1,000	1,770	1,000	0	770	0
		<b>143,505</b>	<b>74,043</b>	<b>143,533</b>	<b>34,758</b>	<b>12,383</b>	<b>28,107</b>

## EDUCATION &amp; CHILDREN'S SERVICES – REVENUE BUDGET

3. The main areas of pressure, emerging risks and assumptions within Inclusion are:

As at 30 September 2017	Year to Date				Forecast to Year End		
ACCOUNTING PERIOD 6	Full Year Revised Budget	Revised Budget	Actual Expenditure	Variance Amount	Forecast Actual	Variance Amount	Variance Percent
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Head Of Service- Childrens Social Work	41,094	19,823	21,204	1,381	42,849	1,754	4.3
Head of Service - Education Services	159,175	81,885	80,232	(1,653)	157,901	(1,274)	(0.8)
Head of Service - Inclusion	17,035	9,181	9,060	(121)	17,450	416	2.4
Head Of Service- Policy, Performance & Resources	5,240	2,715	2,622	(93)	5,050	(190)	(3.6)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>222,543</b>	<b>113,604</b>	<b>113,117</b>	<b>(486)</b>	<b>223,249</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>0.3</b>

It should be noted that the full year budgets reflected above differ from those set by Council in February 2017 for a number of reasons. This is normal practice during the year as virements are identified. The main change in services relates to the allocation of procurement savings which was held within Contingencies at the time the budget was set.

There are a number of identified cost and/or demand pressures on services which require to be addressed during the remainder of the year. A short life working group has been set up to carry out a strategic review of spend across a range of areas including those detailed below. Initial work carried out by the group indicates that whilst there are challenges ahead, a number of options are available to address these such that a balanced position can be achieved.

The main areas of pressure, emerging risks and assumptions within Children's Social Work are:



- Childrens Fostering costs are under pressure due to a shortage of In-house provision. Alternative External fostering agency costs are more expensive. It has been assumed that these costs can be contained within budget.
- Self Directed Support cases are assessed on how best to meet client needs and it has been assumed that overall costs can be managed through opening up new and more flexible opportunities to meet the needs of the client.
- Out Of Authority Placements – Pressure continues to reduce the number and cost of external placements. The Child Service Specialist Forum, acting as a gatekeeper, currently manages access to high tariff provision, matching presenting need to resources for young people whose needs have exhausted local provision. It is assumed that this will assist in ensuring that appropriate cost effective option will be implemented.

2. The main areas of pressure, emerging risks and assumptions within Education Services are:

- It has been assumed that any staffing changes associated with the September 2017 pupil roll census can be accommodated from within current budgets.
- It has been assumed that Art Gallery and provosts Skene House Income reduction can be met from savings elsewhere within the budget.

3. The main areas of pressure, emerging risks and assumptions within Inclusion are:

- Out Of Authority Placements Placements – Pressure continues to reduce the number and cost of external placements. The Child Service Specialist Forum, acting as a gatekeeper, currently manages access to high tariff provision, matching presenting need to resources for young people whose needs have exhausted local provision. It is assumed that this will assist in ensuring that appropriate cost effective option will be implemented.
- Fostering – Pressure continues to reduce the number of external foster places being utilised by the service. There is currently a shortage of available Local Authority foster carers and as a result, more expensive external foster placements through agencies are required.

4. The main areas of pressure, emerging risks and assumptions within Policy, Performance & Resources are:

- It has been assumed that all property works relating to school security and other needs led, Health & safety issues, can be met from within current budget resources.



## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	<b>Education and Children's Services</b>
DATE	<b>26<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>
REPORT TITLE	<b>Parental Involvement Strategy</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/18/001</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Bernadette Oxley and Helen Shanks (Acting)</b>
REPORT AUTHOR	<b>Maxine Jolly and Donna Cuthill</b>

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-**

The report provides Elected Members with a copy of the new Parental Involvement Strategy for approval

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Note the content of the Strategy
- b) Endorse the actions for improving parental engagement contained in the Strategy;
- c) Instruct the Director of Education to develop an action plan to deliver the outcomes of the Strategy, and to report annually, by way of a service update, on progress with this plan.

### **3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES / OTHER HEADINGS AS APPROPRIATE**

- 3.1 There is a requirement under the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 to prepare and publish details relating to parental engagement. The current strategy (2014-2017) needs to be updated and reported on annually to reflect current guidance and legislation. The Strategy also should be a 'live' document that can be amended to reflect areas of good practice and any new policies
- 3.2 The Parental Engagement Strategy, whether it is a stand-alone strategy or integrated into a broader improvement strategy, should be easily located on the local authority's website or through normal communication channels, including a link from school websites. The parental involvement strategy, or the relevant aspects of the broader improvement plan, should contain

measurable outcomes on parental involvement and engagement, and progress should be monitored

#### **Steps already taken in Aberdeen City**

- 3.3 The Local Authority Business Plan and The Directorate Service Plan are aligned with the priorities contained in the NIF. All of these documents make reference to the importance of parental engagement
- 3.4 A Parental Engagement Strategy has been prepared (Appendix A). Consultation has already taken place with schools staff, Family Learning Staff; Children and Young People; Parent Groups including Autism and Other Conditions Support Group, Kinship carers, Family Learning groups, Parent Councils and Children's Social Work.
- 3.5 The current School Improvement Planning process has been revised to ensure alignment with the statutory guidance. Reporting on Parental Engagement is required in School Standards and Quality Reports
- 3.6 An action plan will be developed to support the delivery of the Strategy. This will be reported on annually by means of a service update.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising directly from the report

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Education (Scotland) Act (2016) requires local authorities each year to prepare and publish details of activities undertaken regarding their parental involvement strategy. They should comply in full with this requirement while also ensuring that parental engagement is included in the broader National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan reports. These reports should be jargon-free and written in plain English.

#### **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

**6.1 Financial** – The Parental Engagement Strategy and plan are unlikely to carry any financial risks.

**6.2 Employee** – Having effective guidance on Parental Engagement will help staff to be supported in their interactions with parents and families.

**6.3 Customer / citizen** – School leaders will be more effective in supporting parents and families to help their child with learning.

**6.4 Environmental** – The interventions planned to improve parental engagement are unlikely to impact on the environment.

**6.5 Technological** – The interventions planned to support parental engagement are unlikely to present any technological risks.

**6.6 Legal** – Statutory duties and relevant legislation are reference in the strategy. The draft strategy will ensure that we address all of the new duties and mitigate this risk. The risk is low.

**6.7 Reputational** – Not effectively supporting parents and families with their child’s learning could present a reputational risk to the Council, including higher numbers of parental complaints. Effectively implementing the Strategy and close monitoring of impact will enable the Council to positively report on progress made in engaging with parents. The risk is low.

## **7. IMPACT SECTION**

### **7.1 Economy**

Implementing improvement in parental engagement will help parents to support their child’s learning and raise aspirations. These changes will positively impact on our economy and support the theme of Aberdeen Prospers.

### **7.2 People**

Successful implementation of the Strategy will lead to improved outcomes for children, young people and their families. There will be a positive impact on children, young people and families including those with protected characteristics and support our work in ensuring that people are resilient, including and supported when needed.

### **7.3 Place**

The Strategy takes account of local need and will have a positive impact on individual communities across Aberdeen City.

### **7.4 Technology**

Schools will be encouraged to use a range of communication methods with parents, including social media, blogs and school websites. The Strategy should be accessible from school websites and The Aberdeen City Council website

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NA

## **9. APPENDICES (if applicable)**

Parental Engagement Strategy

## **10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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**ABERDEEN**  
**CITY COUNCIL**

**Strategy for Parental Involvement**  
**2018 - 2021**

DRAFT

## Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Purpose and Vision
- 3.0 Guiding Principles
- 4.0 Definitions
- 5.0 Links to Legislation, Policy and National Priorities
- 6.0 Roles, Rights and Responsibilities
- 7.0 Overcoming barriers to Parental Involvement and Engagement
- 8.0 How will we increase Parental Engagement in Aberdeen
- 9.0 Addressing Parental Concerns and Complaints

DRAFT



## 1.0 Introduction

Both globally and nationally it is recognised that parents are the single most important influence on their children's development, learning and achievement.

The involvement and engagement of parents in their children's learning is recognised as a key element in raising attainment through support, help and encouragement given at home and whilst at school.

## 2.0 Purpose and Vision for Aberdeen City

### ***# Families, communities and schools learning and achieving together***

Aberdeen City Council (ACC) is committed to supporting and encouraging parents to be actively involved in their children's learning. Our aim is for children, families and ACC services to learn and work together to raise attainment, improve health and wellbeing and help narrow the achievement gap for all Aberdeen's children.

The Parental Engagement Strategy will communicate a clear plan of how services will work together to support all children, their families, schools and their community.

## 3.0 Guiding Principles

- Parents and families have the most influence on their child's attitudes, behaviour and achievement outcomes
- Parents, children and young people and staff are valued partners in learning; everyone has an important and different role to play
- True parental engagement can only take place when everyone commits to developing an ethos of mutual trust and respect
- Every parent should be encouraged to take an active role in their children's education and learning and given the appropriate information and support
- Parents, children and young people's views and opinions are valued and should be included and taken into account when making decisions that affect their family, school and community

## 4.0 Definitions

### Parental Involvement and Parent Engagement

There are many ways to understand and define what is meant by parental involvement and engagement. Parents can be involved in school activities without actually being engaged in their child's learning. For clarity, the following terms are defined as below:

**Involvement:** occurs by **coming in** to school either informally by dropping off, picking up or attending formally through parent consultations, attending events and receiving reports and sharing information.

**Engagement:** occurs when parents are **actively** involved in supporting learning in the home, at school and in the community through a variety of different ways. This is through providing a supportive home environment for children to grow and develop, where parents have aspirations for achievement; and where parents participate in school life and communicate regularly and have a positive relationship between home and school. Harris et al 12: 2009. Do Parents know they matter?

Where we use the word parent in this document this refers to anyone with parental responsibilities, a carer and /or any person who is liable to maintain or has parental responsibilities (within the meaning of section 1(3) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995) in relation to, or has care of a child or young person.

#### Child

A child means a young person under the age of 18.

#### Family

Family includes any person who has parental responsibility for the child and any other person with whom the child has been living.

#### Looked after Child

The legal status of a Looked After Child is determined by the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. A child becomes Looked After, either as a result of a decision of a Children's Hearing or when a parent requests that the local authority provide care and accommodation for their child/young person.

#### Family Learning

Family learning encourages family members to learn together as and within a family, with a focus on intergenerational learning. Family learning activities can also be specifically designed to enable parents to learn how to support their children's learning. Scottish Family Learning Network, 2016.

#### Corporate Parent

The formal and local partnership between all services responsible for working together to meet the needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers. Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

#### Third Sector

Voluntary Organisations who provide services and support for children and families

## 5.0 Links to Legislation, Policy and National Priorities

This section outlines the primary legislation which directly relates to supporting parents in their children's learning and the life of the school. It also includes related legislation and policies which inform practice.

### Direct Legislation and Policy

- Scottish Schools (Parental) Involvement Act 2006  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2006/8/contents>
- School Handbook Legislation - The Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2012/130/made>
- National Improvement Framework 17 <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/12/8072>
- Education Governance: Next Steps - Empowering our teachers, parents and communities to deliver excellence and equity for our children  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/06/2941>

### Related Legislation and Policy

- Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2000/6/contents>
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- The Equality Act 2010 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/8/enacted>
- Education( Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004  
[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/7/pdfs/asp\\_20090007\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/7/pdfs/asp_20090007_en.pdf)
- Children's Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2011/1/part/1>
- Children (Scotland) Act 1995 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/36/contents>
- Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2013/03/7748>

### Quality Improvement Frameworks

- How Good is Our School 4th Edition  
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/frwk2hgios>
- How Good is Our School Library <https://scottishlibraries.org/media/1692/hgiosls-v6-web-date.pdf>
- How Good is our Learning and Development in the Community  
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/frwk4hgiocommunitylearning.aspx>

### Policies Local & National

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>
- Integrated Children's Services Aberdeen 2017-2020  
<http://www.aberdeengettingitright.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Aberdeen-City-Integrated-Childrens-Services-Plan-2017-2020.pdf>
- Review of Family learning – Supporting equity and excellence  
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/review-of-family-learning>
- Towards a Fairer Aberdeen 2017  
<https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s67196/CHI.17.004>
- Delivering Excellence & Equity in Scottish Education  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/06/3853>

## 6.0 Roles, Rights and Responsibilities

Parental engagement in supporting children's learning is everyone's responsibility. It involves a wide range of services and requires commitment by all staff across Aberdeen City Council and the Third sector. It is a team effort and requires everyone to play their part to deliver the best services for all children and their families.

### What can parents do?

The more that parents engage in their child's learning, the more likely it is that they will help raise their child's attainment. What parents do with their children at home and throughout their education is much more significant than any other factor open to educational influence. Desforges 2003

When parents are actively involved in their child's learning and work together with school and community, children will develop and achieve more. Parents can make a positive difference by:

- Encouraging their children to be positive about learning at home and school
- Making sure their children are attending school regularly
- Letting the school know about anything that is likely to impact on their children's progress, health and wellbeing or safety
- Asking for help when they need support with parenting and family life
- Supporting the values, rules and expectations of their children's school
- Encouraging their children to join after-school clubs or community activities
- Engaging in the life of the school in as many ways as possible
- Asking for information and support about their children's learning at home
- Talking to them about their future and the kind of job they think they would enjoy
- Supporting the work of the Parent Council / Parent Voice group and Pupil Voice Groups

### What will schools do?

Head teachers have a clear role in leading the parental engagement agenda in their schools. All staff have a responsibility to involve and support parents in their children's education. They can do this by:

- Ensuring the school offers a warm welcome to all families
- Communicating clearly, without jargon to the parent forum about all aspects of school life in a way they understand
- Taking account of parents' differing needs and circumstances of families including language, culture and social context
- Creating a range of activities for parents to get fully involved in their children's learning with the curriculum
- Having flexible arrangements to encourage involvement in the wider aspects of the school
- Involving parents in decisions affecting their children's education
- Ensuring they have a close working relationship with key workers and team managers in Children's homes where appropriate
- Encouraging evaluation and feedback to shape the school policies and the school improvement plan,

- Helping parents understand how they can be fully engaged in their children's learning at home, school and the wider community
- Ensuring parent's meetings and processes are delivered in a family friendly way
- Having an active parent council / voice group who represents the parent's needs and influences decision making in the school
- Encouraging parent groups to work and support Pupil Voice Groups

### **What will Aberdeen City Council do?**

Aberdeen City Council is required under the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 to have a strategy in place that promotes the involvement of parents in their children's learning. The introduction of the National Improvement Framework requires an annual report on our work relating to parental engagement.

We will actively promote and support the following:

- Our communication will be clear using plain English. We will ensure our consultations are timely with our documents readily accessible, with no jargon. Where possible key documents will be translated in to the majority of languages
- Increase our use of digital communication with parents to include on-line payments, parent consultations, school letters, subject choice
- We will share the Strategy for Parental Involvement with all parents, schools, staff and services and explain the role they play
- Report on our parent engagement activities annually related to our action plan
- Provide support, training and information for parents, staff and parent councils
- Ensure our schools provide increased opportunities for parents to become more involved in their child's learning and are supported with learning at home
- Continue to improve all aspects of parental engagement by sharing good practice
- Ensure our processes and protocols for multi-agency meetings are parent and child friendly
- Actively involve parents in the appointment of Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teacher posts
- Consult and implement feedback from parents to improve services that directly affect children and families
- Create opportunities for dialogue and sharing information between Parent Councils and Aberdeen City Council
- Support the work of Aberdeen Parent Forum Council
- Implement the recommendations of the Parental Involvement Act 2006 review

### **What will the Third Sector do?**

The Third Sector has regular and often daily contact with parents and plays a key role in helping children, families and other ACC services to support children's learning and wellbeing. They will do this by:

- Providing safe, welcoming environments for children's activities and for their families
- Communicating clearly, without jargon to parents about their services in a way they understand
- Taking account of parents' differing needs and circumstances of families including language, culture and social context

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- Valuing parent's contribution and feedback and in shaping the way services are delivered
- Encouraging and supporting parent volunteers skills
- Directing parents to specific information and resources when the need arises

## **Our Corporate Parenting Role**

As a Corporate Parent Aberdeen City Council wants the same outcomes for our looked after children as any good parent would want for their own children. We will accept responsibility for them and make their needs a priority.

We believe that Corporate Parenting is not just a responsibility. It is also a real opportunity to improve the futures of looked after children. Success will rely on many different organisations working together to make a vital contribution to support every child in our care.

The Virtual School in Aberdeen City was set up to support the educational achievement of the children it looks after, regardless of where they are placed. The role of the Virtual School Head Teacher is to support improvements in the educational progress and attainment and achievement of all children looked after by the authority, including those that have been placed in schools in other authorities.

### **7.0 Overcoming barriers to support families participating in children's learning**

This strategy recognises that every parent want the best for their child. However not all parents will find it easy to become involved in their child's education - even so we must continue to build relationships with all parents, using creative and engaging ways to connect. It is important to understand why this might be the case and ensure we do our best to engage all parents.

### **8.0 How will we increase Parent Engagement in Aberdeen?**

*The evidence is convincing; families have a major influence on children's achievement in school and though life. When schools, families and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to better in school, stay in school longer and like school more. Henderson and Mapp 2002:16*

Research, policy and legislation all point to improved outcomes for children and young people when families are engaged and fully involved in their children's learning.

Dr Epstein's identifies six areas where schools can work together with families and communities to increase attainment in learning and participation. We have adapted and added another theme to account for our needs in Aberdeen. We will define the key areas where we will aim to improve so that families, staff, schools and communities make an impact on children's learning and achievement. Epstein 2001: 409-411

1. Communication
2. Supporting Parenting

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3. Sharing Learning
4. Volunteering
5. Decision making
6. Collaboration with the Community
7. Staff Training

## Theme 1 - Communication

### What do we mean by Communication?

“Communication between home and school has to be regular, two way and meaningful. Effective communication requires school initiated contact with parents and parent invited contact with school, where both parties provide vital information about a child’s strengths, challenges and wider achievements.

To communicate effectively everyone must be aware of, and address issues such as cultural diversity, language differences and any additional needs and barriers that need to be overcome.”

Harris et al 2009

### What could this look like in practice?

- All communication is clear and in plain English, translated if relevant to the school context and readily accessible with no jargon.
- Information is timely with advance notice for school events, celebrations and assemblies
- The school’s vision, values and aims, handbook and policies are clear and help parents, pupils and staff work together. Everyone is clear about their role and responsibilities.
- Have regular opportunities to find out what help parents need to support their child’s learning
- Families know about school life and special events and have opportunities to get involved in learning, volunteering and how to access support for their children and themselves
- Increased use of digital communication to include school letters, online payments, parent consultations, reporting progress and subject choice
- Technology is used to share information such as Groupcall, emails, Google classroom, Twitter; Expressions App, drop in sessions, website, classroom and school blogs and other social media apps
- Flexibility with interview times for parent consultations particularly if other siblings attend the school.
- Focus groups for school improvement such as tea /talk sessions, Head teacher /parent weekly drop in sessions
- Increased flow of communication between home and school relating to learning, sharing valuable and relevant information about a child in good and difficult times
- Increased awareness and understanding of the important role that pupils, parents and schools have in supporting learning and achievement
- Enables parents and teachers to monitor their child’s progress and support their learning at every stage at home, school and community
- Positive relationships with families so that support can be offered/asked for at the right time

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- Everyone has a shared understanding of the values and ethos of school

## **Theme 2- Supporting Parenting**

To be most effective, parental engagement needs to be rooted in the home, in an attitude that fosters learning in the home, as this has been shown to be most positively related to children's achievement.

Desforges and Abouchar 2003; Sylva et al

### **What do we mean by supporting parenting?**

Family plays a key role in a child's learning and development. Helping and supporting families to establish a positive home setting helps children to do better, achieve more particularly when their parents encourage and have aspirations to support their learning and development at home.

### **What could this look like in practice?**

- Families feel supported, valued and feel they are able to contribute to their child's learning and development
- Families feel confident in asking for help and know where to get information and resources
- Families will be increasingly engaged, understand and value all aspects of learning at the home, wider community and at school
- Parents feel enabled to support others by setting up or using positive parent networks
- Parental confidence and engagement will increase when supported, and given information about their child's learning
- Families have access to parenting programmes, learning workshops and family support workers to help build confidence to increase their skills

### **Programmes and Services include:**

- Family Learning Team approaches: e.g. Family Storytime, Confidence and Assertiveness, Family literacy and numeracy, Budgeting, Chef Up
- Home Support workers
- Community Learning – e.g. Adult Learning Digital Literacy, Learning English,
- PEEP - Parent as Early Educator Partners
- Educational Social Workers - delivering parenting and home support
- St Machar Parent Partnership, Barnardos, Home Start
- Aberlour Trust working with families who have learning disabilities
- Bridge the Gap - Kinship Carers Support Group
- Educational Psychologists: Support / Advice to parents, Emotion Coaching,
- Parent Support Groups - ASN
- Services and support through Aberdeen City Libraries including Bookbug
- Health Visitors - Family Nurse Partnership work with teenage mums

## **Theme 3 - Sharing Learning – home, school and community**

*# Families, schools and communities learning and achieving together.*



“Family learning is a powerful method of engagement and learning which can foster positive attitudes towards life-long learning, promote socio-economic resilience and challenge educational disadvantage.’ Scottish Family Learning Network, 2016

### **What do we mean by this?**

Recognising and valuing learning at home emphasises the important role parent’s play in supporting children to learn. When schools intentionally share, celebrate and actively involve families in their children’s learning experiences everyone benefits. There are a number of ways to engage parents with learning:

**Information to support learning** - where schools and services connect parents to classroom learning through a variety of tips, resources, information evenings and digital technology.

**Family Learning activities** - encourages family members to learn together as and within a family with a focus on intergenerational learning. Family learning activities can also be specifically designed to enable parents to learn how to support their children’s learning

**Sharing about learning** - where parents and staff come together to learn about the processes of learning and understand methods to improve children’s attainment and achievement

**Through learning** - where schools and or partners provide opportunities for parents to be learners; creating adult learning opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding through their own experiences to support learning

### **What could this look like in practice?**

- Develop resources which help families support their children at home
- Developing digital workshops to support Google classroom, Text Help and future innovation
- Provide meaningful home activities that parents can do with their child at home, e.g. home learning tasks based on practical literacy and numeracy or personal skill activities that involve their families
- Increase opportunities to stay and play, share celebrations, or hold open events where children and parents learn together
- Host events that value and celebrate the language and culture of families
- Create opportunities for parents to learn and understand the following: stages of child and adolescent development, positive behaviour techniques, support health & wellbeing in children, developing language skills
- Sharing events to help understanding the process of learning, learning styles and strategies to help at home with attainment and achievement
- Providing adult learning approaches and opportunities to support digital, language, literacy and numeracy skills in conjunction with other Adult Learning Services
- Providing parents with useful information about where their children are in their learning, what progress they have made over time, and what they might do to support their child’s learning
- Providing parent/teacher workshops targeting areas of need or interest such

as child resilience, growth mind-set, literacy and numeracy and other health and wellbeing areas

- Involve families in setting goals for their children's learning and build the practice of involving parents into target setting and career planning discussions with their children
- Develop local strategies to support transitions throughout every stage from the early years through moving on to higher education and into employment
- Encourage families to access learning opportunities available through Aberdeen City Libraries

#### **Theme 4 - Decision Making - Parent Voice / Council**

##### **What do we mean by decision making?**

Parents will be actively supported in having a stronger role in the life of the school; such as school improvement, policies, identifying and communicating priorities for supporting families with learning.

Parents views will be sought and actively involved in Aberdeen City Council consultations, strategy and policy development about matters that directly affect their children, school and community. Education Governance 2017

##### **What could this look like in practice?**

- Schools will have an active Parent Council with fair parental representation. e.g. ethnic, faith, gender and Additional Support Needs
- Parent Councils who fully understand their role and responsibility and use this to support and impact on school improvement, policies and
- Effective communication of parents' views and ideas to support school and community
- Deliver specific support to parents around supporting child's learning needs
- School seeks guidance on how best to involve families in the life of school
- Active involvement of parents in school's self-evaluation
- Children and parents are on decision-making groups e.g. Rights Respecting Schools steering group
- PTA/PCs are active in supporting school community and applying for grants or fund raising for resources or specific projects
- Parents are involved in genuine consultation and are part of decision making process on issues such as Poverty Proofing, Pupil Equity Funding, School Improvement Planning

#### **Theme 5 - Volunteering**

##### **What do we mean by this?**

People volunteer for a variety of reasons, for some it offers the chance to give something back to school and community for others it is about making a difference to the people around them. Volunteering provides an opportunity to develop new skills or build on existing experience and knowledge.

Family volunteers can support and enrich their children's learning by giving time, skills, and resources during the school day, after school and the wider community.

### **What could this look like in practice?**

- Volunteer induction sessions delivered to help parents work safely and effectively within school so parent skills are matched within classes/school
- Trips and visits for classes are supported by parents
- The Curriculum is enhanced by parents sharing skills, talents and interests e.g. developing young workforce, business opportunities, mentoring and sharing knowledge
- Class and group activities are regularly supported by parents who know the children
- Extracurricular clubs and activities are supported or developed e.g. Coding clubs, Duke of Edinburgh Award, sports and the arts
- School libraries are supported and developed in consultation with school leadership team, parent councils and appropriate professional guidance from Aberdeen City Libraries.
- Children gain knowledge and insight into the world of work through parents' input
- Volunteers facilitate events that help fundraise for equipment, trips and resources
- Parents are more confident, develop new skills and move on further learning opportunities and wider achievement

## **Theme 6 – Collaboration with Community**

### **What do we mean by this?**

We want to identify, coordinate resources and people to work together to strengthen and enrich the opportunities for social, educational, recreational and cultural experiences for all children, families and their school community.

### **What could it look like?**

- Learning experiences for children are enriched by community resources and expertise
- Families are able to access programmes in their local community e.g. health, cultural, recreational and social support
- Families connect with community programs for their children such as mentoring, tutoring, and business partnerships
- Families access resources and opportunities through the library service e.g. Code Clubs, Creator Clubs, Summer Reading Challenge
- Services work together to create community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for children and young people
- Increased partnerships with schools can provide for local needs of children and families e.g. counselling, art, cultural, health and social opportunities.
- Community benefits from the contribution of children's families, and schools working together (e.g. recycling, art, music, drama, and other activities).
- Applications for funding is targeted by local people to meet local need

*# Families, schools and communities learning and achieving together.*

- Ensure equal opportunities for children and families to access activities and opportunities
- Families, school and community work together on multicultural events and activities

### **Theme 7 - Staff Training**

Our training will improve staff awareness and effectiveness when working with children and their families.

#### **What will it look like in practice?**

- Staff will have an increased understanding of their role in relation to national policies, legislation and professional responsibilities when supporting children and families in learning.
- Staff are effective and confident in listening and supporting families within the community context
- Staff are more effective in supporting bilingual families using translation and interpretation services such as Language Line
- Staff will have increased knowledge and understanding of Autism and other conditions which enable staff to better support families
- Staff effectively use technology and resources available to share learning with families
- Effective collaboration with other services who can support and work alongside families to support parenting
- Staff understand adult and family learning approaches when planning activities that engage parents
- Schools have effective family friendly multi-agency meetings
- Staff will recognise adult numeracy and literacy concerns, be able to respond and signpost appropriately
- Staff will have access to CPD, Blended Learning advice and resources available through Aberdeen City Libraries

## 9.0 Addressing Concerns and Complaints

Aberdeen City Council recognises the vital role that parents play in supporting their children's learning and is committed to fostering positive relationships with parents. No matter how strong partnerships are, or how good our policies are sometimes things can still go wrong and there may be occasions when parents wish to express unhappiness or dissatisfaction with Council services, policies or staff behaviour.

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/complaints>

When a complaint is made it must be handled in accordance with the Complaints Handling Procedure which provides two opportunities to resolve issues internally. In order to maintain positive relationships, it is usually better for all, if parental concerns or complaints can be resolved at school level and as quickly as possible.

If a concern or complaint cannot be resolved at the frontline resolution stage then it will progress to 'Investigation' stage and a detailed investigation into the matter will be carried out. Complaints that are complex, serious or high risk and require detailed, lengthy investigation may be dealt with at the 'Investigation' stage from the outset.

Once the two internal stages of the complaints handling procedure have been exhausted, the complainant must be directed to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to carry out an independent external review of the matter. The SPSO is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

Once the SPSO reaches a decision they may contact the council with recommendations for improvement and will provide dates by which the recommendations must be implemented. The council is required to report back to the SPSO and evidence that the required action has been taken.

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	<b>Education and Children's Services</b>
DATE	<b>25 January 2018</b>
REPORT TITLE	<b>Aberdeen City Play Policy and Strategy 2018</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/18/003</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>(Interim) Bernadette Oxley and Helen Shanks</b>
REPORT AUTHOR	<b>Louise Beaton</b>

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-**

To seek approval of a new Aberdeen City Play Policy and Strategy to be launched in 2018 as part of the Year of Young People celebrations in the city.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- a) To note the contents of the report and the achievements since 2013;
- b) To approve the new Aberdeen City Play Policy and Strategy 2018; and
- c) To instruct officers to work with Aberdeen Play Forum and key stakeholders to launch the Aberdeen Play Policy and Strategy at an event in Spring 2018 as part of the Year of Young People celebrations in the city.

### **3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES / OTHER HEADINGS AS APPROPRIATE**

- 3.1 There is a long history and tradition for supporting play in Aberdeen. Children's right to play is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and applies to all children and young people up to the age of 18.
- 3.2 The previous Aberdeen City Play Policy was adopted in 2013. Since then much has been achieved in Aberdeen:
  - Play Awards have been won by Aberdeen Play Forum for Play Rangers and NHS Grampian for play services at Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital;
  - Aberdeen was commended as a 'City of Play' by the Care Inspectorate in 2015;
  - Universal and targeted high quality play opportunities have been developed and delivered across the city, in partnership with communities and schools;

- Thousands of children and families have attended events delivered by Aberdeen Play Forum on National Play Day and Play on the Longest Day;
- Aberdeen City Council has spent £3.3 million on the refurbishment and redevelopment of 101 play areas across the city since 2013;
- The removal of 300+ “No Ball Games” signs and “Boo to Poo” initiatives have ensured that children have more access to safer environments within their own communities;
- Since 2014, annual Woodland Playschemes have been delivered during the summer holidays for children with additional support needs and their siblings;
- Valuable learning opportunities are delivered weekly for children living at the Clinterty Traveller Site;
- Schools and out of school clubs have actively engaged with loose parts and play training sessions;
- The Cycling Scotland Play on Pedals initiative is being delivered with pre-school children in 7 schools in the Bridge of Don area, with plans to roll out to other areas of the city in the next school session 2018-19;
- Information has been provided to planners and developers so that play is considered during community planning;
- 120 children and young people have engaged in an Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan workshop to explore their ideas for making the city a more welcoming place for people of their age; and
- The importance of play and outdoor play is enshrined in training programmes to ensure that the benefits of play are widely encouraged and promoted.

- 3.3 The new Aberdeen City Play Policy and Strategy 2018 will replace the Policy adopted in 2013.
- 3.4 Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen Play Forum recognises that play is central to the health and wellbeing of our children and to the enjoyment in their lives. Access to high quality play opportunities leads to the development of confident young people who are better able to lead their own learning, fully participate in their own communities and make a full and active contribution to society.
- 3.5 The Play Policy and Strategy 2018 updates and replaces the Play Policy launched in 2013. It makes a commitment to *all* children and young people in Aberdeen to support their right to play regardless of their needs, background or abilities. It acknowledges the significance of children’s rights in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which was approved by the UK Government in December 1991 and adopted by Aberdeen City in 1996.
- 3.6 Aberdeen’s should be a city where *all* children and young people are empowered to play; are encouraged to direct and define their own play spaces and have access to high quality play opportunities at home, in early learning, childcare and school and in their local community.
- 3.7 The purpose of the Play Policy and Strategy is:
- To reaffirm our commitment to play in the city;
  - To celebrate our achievements since 2013;



- To set out our priorities for continuing to improve the quality of current and future play opportunities in Aberdeen; and
  - To highlight the links between play and other local and national policies and strategies for improving outcomes for our children and young people.
- 3.8 Aberdeen's Play Policy and Strategy follows the four themes used in the National Play Strategy for Scotland. Each theme describes what we are aiming to achieve along with our priorities for action. The four themes are:
1. Play in the Home
  2. Play in Early Learning and Childcare and School
  3. Play in the Community
  4. Positive Support for Play
- 3.9 The Play Policy and Strategy shows the value of freedom to play in the lives of our children. It is our responsibility to ensure the freedom to play is a right upheld in Aberdeen and we are committed to this as part of our aspiration to become a UNICEF accredited Child Friendly City.
- 3.10 The Play Policy and Strategy contributes to the Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcome Improvement Plan and the Children's Services Plan priorities to ensure that "*children have the best start in life*".
- 3.11 Partnership working has gone from strength to strength in recent years with Aberdeen being commended as a City of Play in the Report of a joint Inspection: Services for Children and Young People in Aberdeen City, published by the Care Inspectorate in March 2015. A key feature of this Play Policy and Strategy is to work together with our existing and future partners to best meet the needs of children, families and communities.
- 3.12 It is timely to celebrate our achievements and to update our Play Policy to reaffirm our commitment to play in the city and to set out our priorities for continuing to improve the quality of current and future play opportunities in Aberdeen in line with local and national priorities.
- 3.13 The process of developing the new Aberdeen City Play Policy commenced at the AGM of the Aberdeen Play Forum in February 2017. A short-life working group from Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen Play Forum and partners have met throughout 2017 to develop the new Policy and Strategy.
- 3.14 Consultation has been carried out with children, young people, families and professionals who work with children at each stage of the process.
- 3.15 A new logo and branding for Aberdeen: City of Play has been produced, following a short-listing process of design options and voting by children and key stakeholders. Children have contributed to the quotations, drawings and images which will be seen throughout the final version of the Play Policy and Strategy 2018.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## 6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

6.1 Financial – Approval of the Play Policy and Strategy 2018 reaffirms the commitment of Aberdeen City Council to play in the city and the priorities for continuing to improve the quality of current and future play opportunities in Aberdeen. Since 2013, £3.3 million has been spent refurbishing and redeveloping 101 city play areas and supporting communities to improve play spaces. The Play Policy and Strategy enables Aberdeen City Council and its partners to prioritise its resources accordingly in line with local priorities and it can also help to lever in resources from external sources in order to fulfil the ambition of Aberdeen as a City of Play.

6.2 Employee - considered and no risk has been identified

6.3 Customer / citizen - Children’s right to play is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UNCRC) and applies to all children and young people up to the age of 18. The Play Policy and Strategy ensures access to high quality play opportunities for all children regardless of need, background or ability. Section 2 of the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) requires Local Authorities to publish a report of what steps it has taken in a 3 year period to secure better or further effect within its areas of responsibility of the UNCRC requirements. This includes play. The UNCRC was approved by the UK Government in 1991 and adopted by Aberdeen City Council in 1996.

6.4 Environmental – 101 Play areas have been refurbished and redeveloped across the city since 2013, enabling thousands of children to play outside in appropriate, safe environments, within their communities. Furthermore, the “Removal of No Ball Games” and “Boo to Poo” initiatives have also ensured that children have more access to safer environments. Approval of the Play Policy and Strategy ensures that Play in the Community remains a key priority for our children in Aberdeen.

6.5 Technological - considered and no risk has been identified

6.6 Legal - Children’s right to play is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UNCRC) and applies to all children and young people up to the age of 18. The Play Policy and Strategy ensures access to high quality play opportunities for all children regardless of need, background or ability. Section 2 of the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) requires Local Authorities to publish a report of what steps it has taken in a 3 year period to secure better or further effect within its areas of responsibility of the UNCRC requirements. This includes play. The UNCRC was approved by the UK Government in 1991 and adopted by Aberdeen City Council in 1996.

- 6.7 Reputational - Aberdeen was commended as a City of Play in the Report of a joint Inspection: Services for Children and Young People in Aberdeen City, published by the Care Inspectorate in March 2015. Approval of the new Play Policy and Strategy enables Aberdeen to embrace and build on this positive reputation as a City of Play and this will indeed further enhance and support Aberdeen's bid to become the first UNICEF Child Friendly City in Scotland.

## **7. IMPACT SECTION**

- 7.1 The Play Policy and Strategy contributes to the Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcome Improvement Plan and the Children's Services Plan priorities to ensure that "*children have the best start in life*".
- 7.2 Children's right to play is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UNCRC) and applies to all children and young people up to the age of 18. The Play Policy and Strategy ensures access to high quality play opportunities for all children regardless of need, background or ability. Section 2 of the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) requires Local Authorities to publish a report of what steps it has taken in a 3 year period to secure better or further effect within its areas of responsibility of the UNCRC requirements. This includes play. The UNCRC was approved by the UK Government in 1991 and adopted by Aberdeen City Council in 1996.
- 7.3 Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen Play Forum recognises that play is central to the health and wellbeing of our children and to the enjoyment in their lives. Access to high quality play opportunities leads to the development of confident young people who are better able to lead their own learning, fully participate in their own communities and make a full and active contribution to society. Play is a key feature of the new Health and Social Care Standards (2017).
- 7.4 Aberdeen was commended as a City of Play by the Care Inspectorate in 2015 and we are keen to continue and build on this accolade as we work towards becoming the first UNICEF Child Friendly city in Scotland.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

N/A

## **9. APPENDICES (if applicable)**

- 9.1 Aberdeen City Play Policy and Strategy 2018 (draft)  
9.2 Infographic of Play achievements in the city since 2013

## **10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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# Aberdeen City of Play

Aberdeen is a city where all children and young people have a right to play freely every day and have access to quality play opportunities



## Aberdeen City Play Policy and Strategy adopted 2018



## Foreword

Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen Play Forum recognise that play is central to the health and wellbeing of our children and to enjoyment in their lives. Access to high quality play opportunities leads to the development of confident young people who are better able to lead their own learning, fully participate in their own communities and make a full and active contribution to society.

Our vision is to develop high quality innovative and inclusive services in partnership with the community, children and young people and all agencies involved in the delivery of play.

*"Aberdeen is a city of play where all children and young people are empowered to play, are encouraged to direct and define their own play spaces and have access to high quality play opportunities and resources at home, in early learning, childcare and school and in the community".*

The right to play is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and applies to all children and young people up to the age of 18. It is essential to their health, development and well-being. The principle of inclusion underpins this policy as all children and young people need play as part of their daily lives. This policy also recognises that while we should do all we can to protect children and young people from risk of serious harm, they need challenging and adventurous play experiences to develop confidence, resilience and social skills.

*Through play... children learn by doing; they explore and experience the world around them; experiment with new ideas, roles and experiences.<sup>1</sup>*

Aberdeen has made a commitment to see, hear, listen and respond to children playing in our communities therefore encouraging healthy community activity with active and positive contributions from all generations.

The Play Policy and Strategy 2018 shows the value of freedom to play in the lives of our children. It is our responsibility to ensure the freedom to play is a right upheld in Aberdeen and we are committed to this as part of our aspiration to become a UNICEF accredited Child Friendly City.

The Play Policy and Strategy 2018 will also contribute to the realisation of the National Health and Social Care Standards, the Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcome Improvement Plan and the Children's Services Plan priorities to ensure that *"children have the best start in life"*.

A key feature of this Play Policy and Strategy 2018 is to work together with our existing and future partners to best meet the needs of children, families and communities in Aberdeen.

*Signed*

Councillor John Wheeler  
Convener  
Education and Children's Services Committee

*Signed*

Councillor Lesley Dunbar  
Vice Convener  
Education and Children's Services Committee

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<sup>1</sup> Committee on the Rights of the Child, (2013) General comment No. 17 on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts (art. 31)

## Introduction

The Aberdeen City Play Policy and Strategy 2018 updates and replaces the Play Policy launched in 2013. It makes a commitment to *all* children and young people in Aberdeen to support their right to play regardless of their needs, background or abilities. It acknowledges the significance of children's rights in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which was approved by the UK Government in December 1991 and adopted by Aberdeen City in 1996.

The purpose of the Play Policy and Strategy is:

- To reaffirm our commitment to play in the city;
- To celebrate our achievements since 2013;
- To set out our priorities for continuing to improve the quality of current and future play opportunities in Aberdeen; and
- To highlight the links between play and other local and national policies and strategies for improving outcomes for our children and young people.



## What do we mean by Play?

Play is the stimulus for physical, intellectual, emotional, linguistic and social development – it is fundamental to human development. Children play for enjoyment and creative expression, but through play they learn about the world around them. Play is fun and is an essential part of everyone's life.



# Since 2013 for Aberdeen we have...

**Aberdeen Play Forum National Playwork Award Winner 2014**  
 Enabled that it Council Policies and Strategies support the Award for Play

**Provided Valuable Learning Opportunities for Children Living at the Clinterty Traveller Site**

**Supported Communities to Improve Play Spaces**

**Ensured that Children and Young People with Disabilities had Access to Quality Play Opportunities**

**Boo to Poo**

**Commentation as City of Play (Care Inspectorate 2015)**

**Promoted Positive Attitudes Towards Outdoor Play in both Children and Adults**

**Ensured Relevant Training and Qualifications were Available to those involved in Play Activities**

**Play on Pedals**

**Schools & OOSCs Engaged with Loose Parts Training and Play Sessions**

**Consulted with and Provided Feedback to Children**

**Play Sessions Provided throughout Aberdeen**

**Provided Play Opportunities Accessible for All Children within the City that are Wee Green Spaces**

**Aberdeen Play Forum Play Ranger Award**

**Since 2014 Yearly Woodland Schemes run for Children with ASN and their Siblings**

**Provided Information to Planners and Developers so that Play is Considered during Community Planning**

**PLAY ON THE LONGEST DAY**

**UK NATIONAL PLAY DAY**

**Hundreds of Children and Families Attended National Play Day Events**

**101 Play Areas Refurbished £3.3 million Spent**

**As part of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan and plans to become a UNICEF Child Friendly City, 120 children and young people took part in a workshop to explore their ideas for making the city a more welcoming place for people of their age**

**From this Partnership Approaches**

**Play Forum**  
 Aberdeen City Council  
 Aberdeen City Council

**PLAY SCOTLAND**

**aberioor**  
 Aberdeen City Council

**play talk read**  
 Aberdeen City Council

**scma**  
 Scottish Music Association  
 Awarded by Quality Standard

**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL**

**Early Years in Scotland**  
 Aberdeen City Council

**Inspiring**  
 Aberdeen City Council

**abnitive**  
 Aberdeen City Council

**family information**  
 Aberdeen City Council

**NHS SCOTLAND**

**VSA**  
 The Voice of Aberdeen

**scotland's quality standard**

**sport aberdeen**  
 Aberdeen City Council



## Play Policy and Strategy Development and Implementation

This Play Policy and Strategy was developed by a short-life working group which met throughout 2017. The group was made up of a wide range of partners and stakeholders. Consultation was carried out with children, young people and families and professionals who work with children.

Accompanying plans will be developed identifying actions to ensure progress is made towards our vision for play. These plans will be reviewed and up-dated periodically.

Rather than the responsibility of one organisation or department, many individuals, professions and establishments share the responsibility to ensure children and young people enjoy their right to play.

Aberdeen's Play Policy directly links to:

- Scottish Government: Health and Social Care Standards
- Aberdeen Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)
- Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Action Plan
- Aberdeen's Children's Services Plan
- Nurtured Outcome Group Improvement Plan



### Aberdeen: City of Play

Partnership working has gone from strength from strength in recent years with Aberdeen being commended as a City of Play in the Report of a Joint Inspection: Services for children and young people in Aberdeen City, published by the Care Inspectorate in March 2015.

*'The City of Play partnership was working effectively to ensure that children in Aberdeen City were empowered to play, were encouraged to direct and define their own play spaces and have access to high quality play opportunities and resources. The foundation for this was the implementation of the Aberdeen Play Forum comprehensive play policy launched in 2013 and based around Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 32 recognises that every child has the right to rest and play and to have the chance to join in a wide range of activities. Considerable investment had been made to improve play areas around the city. Innovative approaches to play had been adopted and there was evidence that a joined-up approach from staff, effective community engagement and an understanding of the importance of play was benefitting children. Take up of service had increased significantly.'*

Care Inspectorate: Joint Inspection, March 2015

**Aberdeen’s Play Policy and Strategy** follows the four themes used in the Play Strategy for Scotland. Each theme describes what we are aiming to achieve (outcomes) along with our priorities for action.

The four themes are:

- Play in the Home
- Play in Early Learning & Childcare and School
- Play in the Community
- Positive Support for Play.

Key UNCRC Articles  
3, 12, 23, 29, 31

The priorities within each of these themes are specific to Aberdeen and have been agreed as part of the development and consultation process.

## Play in the Home

Our homes and family environments are places where our children and young people enjoy plentiful play opportunities, indoors and out, appropriate to their age, stage, ability and preferences.

### We will:

- 1.1 Support families in exploring the benefits of play
- 1.2 Promote family friendly neighbourhoods and opportunities to reclaim streets for play
- 1.3 Encourage intergenerational opportunities for play

## Play in Early Learning & Childcare and School

All of our children and young people enjoy high quality play opportunities, particularly learning via outdoor free play in stimulating spaces with access to nature, on a daily basis in all early learning and childcare settings and school.

### We will:

- 2.1 Encourage all settings to adopt and promote the Play Policy and Strategy, demonstrating that they value play and understand the vital role this has in supporting children’s holistic development.
- 2.2 Promote play friendly approaches in all settings and in all weathers
- 2.3 Balance benefit and risk to enable challenge and learning through play for all children, building resilient and confident individuals
- 2.4 Encourage the development and use of more natural play spaces

## Community

All our children and young people have sufficient time and space for playing within their community and have contact with nature and outdoor spaces in their everyday lives. Play is valued, encouraged and supported in communities.

### We will:

- 3.1 Promote play opportunities to improve health and wellbeing
- 3.2 Make community and public green spaces clean, inclusive and accessible to all
- 3.3 Empower communities to 'come out and play'

## Positive Support for Play

Aberdeen provides a positive environment for play through: a professional workforce and strong and visionary leadership; a well-resourced third sector and infrastructure; and a supportive and informed media.

### We will:

- 4.1 Promote Aberdeen as a City of Play
- 4.2 Embed children's right to play in policies and strategies
- 4.3 Communicate effectively to ensure all children and young people understand that this policy is for them
- 4.4 Nurture partnership working to support play throughout the city

## What do we mean by 'high quality play opportunities'?

By its very nature 'high quality' is difficult to define, and will look different in different circumstances and locations. However, in terms of the provision of play opportunities and environments, in general we might expect 'high quality opportunities' to happen when:

- » the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are put into practice
- » the environment provides stimulus for play to flourish
- » if adults are involved, they work to established ethical and professional standards.

Of course, given the nature of play, children do have high quality play experiences out with the view of adults and in circumstances and locations that were not intended for play.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Action Plan (2013) Source: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0043/00437132.pdf>

## What Stops us Playing?

In order to support children's play opportunities and promote the benefits of play within the context of their lives, it is important to understand that there are competing elements for children's leisure time and other challenges that can make play opportunities difficult to deliver, these include:

- 1. The importance of the suitability, attractiveness and children's feelings of "ownership" relating to where they play.** Everyone has a right to enjoy play spaces that are clean, attractive and safe. Parents, children, schools and communities should be encouraged and supported to share ownership and responsibility for their local play spaces.
- 2. The weather.** A shift in attitude towards the weather and outdoors is needed. This teamed with education and support about obtaining and using appropriate outdoor clothing is part of making all weather outdoor play more attractive. "There is no such thing as bad weather – only inappropriate clothing".
- 3. The dark.** Aberdeen is always going to be dark in the winter. We need to find ways to play in the dark and also to make the most of our short daylight hours by ensuring our children get out to play during the day (including the school day) when possible. Initiatives such as "Play on the Shortest Day" and staff training using resources such as head torches and glow sticks in order to encourage children to play out in the dark can help extend children's play times in the winter.



## Getting it right through Play



By demonstrating a sustained commitment to the vision of Aberdeen as a City of Play and create opportunities and environments for our citizens to have a more active life, we can work together to improve the wellbeing of children and families and get it right for every child. Not only will this improve the quality of life for children, young people and families, it will also assist Community Planning Partnership partners in achieving wider benefits for the whole community in the longer term. An action plan will accompany this Play Strategy to set out how we will deliver on the priority themes for play within the city.



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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	<b>Education and Children's Services</b>
DATE	<b>25 January 2018</b>
REPORT TITLE	<b>Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/18/010</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Helen Shanks (Acting)</b>
REPORT AUTHOR	<b>Aisling MacQuarrie</b>

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-**

#### **1.1.** The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide information on the work of the Northern Alliance, a Regional Improvement Collaborative for the north of Scotland;
- Endorse the work of the Northern Alliance; and
- Seek support from the Committee for the emerging Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

#### **2.1.** It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Endorse the continued work of the Northern Alliance; and
- b) Support the initial (phase 1) Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan; and
- c) to note that phase 2 of the Improvement Plan would be reported in Autumn 2018.

### **3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES / OTHER HEADINGS AS APPROPRIATE**

#### **3.1. Northern Alliance: Regional Improvement Collaborative**

3.1.1 In June 2017 the publication Education Governance: Next Steps document set out the Scottish Government's proposals for an empowered school led system. The proposals recognise that such an empowered school led system will require excellent, accessible improvement support which is aligned to the National Improvement Framework [NIF] and informed by performance data. To this end, the Scottish Government established six Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs) with the aim of bringing together a range of professionals with a relentless focus on supporting teachers, and a range of other staff on how provide support to improve children and young people's

attainment. The Northern Alliance is a RIC between eight local authorities, across the north of Scotland: Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Eilean Siar [Western Isles], Highland, Moray, Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands.

3.1.2 The Northern Alliance is committed to improving the educational and life chances of children and young people. Since its inception the Northern Alliance has sought to develop a culture of collaboration, which has resulted in the sharing of expertise in a range of areas. By building on the Northern Alliance's collective experiences as a RIC it is confident it will make a meaningful difference to the lives of children and young people.

3.1.3 Each RIC has been asked by a joint Steering Group, consisting of the Scottish Government, Education Scotland and Local Government, to produce its own Regional Improvement Plan. Each Regional Improvement Plan has to indicate clearly how the RIC intends to reduce inequalities, target improvement in the four national priorities from the NIF. Importantly, it is also recognised that a degree of flexibility is required to allow RICS in their Regional Improvement Plans to reflect appropriately the needs and improvement priorities of the schools they support.

### **3.2. Priorities**

3.2.1 To this end, the high level priorities outlined in the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan are aligned to the aims of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the NIF (see Appendix A). This initial plan covers the period up until the end of the school year in 2019 although this may be subject to change following the outcome of the Scottish Governments consultation on the Education Bill. The priorities outlined in the Regional Improvement Plan highlight the aims of the NIF, however, the activities and outlook of the Northern Alliance are far broader. The Alliance champions a child and family-centred approach to address the achievement gap and to drive improvement.

### **3.3. Timescales**

3.3.1 The development of the plan is an iterative process. The Regional Improvement Plans are to be developed in phases. The initial Regional Improvement Plan (Phase 1) is to be submitted to the Chief Inspector of Education by 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018 for feedback. The second phase will develop Phase 2 of the Regional Improvement Plan further and provide greater detail through additional analysis and consultation. Phase 2 of the Regional Improvement Plan is expected to be submitted to Education Scotland for sign off in Autumn of 2018.

### **3.4. Ongoing Development**

3.4.1 As a first step in the process, the draft Regional Improvement Plan (see appendix A) evidences the strengths of the Northern Alliance's collaboration



and provides a meaningful starting point to further enhance and enrich the work of the Alliance.

- 3.4.2 We will add to and amend the Regional Improvement Plan as we learn from what works well, where change is needed and importantly to react to feedback and requests from schools and teachers to aid their work with children and young people.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. At this point in time there are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

##### **5.1. Education Bill consultation – Regional Improvement Collaborative**

- 5.1.1 The legislative underpinning of the RICs is the subject of consultation as part of the wider Education Bill. In particular, the potential for a requirement set out in legislation that local authorities participate in RICs. The Scottish Government advise that the outcome of the consultation process will inform how RICs continue to develop.

#### **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

##### 6.1 Financial:

- 6.1.1 The Northern Alliance has secured funding from the Scottish Government of £385,000 for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. The funding will enhance the work of the Northern Alliance to strengthen resources that support learning and teaching.

- 6.1.2 A financial risk is the financial pressures on Aberdeen City Council and the other local authorities, which may limit the capacity of the local authority to resource the collaborative improvement priorities. To this end, the Northern Alliances is committed to sharing best practice to mitigate against these risks. This is remains a medium risk.

##### 6.2 Employee:

- 6.2.1 Lack of workforce capacity to deliver the Regional Improvement Plan. The following actions will be implemented to mitigate against this risk:
- clarity of roles and responsibilities
  - develop equitable resource allocation
  - develop protocols for joint working
  - continuous review of workforce allocation

The risk remains low-medium.

### 6.3 Customer / citizen:

6.3.1 The Northern Alliance seeks to ensure that consistent improvement support is available to the entire region. The Northern Alliance is committed to ensuring staff have access to the practical improvement support they need, when they need it. A risk is that this message is not clearly communicated to staff and there is a lack of understanding amongst schools regarding the role of the Northern Alliance. To minimise this risk the Northern Alliance has developed a website that is user friendly and profiles the work of the Northern Alliance. The website also makes available all guidance and materials. The Northern Alliance will also consult with schools, teachers, parents and children to engage with them and respond to their needs. The risk remains low.

### 6.4 Environmental:

6.4.1 It is unlikely that there will be a negative impact on the environment as a result of the Northern Alliance's Regional Improvement Plan. This risk is low.

### 6.5 Technological:

6.5.1 The Northern Alliance covers a vast area, 58.4% of the landmass of Scotland. Given the geographic reach of the Alliance it frequently utilises I.T and digital technologies to overcome distance and enable all officers and partners to participate in meetings /workshops irrespective of geography. It is also a cost effective option as it reduces travel costs. There is a low risk that if the IT infrastructure is not effective it will hinder involvement and delay the pace of change. The risk is low.

### 6.6 Legal:

6.6.1 Legislative changes to the Education Bill becoming substantially different may have implications for RICs. To mitigate against this the Regional Improvement Plan will be flexible to accommodate any new duties. The risk remains low.

### 6.7 Reputational:

6.7.1 Not supporting the Northern Alliance's work outlined in the draft Regional Improvement Plan could create a negative reputational risk. The Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan supports the delivery of the LOIP through the delivery of the NIF and the National Governance review. The Northern Alliance's Regional Improvement Plan supports educational outcomes and GIRFEC delivery across the city and region. Failure to support the Northern Alliance's Regional Improvement Plan may cause reputational damage for Aberdeen City Council and put into question the organisation's commitment to raising attainment and closing the gap. The risk is low.

## **7. IMPACT SECTION**

### **7.1 Economy**

7.1.1 Implementing improvement in the four priorities set out in the plan will help break the cycle of deprivation and support the developing the young workforce. These changes will positively impact on our economy and support the theme of Aberdeen Prospers.

7.1.2 The Northern Alliance will also share best practice and innovation solutions to overcome shared challenges such as teacher recruitment, which in the long term should have a positive impact on our economy. This will support the LOIP themes of Aberdeen Prospers and Children are our Future.

### **7.2 People**

7.2.1 Successful implementation of the phase 1 of the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan will lead to improved outcomes for children, young people and their families. There will be a positive impact on children, young people and families including those with protected characteristics, which will support our work in ensuring that people are resilient, included and supported when needed.

### **7.3 Duty of Due Regard**

7.3.1 Central to the work of the Northern Alliance is the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the shared aim to achieve equity in educational outcomes, with a focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap. This is of particular interest to the Northern Alliance given the challenges of both rural and urban poverty experienced by the region. The high level priorities outlined in the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan are aligned to the aims of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the NIF. A number of workstreams outlined in the Regional Improvement Plan directly support the above-mentioned priorities. The Emerging Literacy, Numeracy, Maths Attainment and Modern Foreign Languages programmes contribute to directly improving attainment. The Regional Improvement Plan offers the Northern Alliance an opportunity to continue to grow and improve on education and children's services issues through shared expertise, scale and capacity.

### **7.4 Place**

7.4.1 The Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan takes account of local need and will have a positive impact on individual communities across the Aberdeen City. It also encourages the sharing of best practice across the north of Scotland region, which will be to the benefit of Aberdeen City.

### **7.5 Technology**

7.5.1 The Northern Alliance is committed to using innovative technological solutions to reduce the need for officers to travel for meetings across the north of

Scotland. The use of video conferencing technologies is a more effective use of resources – ensuring the better use of officer time and reduces travel overheads.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Regional Improvement Collaborative: Guidance on Developing Regional Improvement Plans [Scottish Government, December 2017]

Education Governance: Next Steps – Empowering Our Teachers, Parents and Communities to Deliver Excellence and Equity for Our Children [Scottish Government, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017]

## **9. APPENDICES (if applicable)**

Appendix A: Draft Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan

## **10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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## **The Northern Alliance**

### **Draft Regional Improvement Framework Plan January 2018**

DRAFT



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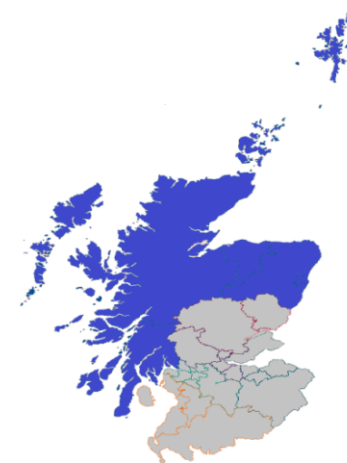
## 1. Introduction

The Northern Alliance is a collaboration between eight local authorities, across the North of Scotland: Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Eilean Siar [Western Isles], Highland, Moray, Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands. Our shared vision is to improve the educational and life chances of our children and young people. To remove the barriers to learning and improve children's outcomes, the collaborative seeks to build on the strengths of shared service development, create professional networks and deliver continuous professional development. The Northern Alliance exists to make a difference to the lives of children and young people by ensuring that the professionals who work with them collaborate for improvement and impact.

The reach of the Northern Alliance is vast, covering 58.4% of the landmass of Scotland, yet it represents a small percentage of the Scottish population. This area has amongst the highest levels of rurality and the lowest levels of population density within a context of economic fragility and poverty. The geography and common challenges experienced across the region moved the Alliance to identify new ways of working and adopt a shared approach to the communities it represents in the north of Scotland and in the islands.

In response to the Governance Review of Scottish Education, the Alliance has sought to further develop its culture of collaboration. This has resulted in the sharing of expertise in a range of areas: curriculum development, school estates, early years and Integrated Children's Services development, as well as establishment of local and regional networks. Partnership working has enabled the Northern Alliance to deliver programmes such as Emerging Literacy and Leadership Development, which are already benefiting schools and teachers across the region. The Raising Attainment in Literacy, Language and Communication workstream is currently providing direct support to practitioners in 47% of primary schools across the Northern Alliance.

A key strength of the Northern Alliance is found in its commitment to distributed leadership at all levels. This approach allows flexible and organic partnerships to emerge, which cross professional and geographic boundaries. This 'bottom up' approach is reflected in the origins of a





number of the Alliance's workstreams such as the Equalities group and more generally, in the practitioner informed approach that shapes all our activities.

By building on our collective experiences as a regional improvement collaborative we are confident we can make a meaningful difference to the lives of children and young people. To measure our impact the Alliance is committed to evaluating performance data through the use of pupil data. Alongside the use of quantitative data we draw on qualitative data to capture information from teachers and practitioners, which is collated into the formal evaluation of programmes. Our commitment to ongoing evaluation across all of the programmes allows the Alliance to measure impact and target improvement. We aim to grow and develop this approach with other partners – such as NHS, universities and national agencies.

Central to the work of the Alliance is the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the shared aim to achieve equity in educational outcomes, with a focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap. This is of particular interest to the Northern Alliance given the aforementioned challenges experienced by the region. To this end, the high level priorities outlined in the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan are aligned to the aims of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the National Improvement Framework [NIF hereafter]. This initial plan covers the period up until the end of the school year in 2019 although this may be subject to change following the outcome of the Scottish Governments consultation on the Education Bill.

The Northern Alliances seeks to deliver on the following priorities:

- Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy
- Priority 2: Closing the outcome gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- Priority 3: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Priority 4: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.





As a group of eight local authorities we are committed to improving outcomes and closing the gap, which exists across our wide and varied communities and crucially, keeping the child and family at the centre of all that we do. Schools, teachers and headteachers have a clear role to play, but for too many young people and families, this is not enough. Some of our young people and their families require family support workers, social workers, school nurses and many others besides. While the priorities outlined in the Regional Improvement Plan highlight the aim of the NIF, the activities and outlook of the Northern Alliance is far broader. The Alliance champions a child and family-centred approach to address the achievement gap and to drive improvement.

To realise our vision, we work in a multi-layered way. Some programmes are directed, such as those which support the above mentioned priorities. The Emerging Literacy, Numeracy, Maths Attainment and Modern Foreign Languages programmes contribute to directly improving attainment. A significant number of our workstreams cut across all the priorities and are reflective of the leadership ethos which we have promoted over the last three years. These workstreams not only reflect the wider imperative to improve all children's services, but have come about by middle managers and leaders recognising themselves the benefits of collaboration to improve services more quickly and sustainably. However, not all schools will be involved in all improvement activities at any given time.

The development of the plan is an ongoing iterative process and a second phase of the plan will be developed and submitted to Education Scotland in August 2018. The Regional Improvement leads and Scottish Government are due to meet ahead of the next iteration of the plan to discuss evidence of impact and the application of improvement methodology. Resource allocation for the workstreams will be mapped out in the next iteration of the plan (phase 2) but initial workforce planning considerations and factors are outlined in a separate document.

The Northern Alliance is a committed learning collaborative and as such will continue to develop and learn as programmes embed and develop, we are committed to working in partnership nationally, regionally and locally and welcome wider collaborations and learning which develop impact and drive improvement across the country. We will add to and amend the Regional Improvement Plan as we learn from what works well, where change is needed and importantly to react to feedback and requests from schools and teachers to aid their work with children and young people.

## 2. Northern Alliance Workstreams



### Northern Alliance Workstreams



Emergency Literacy Programme	Numeracy Programme	Maths Attainment Programme	Leadership Development / NIF Programme	Early Years and Child Care Programme	Performance/ Data Sharing Programme	Children's Services Development Group	MFL Development Group	Improvement Cycle Development Work	Technology/T ASSC Programme	Poverty/Closing the Gap Development	Future Delivery Models / Estates	IT transformation (Esgoil)	Equalities	School Improvement	Community Learning & Development
<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay  <i>Programme Lead:</i> James Cook	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Felicity Martin	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay  <i>Programme Lead:</i> David Clark	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Vincent Doherty/SCEL regional officer	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Bill Alexander  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Katherine Diamond (TBC)	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Reyna Stewart	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Bill Alexander  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Byrony Revell	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Finlay  <i>Programme Officer:</i> Laurence Finlay	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Finlay  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Sacha Will, SG Improvement Service	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Maria Walker  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Craig Clements	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Helen Budge  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Shetland QIO	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Wliff Weir  <i>Programme Lead:</i> James XX, Orkney	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Bernard Chisholm  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Bernard Chisholm	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Laurence Findlay  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Caroline Hastings [tbc]	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Maria Walker  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Andrew Griffiths	<i>Programme Sponsor:</i> Maria Walker  <i>Programme Lead:</i> Avril Nicol
Focus: Raising Attainment in literacy  Outcome: Impact on closing the gaps, teacher subject knowledge and attainment  Number of Schools: 486  Year groups - P1, EY	Focus: Raising Attainment in mathematics  Outcome: Impact on closing the gaps, numerical confidence of teachers and pupils, reduce maths anxiety  Number of Schools: 60  Year groups - P3/4	Focus: Review of attainment in mathematics, T&L approaches  Outcome: Identify key areas for development, strengthen T&L, create curriculum pathway for BGE  Number of Schools: 81  Year groups - S1-4	Focus: Raising attainment in NIF areas  Outcome: Improving attainment, closing attainment gap  Number of Schools/Settins: 250  Year groups - All P/S	Focus: Delivering 1140 hours EYCC policy  Outcome: Improving access, quality and closing economic/ attainment gap  Number of Schools/Settins: All  Year groups - EYCC	Focus: Create shared data set for NA work  Outcome: Shared agreement re data to help drive performance of NA programmes  Number of Schools: All  Year groups: N/A	Focus: To ensure alignment and coherence across NA ICS plans and workstreams  Outcome: Work towards shared improvements across the NA, sharing of best practice, innovation in approach across the region  Number of Schools: N/a - all partners  Year groups: N/A	Focus: To develop 1+2 languages, embed teacher subject knowledge  Outcome: Increase teacher subject knowledge, extend qualified teacher numbers, raise attainment  Number of Schools: 30  Year group: P1-7	Focus: Embed improvement methodology in schools/education  Outcome: Improvement methodology driving system level improvement, empowered teacher leadership to raise attainment  Number of Schools: 30  Year groups: all	Focus: To review offer of TASSC across the region  Outcome: deliver central aligned service for NA, improve access for children, cost reduction  Number of Schools: All  Year groups: All	Focus: To explore rural poverty and it's impact on attainment  Outcome: identify key indicators of rural poverty: reduce impact on attainment  Number of Schools: 150  Year groups: All	Focus: To develop innovative approaches to future of children's estate  Outcome: reduce costs: share best practice, create innovative plans for future services  Number of Schools: All/ all partners  Year groups: N/A	Focus: To explore development and impact of Esgoil model across the region  Outcome: Wider access to full curriculum, cost reduction, transformation of T&L  Number of Schools: tbc  Year groups: tbc	Focus:  Outcome:  Number of Schools: TBC	Focus: To develop shared school improvement methodology  Outcome: Improving attainment, closing attainment gap  Number of Schools: all  Year groups: N/A	Focus:  Outcome:  Number of Schools: TBC



### 3. Northern Alliance Priorities

#### High Level Priorities

<b>Priority 1</b> <b>Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy</b>	<b>Priority 2</b> <b>Closing the outcome gap between most and least disadvantaged children</b>	<b>Priority 3</b> <b>Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing</b>	<b>Priority 4</b> <b>Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Empower leaders to confidently lead the raising attainment agenda at school, ASG, City and across the Northern Alliance via implementation of impactful professional learning</li> <li>❖ In collaboration with the Northern Alliance, develop shared approaches to assessment and moderation.</li> <li>❖ Work across the Northern Alliance to shape a literacy and numeracy strategy to improve attainment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Work in collaboration to develop programmes to support the implementation of the Pupil Equity Fund</li> <li>❖ Use PEF data across the Northern Alliance to analyse common focus to frame future improvement priorities.</li> <li>❖ Establish consistent criteria in how we all measure / baseline gaps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Work across the Northern Alliance to reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences and chronic neglect.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Collaborate with the Northern Alliance to establish and implement a strategy on Developing the Young Workforce to increase the number of young people reaching a positive and sustained destination</li> <li>❖ Curriculum re-design and learner journey</li> </ul>

#### Workstreams Cutting Across All Priorities

Workforce Planning	Leadership Development	Early Learning and Childcare	Future Delivery Models/Estates	Integrated Children's Services	Performance and Data Sharing
Esgoil	Improvement Cycle Development Work	Community Learning and Development	Technology TASSC	Equalities	School Improvement

#### 4. Northern Alliance 'Northern Star' Workstream Diagram

[Please note this is still in design phase ]





## 5. The Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan – How This Will Be Achieved

PRIORITY AREAS		KEY DRIVERS	
1	Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy	SL	School Leadership
2	Closing the outcome gap between the most and least disadvantaged children	TP	Teacher Professionalism
3	Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing	PE	Parental Engagement
4	Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people	ACP	Assessment of Children's Progress
		SI	School Improvement
		PI	Performance Information

Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy				
Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By Whom	By When	Evidence of Impact
<p><b>By 2020 at least 85% of children within each SMID quintile will have successfully achieved early level literacy:</b></p> <p>❖ <b>Learners benefit from high quality research informed pedagogy, beginning in Early Learning and Childcare and beyond, which is delivered by confident practitioners with enhanced subject knowledge, supported by</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2017/2018, supporting 47% of schools in taking a developmental approach to Emerging Literacy through:</li> <li>professional learning which is co-designed by education practitioners and allied health professionals, delivered across the Northern Alliance.</li> <li>enabling network collaboration at a universal level between education and allied health professionals</li> <li>local networks of practice to support ongoing professional learning at Local Authority level and at cluster level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Literacy lead: James Cook</u></li> <li><u>Launch Events</u></li> <li><u>Local Networks</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June 2017</li> <li>September 2017</li> <li>January 2018</li> <li>March 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CfE Achievement of a Level Judgement Data – P1 Listening and Talking, Reading and Writing to show how taking a developmental approach to emerging literacy contributes to achievement of a level. Analysis will evaluate on whole cohort outcomes and outcomes linked to SIMD</li> <li>CfE levels for P1 reading</li> </ul>



<p><b>senior leaders who enable ongoing progress</b></p> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> <span style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 2px;">ACP</span> <span style="background-color: #9c27b0; color: white; padding: 2px;">SL</span> <span style="background-color: #3f51b5; color: white; padding: 2px;">TP</span> <span style="background-color: #a1887f; color: white; padding: 2px;">PI</span></p> <p>❖ <b>Empower leaders and teachers to confidently lead the raising attainment agenda at school, ASG and across the Northern Alliance via implementation of impactful professional learning.</b></p> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> <span style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 2px;">SL</span> <span style="background-color: #a1887f; color: white; padding: 2px;">PI</span></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• online collaboration to support “families” of practitioners who support learners across similar demographics.</li> <li>• buddy networks of practice to support ongoing professional learning in clusters of schools.</li> <li>• Access to online resources to support ongoing learning and teaching.</li> <li>• In 2018/2019, continue to scale the support of the number of schools across the Northern Alliance taking a developmental approach to Emerging Literacy through:</li> <li>• developing the skills of lead practitioners in each local authority to support practitioners at local level.</li> <li>• enhancing buddy networks which build capacity at school and cluster level to enable a whole-school approach to emerging literacy</li> <li>• expanding on the resources to support the five key areas of concepts of print, executive functions, oral language, phonological awareness and pre-handwriting.</li> <li>• sharing practice examples which have had an impact on practice and bettered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Buddy Network/ Yammer Launch</u></li> <li>• <u>Reflection Events</u></li> <li>• <u>Partnership Group Meetings</u></li> <li>• <u>Resources</u></li> <li>• <u>Lead Practitioners</u></li> <li>• <u>Practice Examples</u></li> <li>• Collected and shared 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 via Northern Alliance website</li> <li>• <b>2018/2019</b> Mirror support structure of 2017/2018 with:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nov 2017</li> <li>• June 2018</li> <li>• Nov 2017; March 2018</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Support 2018/2019</li> <li>• 2017/18 and 2018/19</li> <li>• 2018/19</li> </ul>	<p>writing listening and talking improved in areas where practice has been adopted. Level of improvement to provide benchmarking for future roll out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidence/ Impact of practice reflections – measured through the local networks to demonstrate the impact on practice which is leading to better outcomes for children</li> <li>• CPD evaluations will identify the following: -</li> </ul> <p>which areas have made the biggest impact to practice;</p> <p>how, qualitatively, is a developmental approach bettering outcomes for children</p>
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	outcomes for children.	additional Buddy Networks local support through lead practitioners		
<p><b><u>Numeracy</u></b></p> <p>❖ <b>Develop teacher confidence and leadership in relation to numeracy</b></p> <p>Key Drivers: <b>SL PI TP</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2017/2018, the numeracy programme will improve attainment across the Northern Alliance by:</li> <li>developing professional understandings e.g. how to identify 'hard to teach' areas in numeracy</li> <li>develop networks of educational practitioners and allied health professionals to co-design professional learning, which will be delivered across the Northern Alliance.</li> <li>Establish networks of practice (school cluster level).</li> <li>Track one pupil throughout the year.</li> <li>Literature review / research of educational projects and best practice.</li> <li>Practitioner enquiry (participation)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Numeracy lead: Felicity Martin</u></p> <p><u>Launch Events</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nov 2017</li> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Nov 2018 - onwards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Alliance Numeracy data – longitudinal surveys in increasing pupil confidence /less maths anxiety</li> <li>Attitude surveys [numeracy] – increased teacher confidence</li> <li>Gloss assessment (NZ)</li> <li>SNSA data [Dec '18]</li> <li>Numeracy - CfE level of judgement data (primary 4)</li> </ul>
<p>❖ <b>Ensure all primary teachers across the Northern Alliance see themselves as teachers of language.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop moderation work in and across primary and secondary.</li> <li>Focus on tracking and monitoring of languages across the BGE.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Laurence Findlay</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased uptake in languages in the Senior Phase:</li> <li>Insight data set</li> <li>Annual 1+2 survey of primary languages</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Develop strong connections and synergy between emerging literacy and language learning ensuring a connected curriculum and a more integrated approach to raising attainment in literacy.</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Focus on improvement literacy through languages.</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Develop teacher confidence and leadership in relation to literacy and languages.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> SL PI PE TP ACP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align progression frameworks for languages across the Northern Alliance.</li> <li>• Develop links between emerging literacy approaches to phonics with 1+2.</li> <li>• Champion community languages through parental engagement and storytelling.</li> <li>• Develop a measure to gather data on community languages.</li> <li>• Include language development as an integral part of all literacy CLPL for teachers.</li> </ul>		<p>2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 2019</li> <li>• From Feb 2018-onwards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved literacy attainment at all curriculum levels and in SQA examinations:</li> <li>• CfE and Insight data</li> <li>• Increase in the diversity of languages studied in the Senior Phase</li> <li>• Insight data set</li> <li>• Draw on case studies to measure parental engagement; Grampian Regional Equality Council [GREC]; data to assist in developing measure; British Sign Language [BSL] used as 1+2 in special schools</li> <li>• School inspection data:</li> <li>• 1+2 policy summary of inspection findings (Moray)</li> <li>• Collaborative links between secondary English and Modern Languages departments focussing on literacy</li> </ul>
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<p>❖ <b>In collaboration with The Northern Alliance, develop shared approaches to assessment and moderation.</b></p> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> TP PI ACP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers to develop a greater shared understanding of standards (improved standardisation) by facilitating opportunities for professional networking.</li> <li>• Create virtual communities of practice to develop teacher judgement.</li> <li>• Introduce 'critical friend' approach to moderation (teachers moderating across the Northern Alliance region).</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Regional Improvement Lead</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through out school session 2018/19</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher confidence survey:</li> <li>• sampling across the Northern Alliance</li> <li>• Use of web analytics to track use of online communities and resources</li> <li>• QAMSOs to assess teacher judgement</li> <li>• Collectively tracking teacher judgement across the Northern Alliance</li> <li>• Review of embedding standardisation in assessment and moderation</li> </ul>
<p>❖ <b>Increase and improve parental engagement.</b></p> <p>❖ <b>Develop shared approaches to family learning across the Northern Alliance region.</b></p> <p>❖ <b>Target grandparents / carers through Adult and Family learning.</b></p> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> PE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-generational learning programmes to be developed</li> <li>• ESOL – family learning practice developed for ESOL families</li> <li>• Literacy, numeracies, IT literacy</li> <li>• CPD/Workforce development</li> <li>• Bolster training for parents/ grandparents/ carers on project linked activity:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- e.g. taking children shopping, contributing to wider learning.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Avril Nicol</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From Feb 2018 onwards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce and embed Adult Achievement Award – initially in 3 LAs.</li> <li>• Measure uptake of SQA modules for accreditation of.</li> <li>• Measure consistent understanding of Family Learning – to support application of agreed measures</li> </ul>



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<p>❖ <b>In collaboration with the Northern Alliance partners to deliver financial awareness and measure financial literacy.</b></p> <p><b>Key Drivers: PE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop professional understanding of financial literacy - (To be financially literate, individuals must demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to make choices within a financial marketplace that all consumers face regardless of their particular characteristics.)</li> <li>• Establish networks of practice between LAs and at locality level (Youthbanks; Credit Unions; links to Welfare Reform – benefits uptake rates)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Avril Nicol</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From April 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial awareness training delivered in all 8 LAs</li> <li>• Development of agreed Financial Literacy Measures</li> </ul>
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**Priority 2: Closing the outcome gap between most and least disadvantaged children**

Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By Whom	By When	Evidence of Impact
<p>❖ <b>Review of attainment across the Northern Alliance with a specific focus on our more most disadvantage children in order to identify 'the gap'</b></p> <p>Key Drivers: <b>SL</b> <b>PI</b> <b>PE</b> <b>TP</b> <b>ACP</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group review attainment in maths across the Northern Alliances (stats review)</li> <li>• Establish statistical milestones, which identifies effective practice e.g. S4 scores.</li> <li>• Gap between SMID levels is analysed and described, and common themes identified</li> <li>• Review of Presentation policies</li> <li>• Review of Inspection outcomes for best practice/key themes</li> <li>• Work with Education Scotland on maths support and development from national thematic programme</li> </ul>	<p><u>Leads: HT, DHT, PT (Maths)</u></p> <p><u>Performance workstream</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures to be identified</li> <li>• Increased attainment for the lowest 20% of cohort</li> <li>• Clear articulation of the attainment gap in different areas</li> </ul>
<p>❖ <b>Identification of key development areas through consultations with schools and teachers</b></p> <p>Key Drivers: <b>TP</b> <b>SI</b> <b>SL</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective Pedagogy shared and developed</li> <li>• Curriculum pathways developed to be more inclusive and flexible</li> <li>• Strategic /operational effective practices</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Ed. Psycs.</u> <u>All work stream leads</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feb 2018 - ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L &amp; T impact on engagement</li> <li>• Use of 'toolkits' / curriculum frameworks</li> <li>• Better of understanding of curriculum pathways</li> <li>• Exclusions and attendance data in specific areas / cohorts e.g. LAC or SIMD</li> </ul>



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<p>❖ <b>Ensure all young people receive their entitlement to languages learning given the wider attainment benefits this brings for all learners regardless of background or ability.</b></p> <p>Key Drivers: <b>SL</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clear consistent guidance for schools in relation to timetabling and presentation in Modern Languages to ensure a common approach across all our schools.</li> <li>• Involvement of key practioners in developing T&amp;L tools to support learning</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Laurence Findlay</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By no later than 2020 in line with the Government 1+ 2 strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uptake and presentation rates in Senior Phase Modern Languages linked to SIMD data</li> <li>• All learners receiving their entitlement to languages learning.</li> <li>• Insight analytical data set.</li> <li>• Use of rural deprivation measure [once developed]</li> </ul>
<p>❖ <b>Work in collaboration with The Northern Alliance to develop programmes to support the implementation of the Pupil Equity Fund.</b></p> <p>Key Drivers: <b>SI PI</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish systems to share best PEF practice across The Northern Alliance.</li> <li>• Identify how schools are making innovative use of PEF</li> <li>• Use expertise to create CLPL opportunities for other Head Teachers</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Regional Improvement Lead</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From March 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence best use of PEF</li> <li>• CLP opportunities for schools</li> <li>• Case studies used on an annual basis using a good practice guide</li> <li>• HMle evidence from inspections</li> </ul>
<p>❖ <b>Reduce child poverty [including rural poverty] in line with the provisions set out in the Child Poverty Act 2017</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an overall deprivation measure.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively to address the unique challenges that rural communities face.</li> <li>• Enable staff to continue career long professional learning regardless of area – utilise eLearning and online communities.</li> <li>• Utlise eSgoil.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Wilf Weir</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of deprivation measure</li> <li>• Use of said measure to evidence impact</li> <li>• Work with ADES</li> <li>• Work with SG</li> </ul>



	<p>/ partnerships with SW and other colleagues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information for Foster Carers</li> <li>- the development of support and guidance for designated managers and class practitioners</li> <li>- develop shared policies relating to LAC in education</li> <li>- tracking and monitoring processes for Looked After and care experienced children and young people being educated in the local authority and those placed in another local authority.</li> <li>- Financial tracking – out of authority placements</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Agree stages for investment in earlier intervention – Early Years / P7-S1/ S3-4.</b></li> <li>❖ <b>ESOL using language as an area for intergenerational learning.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> <span style="background-color: #ff0000; color: white; padding: 2px;">SL</span> <span style="background-color: #0000ff; color: white; padding: 2px;">PI</span> <span style="background-color: #00ff00; color: white; padding: 2px;">PE</span> <span style="background-color: #0000ff; color: white; padding: 2px;">TP</span></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint residential programmes e.g. health and wellbeing bespoke summer schools – residential.</li> <li>• Work collectively to harness holiday periods to target energy regarding SQA or Adult Learning</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Avril Nicol</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From July 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share best practice</li> <li>• Develop agreed impactful programmes to be delivered in all 8 Las in holiday periods.</li> <li>• Improved learner outcomes – Literacy/ Numeracy/ Health &amp; Wellbeing - feedback from teachers</li> <li>• Evaluation surveys –</li> </ul>

				<p>increased confidence, participation measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased participation</li> </ul>
<p>❖ <b>Alternative learning programmes and Early interventions which target whole families.</b></p> <p>❖</p> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> PE ACP PI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualised/ flexible learning pathways – including element of family learning</li> <li>• Youth work in schools</li> <li>• Increased collaborative working with further and higher education to support curriculum delivery</li> <li>• Sharing curricular models across the NA</li> <li>• Mechanisms for school leaders to share best practice in use of PEF funding</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Avril Nicol</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From June 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in Out of Authority Placements.</li> <li>• Reduction in out of area placements</li> <li>• Increased attainment in your lowest 20% of cohort</li> </ul>





Priority 3: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing				
Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By Whom	By When	Evidence of Impact
❖ <b>Work across the Northern Alliance to reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences and chronic neglect</b>  Key Drivers: <b>PI PE TP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting understanding of ACEs and their impact.</li> <li>Earlier identification and assessment of chronic neglect</li> <li>Responding to chronic neglect</li> <li>Strategies to promote resilience</li> </ul>	<u>Lead: Bill Alexander</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From March, 2018.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pooling of staff resource across LA teams</li> </ul>
❖ <b>Develop an effective partnership across the different NHS boards and the Northern Alliance focused on improvement of young people's health and wellbeing</b>  Key Drivers: <b>PI ACP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mapping exercise of current health related services for children and young people across the Northern Alliance:</li> </ul>	<u>Lead: Laurence Findlay</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dec 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit exercise</li> <li>Individual Children's Services Plan.</li> </ul>



Northern Alliance

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Promoting health and wellbeing, resilience for children and young people across the Northern Alliance.</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Family learning</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Essential skills</b></li> <li>❖ <b>ESOL</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Progression from PEEP &amp; Bookbug</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> SL PI PE TP ACP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent application of tried and tested Programmes such as:</li> <li>• No Knives Better Lives</li> <li>• Reduce substance abuse [to be developed]</li> <li>• Under Pressure to be Sexy - healthy attitudes towards sex and relationships</li> <li>• Mentoring Violence Prevention</li> <li>• Skills building – confidence, leadership, self-esteem, personal development, anger management.</li> <li>• Adult learning – recognising need to support parents to support children</li> <li>• Skills development</li> <li>• Improve neuro linguistic programming, emotional intelligence [NLP]</li> <li>• Share practice e.g. language skills – bilingual settings, Gaelic/Doric – build on programmes</li> <li>• Progression from PEEP and other parenting programmes to support families and parenting skills</li> <li>• We will achieve this by focusing on parents specifically within the lower SMID areas</li> <li>• Empowering parents to allow them to support their children to attend and achieve at school</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Avril Nicol.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing from November 2017</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit current use of programmes across NA – establish baseline</li> <li>• Share best practice/impact</li> <li>• Develop CPD action plan to support out</li> <li>• Further develop assessment tools for wellbeing</li> <li>•</li> <li>• Data on weapons</li> <li>• CLD data in relation to adult learning</li> <li>• Children's Services Plans reports</li> <li>• Lowest 20% cohort increased attendance in lower SMID areas and reduced exclusion</li> </ul>
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Northern Alliance

<p>❖ <b>Work across the Northern Alliance to ensure we are celebrating diversity and global citizenship through languages learning</b></p> <p>Key Drivers: <b>TP PE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively facilitate family learning within a languages context in line with approaches used to engage parents with literacy and numeracy</li> <li>Ensure all languages CLPL is linked to global citizenship and cultural diversity</li> </ul>	<p>Lead: <u>Laurence Findlay</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater parental engagement with languages learning.</li> <li>Reduction in the reporting of racial incidents due to increased cultural awareness: GREC data</li> </ul>
<p>❖ <b>Champion Equalities across the Northern Alliance</b></p> <p>❖ <b>Enabling Youth Voice</b></p> <p>Key Drivers: <b>SL PI PE TP</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Champion Equalities and Rights Respecting Schools across the Northern Alliance. (children's rights)</li> <li>All LAs to have a service level agreement with Unicef UK, and identify a strategic lead to co-ordinate delivery of RRSA in schools, and to promote children's rights and participation in schools and communities</li> <li>Youth democracy. CLD staff across the Northern Alliance to promote youth led participatory groups and volunteering opportunities for CYP</li> </ul>	<p>Leads: <u>Laurence Findlay</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain UNICEF Rights Respecting status across the Northern Alliance.</li> <li>Across the Northern Alliance at least 30% of schools will be registered and progressing towards RRSA. In LAs where there is already a SLA in place, there will be a 5% increase in the number of schools achieving silver and gold of the award</li> <li>Additional measures to be added from existing data sets</li> <li>RRSA assessments and base line data</li> </ul>

				<p>will evidence increase of CYP who feel included and listened [children's voice].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5% increase in the number of CYP achieving wider achievement awards such as Saltire</li> </ul>
<p>❖ <b>Working collaboratively across the Northern Alliance to ensure all staff are enabled to support young people's health and wellbeing/becoming resilient</b></p> <p>Key Drivers: <b>TP</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint CPD in emotion coaching</li> <li>• Protecting children and adults against abuse through effective professional learning</li> <li>• Capture current picture of relevant available CPD – across Northern Alliance members</li> <li>• Work collaboratively to agree measures – e.g. linked back to Bounce Back programme</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Avril Nicol</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial picture by end Feb 2018</li> <li>• Agreed measures by end Feb 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear picture of available training</li> <li>• Better understanding of impact of emotion coaching</li> <li>• Agreed measures in place</li> </ul>



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**Priority 4: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people**

Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By Whom	By When	Evidence of Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Ensure languages are within DYW agenda across the Northern Alliance</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Link languages experiences in schools to the wider DYW agenda and skills agenda/provide an employment context for learners</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Embed languages across the curriculum (5 – 15) with a clear focus on skills development</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> <span style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 2px;">SL</span> <span style="background-color: #9c27b0; color: white; padding: 2px;">TP</span> <span style="background-color: #f44336; color: white; padding: 2px;">PI</span></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree common expectations and principles for a languages approach to DYW in the Northern Alliance.</li> <li>• Provide CLPL for teachers linked to languages and DYW and further ensure DYW CLPL has an integrated languages component as required.</li> <li>• Ensure all our schools, primary and secondary, have access to business champions who can bring relevance to languages learning.</li> <li>• Greater connectivity and synergy across languages and DYW policy areas</li> <li>• Develop contexts for learning linked to DYW/languages.</li> <li>• Further develop partnerships with SCILT with regards Business Champions and Business Brunches.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Laurence Findlay</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• December 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater opportunities for young people to undertake experience of work linked to languages</li> <li>• Increase in businesses working with schools on joint DYW/languages ventures</li> <li>• Increase in Senior Phase uptake with links to industry/skills</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Collaborate across the Northern Alliance to review all Northern Alliance employability strategies /plans and consider areas of</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review plans.</li> <li>• Arrange for DYW leads to meet to identify skills pathways.</li> <li>• Share skills pathways.</li> <li>• Share best practices.</li> <li>• Engage key stakeholder e.g. better linking</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Avril Nicol.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase one data gathering by end March 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation measures in place across the Northern Alliance – SDS extract</li> <li>• Improved data available – e.g.</li> </ul>

<p><b>common interest were we could add greatest value.</b></p> <p>❖ <b>Wider achievement</b></p> <p>❖ <b>Employability – senior phase, essential skills</b></p> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b>    <b>SL</b> <b>PI</b></p>	<p>with colleges and Adult Learning staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase engagement of primary schools with DYW, and develop improvement plans to raise aspirations in CYP from primary stage</li> <li>• Youth Aspiration Survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- roll out across a small cohort (primary and secondary).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Linking curriculum areas of CfE to employment opportunities and skills.</li> <li>• 16-18 named person role implementation/improvement</li> <li>• Pre-16 activity agreements</li> <li>• Have flexile arrangements for Activity Agreements to take place across LAs</li> <li>• ‘Named person’ role</li> <li>• 16+key worker role</li> <li>• Retaining contact with those who were known now not known, embed in each targeted school with consistent approach managing a gap</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase two reporting end June 2018</li> </ul>	<p>Northern Alliance data sets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearer picture from Youth Aspiration Survey</li> <li>- roll out across a small cohort (primary and secondary)</li> <li>• Link with CfE and Insight data (primary and secondary)</li> <li>• Measures to be added from existing data sets</li> <li>• Measures to be added from existing data sets</li> </ul>
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<p>❖ <b>Improve participation of 16-19 years of school leavers</b></p> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> <span style="background-color: #f08080; padding: 2px;">SI</span> <span style="background-color: #800000; color: white; padding: 2px;">PI</span></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted work</li> <li>• Sharing areas of best practice across the Northern Alliance</li> <li>• Establishing good partnership arrangements with further and higher education to support pupil pathway planning.</li> <li>• Opportunities for wider accreditation through volunteering and experience of work</li> </ul>	<p><u>Lead: Regional Improvement Lead</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 2019</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures to be added from existing data sets</li> </ul>
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Across All Priorities				
Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By Whom	By When	Evidence of Impact
<p>❖ <b>Improve performance and data sharing across the Northern Alliance by seeking consistency in data collection, the use of methodologies and the quality data.</b></p> <p>Key Driver : <b>PI</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data sharing agreement</li> <li>• Data review</li> <li>• Establish a national protocol for data sharing within and outwith the collaborative.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Leads: Regional Improvement Lead; Reyna Stewart and 8 authorities.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEEMIS</li> </ul>
<p>❖ <b>Ensure school improvement teams are working collaboratively and effectively across the Northern Alliance</b></p> <p>❖ <b>Sharing best practice in quality assurance in Children's Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review internal working arrangements in light of the Three Pillars (CfE, GIRFEC and Developing the Young Workforce)</li> <li>• Review reporting arrangements - once plan approved and enacted and report to the improvement advisory forum (quarterly)</li> <li>• Identify as an alliance schools with greater need of targeted support e.g. cluster work / buddying activities.</li> <li>• Focus on self-evaluation for improvement.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Leads: Regional Improvement Lead; Andrew Griffiths.</u></p> <p><u>Leads: Susan MacLaren and</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From March 2018</li> <li>• From March 2018</li> <li>• From March 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NIF return</li> <li>• Increased confidence in self-evaluation over 18-21 month period as move forward greater alignment;</li> <li>• External inspections.</li> <li>• Measures to be used from existing data set. [TBC]</li> </ul>



<p>❖ <b>Sharing best practice approach quality improvement across ELC</b></p> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> <span style="background-color: #FF00FF; padding: 2px;">ACP</span> <span style="background-color: #4B0082; color: white; padding: 2px;">TP</span>  <span style="background-color: #8B4513; color: white; padding: 2px;">PI</span></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared approach to QA across the Northern Alliance</li> <li>• Peer review</li> <li>• Linking across self-evaluation activities</li> <li>• Preparing for Children’s Services Inspection 3</li> <li>• Supporting an outward looking approach</li> <li>• A coordinated approach across the 8 authorities</li> <li>• Consider the best improvement methodologies for supporting improvement across the Northern Alliance.</li> </ul>	<p><u>subgroup.</u></p> <p><u>Leads:</u>  <u>Regional Improvement Lead;</u> and 8 <u>LAs</u></p>		<p>Children’s Services Reports from individual LA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBC</li> </ul>
<p>❖ <b>Supporting activity across social work and children’s services</b></p> <p><b>Key Driver :</b> <span style="background-color: #8B4513; color: white; padding: 2px;">PI</span></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidating and coordinating the Children’s Services Network</li> <li>• Consolidate and build the network</li> <li>• Co-ordinate the workstreams</li> <li>• Supporting and developing Social Work leadership</li> <li>• Ensuring peer support networks for practitioners across the Northern Alliance</li> <li>• Identifying, sharing and responding to new challenges</li> </ul>	<p><u>Leads: Bob Driscoll, Heads of Service</u> across eight local authorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From December 2017 - ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACORN</li> <li>• Measures to be used from existing data set. [TBC]</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being a collective voice</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Workforce Development - developing staffing and curriculum to provide an agile qualified and responsive Workforce (further elaborated in workforce plan).</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of existing curriculum offered in Island/rural schools.</li> <li>• Explore the staffing requirements of Island/Rural Schools.</li> <li>• Develop an agile, appropriately qualified and responsive workforce to provide the services required.</li> <li>• Supporting the social care workforce in skills development.</li> <li>• Dealing with challenge and the changing social care environment.</li> <li>• Supporting recruitment.</li> <li>• Building resilience (and staff retention).</li> <li>• Range of activities, including: Practice papers, joint (and virtual events), networking, job shadowing and exchange.</li> <li>• Promote wellbeing of the workforce.</li> <li>• A co-ordinated approach across the 8 authorities, and with partners: colleges, universities, chamber of commerce.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Leads: Regional Improvement Lead and 8 authorities.</u></p> <p><u>Leads; Sandra Campbell, with sub group.</u></p> <p><u>Leads: Regional Improvement Lead and 8 authorities.</u></p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From March 2018 – ongoing</li> <li>• From March 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures to be used from existing data set.</li> <li>• TIES – end of next academic year '2018.</li> </ul>



Northern  
Alliance

<p><b>Key Drivers:</b> <b>SL</b> <b>PI</b> <b>TP</b> <b>SI</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include skills development for Gaelic medium provision.</li> <li>• TIES</li> <li>• STEM</li> <li>• Development of DLITE</li> <li>• OU pilot 1+2 languages (professional)</li> </ul>			
<p>❖ <b>Leadership Development in Schools across the Northern Alliance led by sector leading Head teachers / teachers.</b></p> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> <b>SL</b> <b>TP</b> <b>SI</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying sector HT and teachers to champion educational improvement across the Northern Alliance to a school led system.</li> <li>• Establishment of a NA strategic group to lead this initiative. Representation from all LA's expected and when appropriate teachers and middle leaders will be invited to engage in the group's work</li> <li>• A draft template for a leadership development framework to be created</li> <li>• A scoping exercise to be carried out to ascertain what existing effective practice and approaches to leadership development are currently in place. Liaison with SCEL will support this.</li> <li>• A rationalisation of the current position and commissioning of work to address potential gaps will lead to the creation of a NA Leadership Development Framework</li> </ul>	<p><u>Leads: Vincent Docherty supported by focus group: Headteachers leadership group – SCEL fellows</u></p> <p>- NA group</p> <p>NA group</p> <p>- CPL leads to be consulted. Sub-group to pursue.</p> <p>- NA group assisted by Yvonne McCracken</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 2018 and onwards</li> <li>• January 2018</li> <li>• March 2018</li> <li>• June 2018</li> <li>• October 2018</li> </ul>	<p>The impact emerging from this work-stream will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased self-identification as leaders by staff at all levels in schools</li> <li>• Access by all staff in schools to a clear leadership development programme supported by high quality professional learning</li> <li>• 50% of staff in schools will be engaged in some aspect of formal</li> </ul>

	<p>for Schools. This framework to be endorsed and validated by SCEL.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A co-ordinated professional learning plan will be confirmed to support leadership development at all levels</li> </ul>	<p>and SCEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NA group in liaison with PCL leads</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• leadership training</li> <li>• Leadership positions in schools filled with appropriately prepared leaders</li> <li>• As a result of the leadership development programme and other influences all HMI inspections will see the QI 1.3 evaluated as Good or better</li> <li>• This work to be show-cased at NA Learning Festival February 2019</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Share best practice in management School Estates and considering future education delivery model</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop digital culture for training staff</li> <li>• Utilise IT infrastructure that is available to deliver a virtual learning environment – Esgoil.</li> <li>• Explore and develop commissioned provision opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Leads: Wilf Weir/ Bernard Chisholm.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % children across the NA meet the DD standard;</li> <li>• Evidence community facilities are better used</li> <li>• IT infrastructure– Esgoil</li> <li>• Qualitative –</li> </ul>



<p>❖ <b>Partnership provision providing improved outcomes (for example e-learning and virtual classroom development)</b></p> <p>❖ <b>Survival and sustainability in Island and rural settings.</b></p> <p>❖ <b>Develop a digital culture to improve learning provision.</b></p> <p><b>Key Drivers:</b> <span style="background-color: #f08080; padding: 2px;">SI</span> <span style="background-color: #663399; padding: 2px;">TP</span></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a conversation with Island/rural communities around sustainability and learning futures</li> <li>• Map community assets and barriers to sustainable community participation.</li> <li>• Explore existing solutions used in rural/island areas and build on/adapt these to other rural/island settings.</li> <li>• Identify existing infrastructure and identify future options.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Leads:</u> <u>Wilf Weir /</u> <u>Craig</u> <u>Clements</u> <u>[TASSC]</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<p>teachers views if they are confident using it</p>
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Northern Alliance

<p>❖ <b>Work across the Northern Alliance Early Years Programme for the promotion of preventative and early intervention to support families.</b></p> <p>Key Drivers: <b>PI</b> <b>TP</b> <b>SI</b> <b>ACP</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A shared strategy, building on best practice linking with literacy and numeracy developments</li> <li>• Promote and increase understanding of importance of attachment and supportive approaches</li> <li>• Co-ordination of Early Years Workstreams</li> </ul>	<p>Leads: <u>Regional Improvement Lead; Early Years Network across all 8 LAs.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures to be established</li> </ul>
<p>❖ <b>Develop quality improvement across early learning and childcare.</b></p> <p>❖ <b>Key Drivers: <b>SI</b></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A co-ordinated approach across the 8 local authorities</li> <li>• Consider the most appropriate Improvement methodologies to audit quality of provision</li> </ul>	<p>Leads: <u>Regional Improvement Lead and 8 authorities.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures to be established</li> </ul>



## **6. Governance and Reporting**

It is important to be clear about the Northern Alliance's approach to governance. The Alliance does not adopt a 'hard' governance model but one that is nonetheless robust, transparent and accountable. It is appropriate to be clear about how we anticipate accountability for improvement in attainment sitting within each of the eight local authorities internal governance framework and structures. The governance arrangements within the Northern Alliance will be subject to constant review for all those involved. The collaborative is also aware that further changes may be required to be made to governance framework subject to the outcome of the Scottish Government's wider consultation on the Education Bill. The following roles and responsibilities are outlined below underpin the current governance model:

### Regional Improvement Forum

The Regional Improvement Forum is a key leadership group which will be made up of the eight Directors from each partner authority and the Regional Improvement Lead. It provides for strong collaborative leadership across the Northern Alliance to drive forward strategic developments in relation to curriculum, learning and teaching and other outcomes-focussed areas of agreed collaborative practice. This group will regularly monitor and scrutinise collaborative projects being undertaken across the Northern Alliance and will have strategic oversight of the deployment of shared resources as appropriate to ensure these are focussed on agreed improvement priorities and outcomes. It will focus on the regional delivery of the SAC/NIF key drivers and focus on developing impactful evidence based improvement programmes, which can then be scaled up to close the attainment gap and accelerate attainment across all sectors.

We anticipate the Improvement Forum will support each of the constituent local authorities with its improvement journey but the body itself will not be accountable for the improvement. Given it is an alliance of the willing partners rather than a formal decision making structure, it will not be a part of the formal governance structures of each of the eight authorities.

Where the forum does offer advice and recommendations for significant change in professional practice, policy or resource allocation, it will be the responsibility of each authorities representative on the forum to seek the necessary approvals from his/her own governance structures rather than being able to accept an instruction from the forum without the approval of council.

This model has now been operating for a short period and the additionality it offers as a challenge group, best practice model and shared expert forum can be seen in the variety of projects and programmes now underway across the region.



## Regional Improvement Advisory Forum

The Regional Improvement Advisory Forum will include the eight Directors together with wider governance partners including Education Scotland, Care Inspectorate, universities and training providers and Scottish Government. This Forum will add a quasi-external perspective as well as challenge to the improvement endeavours and the thinking of the Northern Alliance, focussing on enhancing our collaborative work and practice through focussing on the latest research and innovation from across Scotland, the UK and indeed from a global perspective. There is an opportunity also to enlist input from national and international expertise.

The Improvement Advisory Forum would also be central to the evaluation of impact of the Northern Alliance. The review of improvement data from programmes, progress data and scrutiny of evaluation is central to effective governance. Learning and research from across Scotland and beyond will also feed into this forum so that we can learn and react quickly to new evidence based impactful practice. The formal publication of evaluation of impact and an annual report on the activity and outcomes will be presented to this forum for scrutiny, as well as to each of the Local Authority governance structures.

## Local Authority

Local authorities maintain their key strategic role in leading forward educational services at a local level to ensure local needs are best met within existing resources. Each of the eight authorities will retain their own governance and scrutiny arrangements, through committees and other means on to govern education and children's services and will remain the accountable body for school performance and all other aspects of the day to day leadership and management of schools as enshrined in legislation.

## Convention of Convenors

We have created a Convention of Convenors (of Education/Children's Services) bringing together the lead elected members from each of the eight authorities with the Directors and Regional Improvement Lead. On a six monthly basis this will provide them with the essential opportunity to monitor the progress being made across the Northern Alliance in terms of meeting shared objectives and improving outcomes for young people. This Convention will be modelled on the successful Convention of Highlands and Islands. Whilst each authority area is unique, many of the same challenges are shared and this forum will provide a powerful opportunity to ensure political appraisal of the key work



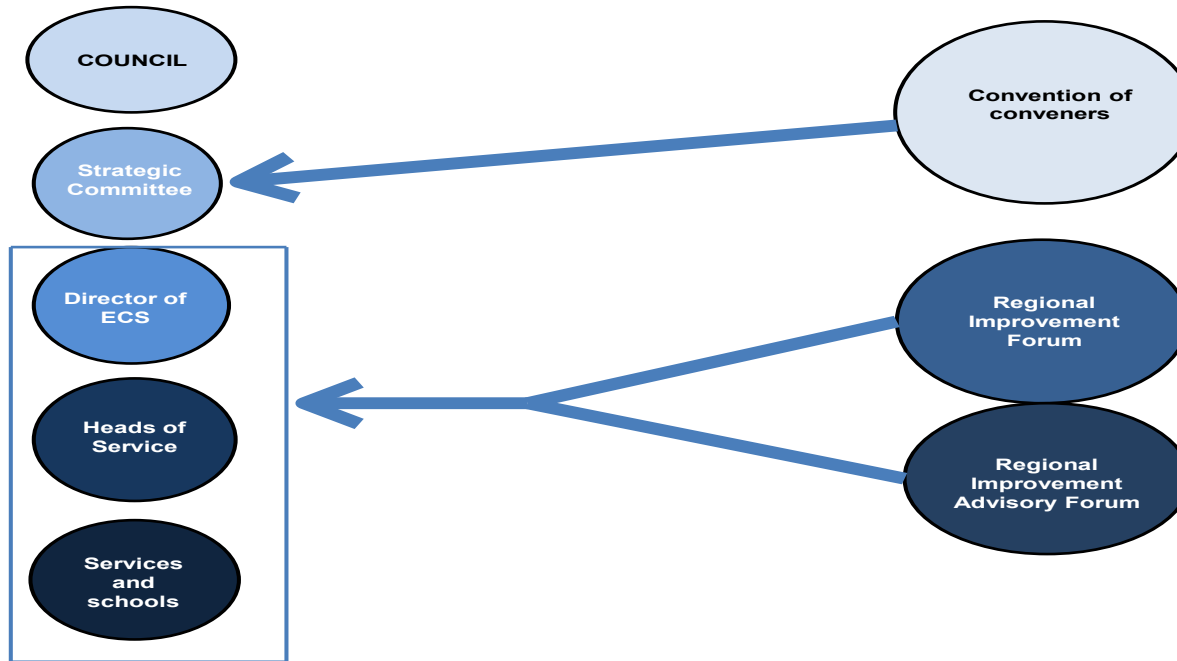


being led forward at a regional level. Evaluation of impact on children and young people's outcomes, scalability, shared approaches and new developments will be shared and reviewed by this important group. They will also have an important role in disseminating approaches and ways of working to their relevant Councils and the wider political networks/groups.

### Scottish Government

The Scottish Government sets national policy and direction with regards to education and children's services and also sets the inspection framework. The Northern Alliance is committed to working closely in partnership with the Scottish Government to achieve the aims and objectives as outlined in the National Improvement Framework. We clearly share the same aims and welcome their involvement and scrutiny. By working in partnership we believe that the additionality of the regional approach can be shared with national partners and help shape and develop practice across Scotland. As previously discussed the Northern Alliance is aware that the outcome of the Scottish Government's consultation on the Education Bill will inform how the collaborative develops in the future.

Northern Alliance Governance Framework Diagram





## 7. Next Steps

The Northern Alliance's Regional Improvement Plan is ambitious and reflects the multi-layered approach of the collaborative. The development of the plan is part of an ongoing iterative process. The initial plan maps out the work which will be taken forward to best support schools and improve the outcomes for our children and young people. Phase 2 of the plan, which will be submitted to Education Scotland in Autumn 2018, seeks to further develop this blueprint through additional analysis and consultation. It is the ambition of the Northern Alliance that it will become an improvement collaborative that is practitioner led. To achieve this aspiration the collaborative is committed to engaging with all stakeholders and enabling them to contribute to the development of the plan as well as the wider work of the Alliance.

An immediate next step is to consult with the profession for further feedback to continue to refine the plan. The Northern Alliance will consult with schools, teachers, parents, guardians and children and young people. A consultation exercise will take place from February 2018 onwards and the responses received to the initial phase of the Regional Improvement Plan will shape the second phase. In order to deliver education improvement it is imperative the collaborative consult with schools on an ongoing basis to ensure the work of the Alliance is based on the needs and improvement priorities of schools. The 'bottom-up' approach adopted by the Northern Alliance will also be supported by identifying champions from across the workstreams to advocate and reach out to peers.

The Northern Alliance will establish a training calendar that will showcase all of the proposed training events for the academic year 2018/2019 and clearly outline the professional learning opportunities offered by the collaborative. This will require further work to identify the best platform that will allow schools and staff to access opportunities.

In addition, the Northern Alliance will work with all partners. In preparation for the second phase of the plan, the Regional Improvement Lead will be meeting with the Chief Executive of NHS Grampian and key stakeholders from Further and Higher Education to secure their contribution and commitment to further iterations of the plan.



As previously stated the collaborative has developed organically and the workstreams outlined in this document reflect the significant work that is already underway albeit at varying stages. The first phase of the plan is an opportunity to allow those workstreams at the more embryonic stage to take root and grow. In the next iteration of the plan the collaborative will seek to build on those workstreams that have developed. To this end, in Phase 2 of the plan we will seek to shape a literacy and numeracy strategy to improve attainment and ensure that regional expertise is fully utilised. National directives and initiatives such as STEM and how they can be addressed on a regional basis, will also be incorporated into the next iteration. The Northern Alliance will look to add value by including subject specific support and advice across all eight curriculum areas. Phase 2 will consider how the collaborative can set up professional learning networks linking to different curriculum areas.

Through robust monitoring and close scrutiny of the impact of evidence the collaborative will demonstrate the extent to which we are improving the outcomes for our children and young people. Phase 2 is an opportunity to be clearer on how we will measure progress. The Alliance will undertake a mapping exercise across the partnership to identify baseline data and if no baseline is available whether an indicative baseline can be adopted. The Performance and Data Sharing workstream is working closely with Education Scotland to take this forward with a view to developing a data sharing agreement. Alongside refining the data available, and, improving consistency across the improvement plan, a key action of Phase 2 will be evaluating which improvement methodology can be applied to best meet the needs of the Northern Alliance.

The Alliance is a committed learning collaborative and, as such, will continue to develop and learn as programmes are embedded and developed. It is anticipated that the Regional Improvement Plan will undergo further iterations as we identify what is having a positive impact and as we listen to feedback from schools and practitioners. Advice from Education Scotland is that Regional Improvement Collaboratives will produce three-year plans regional plans with an annual performance plan, although this is still to be confirmed. The Regional Improvement Plan offers the Northern Alliance an opportunity to continue to grow and improve on Education and Children's Services issues through shared expertise, scale and capacity and by working with all our partners. The Northern Alliance is committed to achieving the best for all our children and young people by supporting a school-led and teacher-led system of improvement.

COMMITTEE	<b>Education and Children's Services</b>
DATE	<b>25 January 2018</b>
REPORT TITLE	<b>Cordyce School Closure Consultation</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/18/002</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Helen Shanks (Acting)</b>
REPORT AUTHOR	<b>Andrew Jones</b>

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-**

To report to Committee on the outcome of a recent statutory consultation on the proposal to permanently close Cordyce School.

**2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that the Committee agrees:

(i) to implement the proposal to permanently close Cordyce School in Aberdeen, with effect from 1 April 2018; and:

(ii) to instruct the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources to notify Scottish Ministers of the Council's intention to implement the closure proposal, in accordance with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended; and:

(iii) subject to any call-in by Scottish Ministers, that the Cordyce school site should be declared surplus to Education and Children's Services requirements, and to instruct the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources to make arrangements to transfer the site to the Head of Land and Property Assets.

**3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

**3.1 Background**

3.1.1 At its meeting on 1 June 2017, the Education & Children's Services Committee instructed officers to prepare a proposal document for public consultation on the proposal to permanently close Cordyce School. This report details the outcome of the subsequent consultation on that proposal.

**3.2 Educational Implications**

- 3.2.1 The Education Authority has a programme to ensure the provision of an affordable and suitable education service for all its pupils. Implementation of the proposal will assist in the delivery of these objectives, thereby meeting the Council's statutory obligations as set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (as amended).
- 3.2.2 The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 introduced the presumption of mainstreaming, which requires local authorities to start with the assumption that all children and young people should access learning within their local school, alongside their peers, rather than necessarily attending a separate school specifically for children with additional support needs. Implementation of the proposal to close Corydce School will also assist in the delivery of this objective.

### **3.3 Statutory Consultation Feedback**

- 3.3.1 The consultation report for the proposed closure of Corydce School can be found at Appendix 1 of this report.

#### Methodology

- 3.3.2 All requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended were met in full.

#### Correction

- 3.3.3 Following publication of the Council's proposal document on 30 August 2017, a minor error in the reported previous staff numbers at Corydce School was discovered. The original document stated that there were two deputy head teachers, 14.42 full time equivalent class teachers, and 17 social workers, based at the school. In fact there was one deputy head teacher, 10.42 full time equivalent class teachers, and 10.5 full time equivalent social workers at the school.
- 3.3.4 Upon discovery of this error, an updated version of the proposal document providing the correct staff numbers, was published on the Council's consultation website and distributed to stakeholders on 18 September 2017. As the error was not considered by officers to be significant, it was not deemed necessary to review the merits of the proposal or to revise the timescales for consultation.

#### Feedback from Stakeholders and Education Scotland

- 3.3.5 A public consultation event was held on 20 September 2017 to discuss the proposals. The event was attended by five stakeholders. Twenty-six written submissions were also received in response to the consultation, including one response from the EIS teaching union.
- 3.3.6 Whilst a small number of respondents welcomed the proposal, as it would see pupils being placed in mainstream settings alongside their peers and it would help to reduce costs, the majority of those responding to the consultation were

not in favour of the proposal and raised concerns about the possible closure of the school.

- 3.3.7 These concerns included questions over whether the appropriate level of support for pupils with additional support needs arising from social, emotional and behavioural difficulties would be available within mainstream settings. There were also concerns about pupils 'falling behind' within a mainstream setting, and that some may choose not to attend school.
- 3.3.8 The response from the EIS teaching union raised a number of questions about the Council's approach to supporting pupils who would otherwise have attended Cordyce School, including its model of hub provision, and the training offered to staff. It also highlighted concerns about recruitment difficulties and budget constraints, which it was felt would impact on the quality of support offered to pupils.
- 3.3.9 In its report on the proposals, Education Scotland agreed that the proposal to close Cordyce School has educational benefit, that the continuum of provision which has been designed by the Council has merit and will provide appropriate alternatives for young people who may have attended Cordyce School. HM Inspectors were assured that the Council is working toward a range of inclusion strategies, and that the education benefits statement within the proposal document provides clear evidence of this.
- 3.3.10 The Education Scotland report also noted that the development of satellite hubs around the city is in an early stage of development. It recommended that the Council reassures stakeholders that the alternatives to full-time mainstream provision will be designed in consultation with them, and that the continuum of provision can effectively meet the needs of the most vulnerable young people.
- 3.3.11 The Council's response to all of the issues raised by consultees is provided within the Consultation Report at Appendix 1.

#### Overall View of the Proposals

- 3.3.12 Officers were satisfied that no comments had been received which would have caused them to review the merits of the proposals to permanently close Cordyce School.
- 3.3.13 It is therefore recommended that Councillors approve the original proposal, to permanently close Cordyce School, with effect from 1 April 2018.

### **3.4 Fire at Cordyce School**

- 3.4.1 On 13 November 2017, Cordyce School suffered a major fire, which largely destroyed the main school building. Officers are working with the Council's insurers so that an appropriate settlement can be determined. In the meantime the proposal to permanently close the school as an institution remains in place, and the Council is required to continue with the statutory consultation process.

- 3.4.2 Due to the extent of the damage to the main school building, there is a requirement to demolish this part of the site. The costs of this are likely to be covered by any insurance settlement, subject to the deductible sums built into the Council's insurance policy. Two former accommodation blocks on the site, which were separate from the main building, remain intact as they were undamaged by the fire.
- 3.4.3 However the power supply to the buildings was cut off as a result of the fire and there have been a number of break-ins and vandalism to the buildings, both before and after the fire took place. The buildings have now been secured, but whilst they remain standing there remains a risk of further vandalism.
- 3.4.4 Should the decision be taken to close Cordyce School, it is therefore also recommended that the site is declared surplus for Education and Children's Services requirements, so that the appropriate action can be taken by appropriate officers to avoid further unnecessary costs being incurred by the Council.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Whilst Cordyce School was operating with a full pupil roll, it had the highest running cost per pupil of all schools in Aberdeen. The average annual running costs for the building are shown below:

- Oil & Electricity - £64,160
- Carbon Charges - £8,550
- Water - £5,330
- Cleaning - £26,660
- Repairs/Maintenance - £30,315
- Grounds Maintenance - £4,765
- Waste Collection - £5,980

Total annual property running cost: **£145,760**

- 4.2 Prior to the recent fire at Cordyce which saw the main school building largely destroyed, it was anticipated that closure of the school would help to bring about a reduction in running costs for the Council, as in the short term there would be a reduced need for fuel and facilities management costs, even whilst the site remains within the Council's ownership. However, whilst the building remained in place but not operating as a school, the payment of non-domestic rates relief would have been required, at a cost of approximately £82,000 per year after an initial rates relief discount period. To remove this rates liability the building would need to be demolished, sold or leased out to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Retaining the building and site would leave the Council with ongoing property costs.
- 4.3 Officers are currently working with the Council's insurers and until a decision is made on the future of the building and the site as a whole, the likely settlement from the insurers cannot be confirmed. If the proposal to close the school is accepted and a decision made to proceed with the demolition of the



remaining buildings, then the insurance settlement is likely to be limited to the cost of demolishing the parts of the site which were destroyed by the fire, subject to the deductible sums built into the Council's insurance policy.

4.4 The cost of demolishing the accommodation blocks would not be covered by the insurance settlement and would therefore need to be met from Council budgets.

4.5 However if the proposal to close Cordyce School is not accepted by Committee, then there would be a requirement to relocate the school to an alternative building, and / or to reinstate the school on its existing site. It is unlikely that any insurance settlement for reinstatement would cover all of the costs of rebuilding the school to modern standards, and therefore a significant capital investment by the Council would be required.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The public consultation has complied with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 provides Scottish Ministers with the power to call in decisions by local authorities to close schools, where there have been apparent failures in the consultation or decision making process.

5.2 Local authorities must notify Scottish Ministers of a closure decision within six working days of making the decision, starting with the day on which the decision is made, and submit to them a copy of the proposal paper and consultation report. There will then be a three week period for representations to be made to Ministers and a further five weeks for them to decide whether or not to call in the decision.

5.3 Officers are confident that there have been no failures in the consultation process; however should the proposal to close Cordyce School be accepted by Committee, prior to the decision being made by Scottish Ministers on whether to call in the decision, the local authority will not be permitted to proceed any further with the closure. Given that the timescale for the call-in decision being made by Scottish Ministers is a maximum of eight weeks following the Committee decision, this would still allow for the proposed closure of the school to take effect from 1 April 2018.

## **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

### **Legal**

6.1 There is not expected to be a significant operational risk arising from the implementation of the proposals. Having followed all applicable legislation, the Council will be perceived as having taken account of the result of the consultation process.

### **Customer / citizen**

- 6.2 Given that there are currently no pupils enrolled at Cordyce School, there is no significant risk to customers or citizens resulting from the recommendations in this report.

### **Financial**

- 6.3 The financial implications which relate to the recommendations in this report are explained in Section 4, above.

### **Employee**

- 6.4 Given that the staff formerly based at Cordyce School have now been deployed within other settings around the city, there is no significant risk to employees resulting from the recommendations in this report.

### **Environmental**

- 6.5 There are no environmental risks or implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

### **Technological**

- 6.6 There are no technological risks or implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

### **Reputational**

- 6.7 There are no reputational risks or implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

## **7. IMPACT SECTION**

### **Economy**

- 7.1 There are no significant impacts on the economy associated with these proposals.

### **People**

- 7.2 Following the transformation of the Council's approach to inclusion in schools there is now a clear continuum of provision, which sets out the supports available for children and young people at Universal, Targeted and Specialist level, and which reflects the requirements outlined in the Children and Young People's Act (2014). The continuum supports the delivery of timeous and proportionate support for individual children and young people, who will remain on the roll of their mainstream school. This will ensure that young people continue to have access to a broad curriculum and those who know the child best will continue to lead and coordinate the supports they require to access learning.
- 7.3 Accepting the recommendations within this report will help to reinforce and maintain the above approach and assist the Council in delivering on its

improvement outcomes, to ensure that children have the best start in life, and that children are respected, included and achieving.

## **Place**

- 7.4 Accepting the recommendations to close the school and declare the site surplus, would allow for the asset to be progressed through the surplus site procedure, allowing for potential new uses of the site and/or development which could help meet the needs of the local community.

## **Technology**

- 7.5 There are no significant impacts on technology associated with these proposals.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Aberdeen City Council Consultation Proposal Document on the proposed closure of Cordyce School:

[https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/education-and-childrens-services/cordyce-consultation/supporting\\_documents/Cordyce%20Proposal%20Document.pdf](https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/education-and-childrens-services/cordyce-consultation/supporting_documents/Cordyce%20Proposal%20Document.pdf)

## **9. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Consultation Report on the proposed closure of Cordyce School

## **10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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# ABERDEEN

## CITY COUNCIL

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### **CONSULTATION REPORT**

#### **Proposed Closure of Cordyce School**

This Consultation Report has been compiled in response to the recent public consultation on the proposal to permanently close Cordyce School in Aberdeen. The document summarises the responses received on the proposal set out below and Aberdeen City Council's response to the verbal and written comments submitted by interested parties, in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

#### **Proposal:**

**To permanently close Cordyce School in Aberdeen, with effect from 1 April 2018**

## **1. METHODOLOGY**

This consultation was conducted in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. All requirements of the legislation have been met.

## **2. CORRECTION**

Following publication of the Council's proposal document on 30 August 2017, a minor error in the reported previous staff numbers at Cordyce School, as detailed in the table at Paragraph 4.2 of the document, was discovered. The original document stated that there were two depute head teachers, 14.42 full time equivalent class teachers, and 17 social workers, based at the school. In fact there was one depute head teacher, 10.42 full time equivalent class teachers, and 10.5 full time equivalent social workers at the school.

Upon discovery of this error, an updated version of the proposal document providing the correct staff numbers, was published on the Council's consultation website and distributed to stakeholders on 18 September 2017. As the error was not considered by officers to be significant, it was not considered necessary to review the merits of the proposal or to revise the timescales for consultation.

## **3. INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS**

### **2.1 Public Event**

A public consultation event was held on 20 September 2017 to discuss the proposals. The event took place at Bucksburn Academy commencing at 7.00pm. The event was attended by five individual stakeholders, as follows:

- 2 teachers formerly based at Cordyce School
- 1 teacher from another Aberdeen City school
- 1 social worker formerly based at Cordyce School
- 1 community member

### **2.2 Comments Received**

Twenty-four online submissions were made in response to the consultation, via the Council's consultation portal. In addition the EIS teaching union submitted a response by email, and one further email response was received from an individual stakeholder.

### **2.3 Issues Raised**

The main issues raised at the public meeting and in the written responses to the consultation, are summarised below.

- Some respondents to the consultation welcomed the proposal, in that it would ensure that children could be accommodated within mainstream settings along with their peers, rather than being labelled and segregated. Others noted positively that schools are managing to meet the needs of pupils who require extra support.

- Other respondents welcomed the fact that the proposal would help the Council to reduce its costs.
- Concerns were raised by some stakeholders regarding the extent to which children with additional support needs arising from social, emotional and behavioural difficulties can receive appropriate levels of support, following the closure of Cordyce School.
- It was suggested that within a mainstream setting, it would be difficult for teachers to provide the right level of support, and that this could have a detrimental impact on other children within the same class, whose education could be disrupted. One respondent suggested that children's needs for medical assessments are ignored by schools and that children are not taken care of in schools.
- In their responses some stakeholders highlighted the need for additional support and resources within mainstream settings, including specialist staffing, to help support pupils with additional support needs arising from social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Others suggested that additional resources could be made available for Cordyce School in order to improve the support it can provide to pupils, and that the school could therefore remain open.
- It was also suggested that children who are struggling to cope in a mainstream setting may be tempted to avoid attending school, or that they would be moved to part-time timetables, and that this would result in them being left behind. Similarly, another respondent felt that children could feel frustrated that they do not match up to their peers within a mainstream setting. One respondent suggested the proposal would result in children being forced into mainstream, and as a result may choose not to attend school, when they may have been happy to attend at Cordyce.
- Stakeholders also highlighted that within Cordyce School, the specific needs of pupils could be catered for by trained staff within a controlled environment, and that moving pupils to mainstream classes would impact on the learning and teaching in those classes. This, it was felt, would result in support staff needing to spend more time with individual pupils, leaving them with less time to support others. It was also suggested that mainstream staff do not have the appropriate level of training to support children with specific needs.
- Some respondents questioned the benefits of the bespoke pathways for individual pupils, suggesting that pathway planning is limited and non-transparent, with limited resources available for supporting the pathways.
- Another respondent was critical of the way in which the Council's report on its review of inclusion was disseminated in 2014, suggesting that the detail of this report was not shared due to fears over what it contained. The same respondent suggested that the bespoke pathways on offer do not offer the breadth of curriculum to replace what was available at Cordyce School.
- One stakeholder questioned why the consultation was being carried out now, given that the school had not been in operation for some months, suggesting that this was a retrospective consultation. Another response criticised the Council for cutting funding to a school which had played a valuable role in the community, suggesting that the education and wellbeing of young people should not be about saving money. A further respondent questioned why staff were still working at the school.

## Comments received from the EIS teaching union

The comments received from the EIS are summarised below:

- The EIS suggested that the reduction in pupil roll at Cordyce was due to schools no longer being able to refer pupils to Cordyce, and it questioned whether out of authority placements would now be the only route for high tariff young people. It suggested that closing Cordyce School would reduce the continuum of provision, as some young people would still require to access provision which is not part of a mainstream setting.
- The EIS response suggested that the hub provision in mainstream schools has changed considerably and schools are unclear about the support that is available. It also questioned how the likely impact of the proposal on schools was measured.
- The response highlighted that staff do not feel adequately trained to deal with the social and emotional difficulties presented by young people, and that recruitment difficulties mean that staff find it more difficult to access high quality training. It was also suggested that the recruitment difficulties are impacting on schools' ability to offer personalisation and choice to young people.
- Finally the EIS concluded that it wholeheartedly supports the inclusion agenda, but that it recognises the significant limitations placed on schools as a result of staffing shortages and budget constraints. It suggested that it is vital for the type of support which was provided at Cordyce School to remain an option for some pupils, to avoid out of city placements.

## **2.4 Education Scotland Report**

An essential element of the statutory consultation process is the involvement of Education Scotland, whose report is provided as Annex A of this Consultation Report.

In its report, Education Scotland agreed that the proposal has educational benefit, that the continuum of provision which has been designed by the Council has merit and will provide appropriate alternatives for young people who may have attended Cordyce School. HM Inspectors were assured that the Council is working toward a range of inclusion strategies, and that the education benefits statement within the proposal document provides clear evidence of this.

The report also noted that the development of satellite hubs around the city is in an early stage of development. It recommended that the Council reassures stakeholders that the alternatives to full-time mainstream provision will be designed in consultation with them, and that the continuum of provision can effectively meet the needs of the most vulnerable young people.

## **3. THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD AND CONTAINED WITHIN THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT**

### **3.1 Suggested lack of support available in mainstream settings**

Recent research has provided a growing body of evidence in relation to ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences). As a result of this research, young people have access to more information to



enable them to understand and support children and young people who have experienced trauma. Historically, these children and young people have been amongst the vulnerable learners who have accessed off-site provision. There is now a far greater understanding that to address the damage done in early childhood these children and young people need to develop a sense of belonging within their local community in a learning environment where positive relationships are prioritised.

The proposed closure of the building would enable a reduction in ancillary costs, allowing continued investment in staff resource to provide timeous and proportionate interventions for children and young people. The staffing resource (teachers, pupil support assistants and educational social workers) will be deployed across the city to work directly with children, young people and their families.

### **3.2 Concerns about attendance at school**

In order to raise attainment attendance at school is crucial. Head Teachers are responsible for reviewing and monitoring data on attendance and for putting in place school procedures which allow for early discussion with Home School Liaison Officers and Educational Social Workers to address cases of poor attendance.

### **3.3 The need for staff training within mainstream settings**

It is acknowledged that there is an ongoing need for high quality staff training. The number of children across the city with social, emotional and mental health needs, including in our primary schools, exceeds the number which could be accommodated at Cordyce School. It is vital that the capacity to meet these needs is developed across Aberdeen City. It should be acknowledged that there are significant numbers of highly qualified and skilled staff who have created environments in which vulnerable children and young people have been able to flourish. This expertise will be used to help build capacity.

### **3.4 The benefits of bespoke pathways**

By working in conjunction with partners in social work, NHS and the third sector the Council has extended the range of professionals engaged in planning with children and young people, their families and schools. This has led to the development of Child's Plans which focus on the individual needs of children and young people. More appropriate pathways, building on learners' strengths and the factors which motivate them, have resulted. It is recognised that this provision needs to continue to grow.

It is also acknowledged that for some young people schools alone cannot provide the level of personalisation and choice that allows them to be successful learners. In these situations learners will continue to have access to alternative learning environments and to have opportunities for personal development, always with the ultimate aim of returning to their mainstream provision.

It is recognised that an appropriate curriculum is of critical importance and that planning for children and young people needs to take them from where they are in their learning. All classroom teachers plan to meet the needs of all learners and are encouraged to use a variety of strategies to meet need and reduce stigma.

Aberdeen City's continuum of provision highlights the range of interventions from universal through targeted and specialist. The establishment of Local Partnerships and the deployment of staff for primary and early intervention will enable the needs of

the majority of learners to be met within their locality. The partnerships which have been built with third sector partners provide specialist interventions, which will continue to ensure the focus on skills for learning, life and work.

### **3.5 Dissemination of the report on the Review of Inclusion**

The recommendations from the Inclusion Review provided clarity in terms of the actions for Aberdeen City to take to fulfil its statutory duties. The full report contained sensitive information regarding individual colleagues and it was stated at the outset that in order to protect them the full report would not be published.

### **3.6 The decision to stop enrolling children at Cordyce**

A variety of factors led to the decision not to enrol additional pupils at Cordyce; these included the staffing position and concerns over health and safety within the building. In light of the planned transformation it was felt that it would be inappropriate to enrol a new cohort of pupils when the future of the provision was uncertain.

### **3.7 Response to comments from the EIS teaching union**

The Inclusion Review recommended that Aberdeen City Council take account of the legislation in respect of the Presumption of Mainstreaming. The staffing difficulties at Cordyce School meant that young people could not have their entitlements delivered at Cordyce.

It is recognised that for some children and young people accessing learning within a school environment can be difficult. Throughout this process the message has been confirmed and colleagues have continued to be advised that off-site provision would remain an option for children and young people. However, it has also been made clear that it is not appropriate for children and young people to be referred to an alternative provision with no ongoing contact with their mainstream school.

Alternative locations have been identified and Head Teachers and Pupil Support staff have received information about these and the processes to be followed if they are considered to be possible options for children and young people. This confirms that out of authority placements are not the only route for our vulnerable children and young people.

Bespoke pathways will now be developed jointly with schools and partners. The roles of the central team have been reviewed to enable a greater focus on supporting children and young people in need of specialist interventions. This is as a result of the experience of colleagues engaged in the development of bespoke pathways and feedback from stakeholders.

The original recommendation of the Inclusion Review was to replace Cordyce school with a provision which would cater for children from P4 – S2 and a Life Skills Academy. It was also recommended that the temporary primary provision at Airyhall School be replaced with an alternative provision. The proposal for a number of hubs across the city was shared later. The following permanent 'hubs' have been identified: St Nicholas Centre; The Foyer Classroom; The House at Queen's Road.

The Mental Health agenda is being taken forward in line with the National Mental Health Strategy. Mental Health First Aid training has been offered but it is recognised

that it will take time for all staff to access this. The initial aspiration is to have a Mental Health champion within each Local Partnership.

A mapping activity, designed to identify resources and supports which staff can access, is under production. The provision within individual schools is being examined. Given the national increase in the number of children and young people presenting with social, emotional and mental health issues, the transformation of our service is critical. With a maximum pupil roll of 49, Cordyce School is not in a position to meet the needs of children and young people across the city.

The staffing resource remains and is being used to ensure we have the right professional roles to address this agenda. Account has also been taken of the changes to the role of school nurses and the fact that adjustments will be made to their remits to enable them to spend more time supporting children and young people with social and emotional health needs.

It is appreciated that staffing difficulties have impacted on many schools, however, the absence of secondary qualified staff delivering a secondary curriculum at Cordyce School exacerbated the challenge and impacted on the staff members themselves.

#### **4. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSALS**

Following the conclusion of the consultation period, Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, requires the Council to review the relevant proposal, having had regard to any written representations that have been received by it during the consultation period, any oral representations made to it at the public meeting held on 20 September, and Education Scotland's report.

In terms of Section 10(2) (e) of the said Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, the Consultation Report is required to contain a statement explaining how the Council complied with its duty under the above Section 9(1) of the Act.

With relation to Section 9(1) of the 2010 Act and having considered all of the information received during the consultation process, officers are satisfied that no comments have been received which would have caused them to review the merits of the proposal to permanently close Cordyce School in Aberdeen.

#### **5. FIRE AT CORDYCE SCHOOL**

On 13 November 2017, Cordyce School suffered a major fire, which largely destroyed the main school building. Whilst officers are working with the Council's insurers to determine the best course of action for the future of the building and the site as a whole, the proposal to permanently close the school as an institution remains in place, and the Council is required to continue with the statutory consultation process.

#### **6. RECOMMENDATION**

It is therefore recommended that the Education and Children's Services Committee agrees to implement the proposal to permanently close Cordyce School in Aberdeen, with effect from 1 April 2018.

**Helen Shanks**  
**Acting Director of Education and Children's Services**  
**December 2017**

## REPORT FROM EDUCATION SCOTLAND

### Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Aberdeen City Council to close Cordyce School permanently.

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (as amended) (the 2010 Act)*. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Aberdeen City Council's proposal to close Cordyce School permanently. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include a copy of this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all legislative obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

#### 1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for young people of the school; young people likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

#### 1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 20 September 2017 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and

- visits to the site of The Foyer, St Machar Academy, St Nicholas Pupil Support Centre and Aberdeen City Council Headquarters, including discussion with relevant consultees.

## **2. Consultation Process**

2.1 Aberdeen City Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the *Act 2010*.

2.2 The consultation ran from 30 August until 13 October 2017. The council announced the consultation in local press and information, including the proposal paper, was placed on the council website and in council buildings. Copies of the proposal were made available in all Aberdeen City Council secondary schools. Stakeholders were invited to respond to the proposal through a comment form. A public meeting was held on 20 September 2017. Fewer than ten stakeholders attended. The council made appropriate arrangements to consult with stakeholders. During the consultation period the council received 25 responses from stakeholders including parents. Three were in favour of the permanent closure of the school and 21 opposed the proposal.

## **3. Educational Aspects of Proposal**

3.1 Cordyce School provides secondary education for pupils with additional support needs arising from social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Young people have previously attended the school from all areas of Aberdeen City. Over time, there has been a gradual reduction in the number of young people attending the school. Fewer than ten young people were on the school roll for session 2016/17. Since August 2017 there have been no young people enrolled at the school. The Cordyce building is rated C (poor) for both its condition and its suitability for use as a school. It also has an energy performance rating of G (very poor).

3.2 HM Inspectors agree that the proposal has educational benefit. The council outlines clearly the educational benefits which it believes will be brought about by the permanent closure of Cordyce School. The Continuum of Provision, designed by the council, has merit and will provide appropriate alternatives for young people who may have attended Cordyce School. HM Inspectors noted that work on the satellite hubs around the city, as an element of bespoke pathways for young people, are at an early stage of development. In its final paper, the council will need to reassure stakeholders that the alternatives to full-time mainstream provision will be designed in consultation with them and with the aim of ensuring successful outcomes for young people. The council has established a number of successful partnerships with other organisations which offer young people valuable support and alternative placements, including work experience.

3.3 Most stakeholders who responded to the consultation directly are opposed to the proposal. They feel that the council has not yet delivered suitable, robust alternatives for the most vulnerable young people. They would welcome greater clarity about the viability of the range of alternatives proposed by the council. Stakeholders who spoke with HM Inspectors are in favour of the proposal. They feel young people will be better served by a range of alternative, bespoke pathways

which have the potential to meet their needs more effectively. They would also welcome greater clarity about aspects of the proposal. In particular, arrangements for young people who have the greatest needs. In its final report, the council will need to reassure stakeholders that the needs of the most vulnerable young people can be met effectively through a well-coordinated continuum of provision across the city.

#### **4. Summary**

HM Inspectors believe the proposal has educational benefit. We are assured that the council is working toward a range of inclusion strategies as alternatives to Cordyce School. The educational benefits statement provides clear evidence of this. For young people who may have become pupils of Cordyce School, the council has set out a range of appropriate alternatives. However, in its final paper, the council will need to reassure stakeholders that the alternatives which the council asserts will bring about successful outcomes for the most vulnerable young people will do so.

The council notified HM Inspectors on 14 November 2017 that the school building had been destroyed by fire. This was prior to the publication of both Education Scotland's report and the council's final consultation report.

**HM Inspectors  
Education Scotland  
November 2017**

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	<b>Education &amp; Children's Services</b>
DATE	<b>25 January 2018</b>
REPORT TITLE	<b>Removal of sites from Education and Children's Services property portfolio</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/18/013</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Helen Shanks (acting)</b>
REPORT AUTHOR	<b>Andrew Jones</b>
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	<b>Yes</b>

---

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-**

- 1.1 This report provides details of a number of Education and Children's Services sites which are considered as surplus to requirements, and makes recommendations for removing these from the service property portfolio.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee declares the following sites as surplus to Education and Children's Services requirements, and instructs the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources to make the necessary arrangements for them to be removed from the Education and Children's Services property portfolio, and for responsibility for the sites to be transferred the Head of Land and Property Assets:

(i) the former Hazlewood School building;

(ii) the former Bucksburn School and Nursery building;

(iii) the existing Stoneywood School building (to take effect following the opening of the replacement Stoneywood School building scheduled to open in August 2018); and:

(iv) the existing Kincorth Academy building (to take effect following the opening of the new Lochside Academy building, scheduled to open in August 2018).

### **3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 **The former Hazlewood School building**

3.1.1 Hazlewood School closed in June 2017, when pupils and staff transferred to the new Orchard Brae School. Officers have considered potential future uses of the building and have determined that it would be prudent to declare it surplus to Education and Children's Services requirements. Doing this would provide opportunities for other Council services to identify other uses for the building or site, or for the site to be placed on the market in order to achieve a capital receipt for the Council.

3.1.2 Woodlands School also closed in June 2017, with its staff and pupils also transferring to the new Orchard Brae School. However officers have identified a potential opportunity to use the former Woodlands School building for early years and childcare provision, to help meet the additional demand for places resulting from the national expansion of early learning and childcare entitlements. A business case for using the building in this way is currently being developed, and consequently the former Woodlands building is not recommended as being surplus to requirement at this stage.

### **3.2 The former Bucksburn School and Bucksburn Nursery buildings**

3.2.1 The former Bucksburn School and Nursery buildings share the same site, and were used latterly as a temporary location for Brimmond School, which was formed following the merger of Bucksburn School and Newhills School. Pupils and staff transferred to the new Brimmond School building when it opened in October 2016, and the former Bucksburn School and Nursery buildings have remained vacant since that time.

3.2.2 Officers have considered potential future uses of the site and have determined that it would now be prudent to declare it surplus to Education and Children's Services requirements. Doing this would provide opportunities for other Council services to identify other uses for the site, or for it to be placed on the market in order to achieve a capital return receipt for the Council.

### **3.3 The existing Stoneywood School building**

3.3.1 A new Stoneywood School building is currently under construction, and is due to open in August 2018, when pupils and staff from the existing building will transfer to the new site. The existing Stoneywood School building is therefore due to close in June 2018.

3.3.2 Officers have considered potential future uses of the existing site, following the opening of the new building. The condition of the existing building is rated as C (Poor), and considerable investment would be required to return it to a suitable standard. Officers have therefore determined that it would now be prudent to declare the building surplus to Education and Children's Services requirements. Doing this would provide opportunities for other Council services to identify other uses for the site, or for it to be placed on the market in order to achieve a capital return for the Council.

### **3.4 The Kincorth Academy building**

3.4.1 The new Lochside Academy building is currently under construction, and is due to open in August 2018, when pupils from Kincorth Academy will transfer

to the new site. Kincorth Academy will then be permanently closed from June 2018.

3.4.2 Officers have considered potential future uses of the existing school site, following the opening of Lochside Academy, and have determined that it would be prudent to declare the building surplus to Education and Children's Services requirements. The site has been identified for future housing development, and so declaring the site surplus at this stage would assist officers in progressing plans for that development.

3.4.3 Torry Academy will also close in June 2018 as pupils from that school will also transfer to the new Lochside Academy. However the Education and Children's Services Committee has already given approval for the Torry Academy site to be used for the planned new primary school in Torry, and consequently the Torry Academy site will need to be retained by Education and Children's Services.

### **3.5 Procedure for declaring sites surplus**

3.5.1 Should the committee agree to the recommendation to declare the above sites surplus to Education and Children's Services requirement, the buildings would be cleared of their contents and the assets would be transferred to the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure directorate. Officers within that directorate would then follow the Council's surplus property procedures to determine the future use or disposal of the sites.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 As assets cease to become operational, certain property costs will remain until such time as the asset is sold, leased out or demolished. A summary of these expected costs are shown in Appendix 1, along with the costs of running the schools whilst in operational use.

4.2 The ongoing repair costs of buildings are difficult to assess but are likely to be limited to security and health and safety works. Budget provision for ongoing costs will need to be made so that the assets can be managed accordingly. Officers within Communities, Housing and Infrastructure would consider the future of the assets in accordance with the Council's surplus property procedures and would look to mitigate ongoing property costs where possible.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no legal implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

## **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

### **Financial**

6.1 The financial implications which relate to the recommendations in this report are explained in Section 4, above. There is a higher risk of vandalism occurring on sites and buildings when they become vacant, and the risk tends

to increase the longer that vacant buildings remain in place. Any vandalism is likely to result in an increase in costs to the Council.

- 6.2 The ongoing security of all vacant sites is considered on an individual basis, and where appropriate consideration will be given to boarding up windows and doors, additional security fencing, and regular inspections of the properties.

### **Employee**

- 6.3 There are no significant risks relating to employees arising from the recommendations in this report.

### **Customer / citizen**

- 6.4 There are no significant risks relating to customers / citizens arising from the recommendations in this report.

### **Environmental**

- 6.5 There are no significant environmental risks arising from the recommendations in this report.

### **Technological**

- 6.6 There are no significant technological risks arising from the recommendations in this report.

### **Legal**

- 6.7 There are no significant legal risks arising from the recommendations in this report.

### **Reputational**

- 6.8 There are no significant legal risks arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **7. IMPACT SECTION**

### **Economy**

- 7.1 There are no significant impacts on the economy associated with these proposals.

### **People**

- 7.2 Declaring the sites surplus would provide opportunities for the future use of the sites and buildings to be considered, which may lead to benefits for local communities, which otherwise would not be realised if the buildings were to remain vacant and unused.

## **Place**

- 7.3 The increased risk of vandalism occurring on vacant sites, as described in paragraph 6.1 above, and the need to board up windows and doors on vacant buildings, can impact negatively on the local environment and the local community. Declaring vacant sites surplus at the earliest opportunity allows for decisions to be taken more quickly on the future of the sites, and therefore helps to minimise the time that a building or site remains vacant.

## **Technology**

- 7.4 There are no significant impacts on technology associated with these proposals.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There are no background papers associated with this document.

## **9. APPENDICES (if applicable)**

Appendix 1: Outline of running costs for proposed surplus sites

## **10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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01224 522073

## APPENDIX 1: Running costs for proposed surplus sites

Asset	Business Rates	Energy	Water	Cleaning	Grounds Maintenance	Repairs / Maintenance	Waste Collection
Hazlewood	£ -	£ 42,525	£ 6,197	£ 19,729	£ 5,031	£ 27,386	£ 3,510
Hazlewood - Vacant	£ 27,030	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 5,031	Unknown	£ -
Bucksburn Operational	£ 35,909	£ 36,360	£ 3,284	£ 29,327	£ 4,670	£ 22,337	£ 3,644
Bucksburn Vacant	£ 37,995	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 4,670	Unknown	£ -
Stoneywood Operational	£ 20,213	£ 23,877	£ 2,865	£ 17,063	£ 1,819	£ 21,954	£ 2,062
Stoneywood Vacant	£ 18,192	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 1,819	Unknown	£ -
Kincorth Operational	£ 151,348	£ 159,709	£ 22,131	£ 99,178	£ 17,767	£ 98,117	£ 19,134
Kincorth Vacant	£ 136,213	£ -	£ -		£ 17,767	Unknown	£ -

*NB: energy and water costs for vacant properties would be zero only when complete disconnection takes place. There are costs associated with disconnection of services which the Council would be required to meet.*

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education & Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	25 January 2018
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Carers Strategy Consultation
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	ECS/18/006
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Bernadette Oxley
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	David Bliss

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Committee about the draft Carer's Strategy ('A Life Alongside Caring' - attached as Appendix One), which covers both adult and young carers, in response to requirements within the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- (i) note the current version of the draft Carers Strategy; and
  - (ii) instruct the Head of Children's Services to submit the final version, following consultation, for approval at the appropriate subsequent Committee.

### **3. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 comes into effect on 1 April 2018. It extends and enhances the rights of carers in Scotland to help improve their health and well-being so that they can continue to care, if they so wish, and have a life alongside caring. It also places a duty on local authorities and health boards to prepare and publish a local Carers Strategy covering both adults and young carers.

- 3.2 Under the Act, local Carers Strategies must include:

- plans for identifying carers and for obtaining information about the care that they provide;
- an assessment of demand and of the support available, as well as the extent to which demand for support is currently not being met;
- plans for support, including to help with emergency arrangements;
- an assessment of the extent to which support may reduce the impact upon the carers health and well-being;
- timescales for preparing adult carer support plans and young carers statements;
- information relating to the particular needs and circumstances of young carers;
- any other appropriate information.

- 3.3 Local Carers Strategies must also:

- have regard to:
  - national health and well-being outcomes;
  - integration functions relevant to carers (set out in the Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan);
  - various sections of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the principles of GIRFEC;

- any other relevant local or national plans.
  - have involved relevant carers and been consulted upon with appropriate stakeholders;
  - be published and reviewed within three years.
- 3.4 The development of the local Aberdeen Carers Strategy was co-ordinated by a Steering Group with representatives from the Health & Social Care Partnership, Integrated Children's Services, third and independent sectors, as well as carer representatives.
- 3.5 Following approval by the Integrated Joint Board (IJB) in December 2017, the draft strategy is currently out for public consultation amongst relevant stakeholders. It should be noted though that whilst the legislation will be implemented from 1 April 2018, there is no requirement for the local strategy to be published in advance of that date.
- 3.6 However, given that the Act places local authorities under a duty to publish a local Carers Strategy which includes both adult and young carers, the final strategy will be submitted to not only the IJB on 27 March 2018 for approval, but also the relevant subsequent Committee for Children's Services and the full Council meeting before being published.
- 3.7 The draft strategy was informed by various sub-groups of the Steering Group which looked at the different requirements of the legislation, as well as by the output from various workshops and a programme of Carers Conversations which involved carers themselves.
- 3.8 These consultation and engagement activities, which it is estimated involved approximately 1000 carers, were valuable sources of information and it is intended that similar events will be repeated throughout the strategy's lifespan to test how successfully it is being implemented and to provide an opportunity to revise activity if necessary.
- 3.9 However, there is a need to ensure that young carers are adequately included in the subsequent consultation and the Young Carers Development Group which has been established, including representatives from Education, Social Work, Health and the Third Sector, is planning to do this by working closely with a group of schools.
- 3.10 The draft strategy (see Appendix One) sets out how the Health and Social Care Partnership and Children's Services within Aberdeen plan to deliver the requirements of the Carers Act particularly in relation to:
- identifying both adult and young carers
  - understanding the care that they provide and their support needs, and
  - providing comprehensive and easily accessible information on the type of support available as well as how and where to get it.
- 3.11 The final strategy will also include an Action Plan detailing how it will be implemented, the resources required, the timescale for its introduction and who is responsible, as well as the outcomes to be measured to show that it is making a difference.
- 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**
- 4.1 Levels of increased demand and the cost pressures that this will bring are unclear at this point. This is partly because the actual numbers of carers who will subsequently



seek support are unknown and the level of financial settlement to support the implementation of the Act is also yet to be confirmed.

- 4.2 Consideration of the eligibility criteria by which carers' entitlement to support will be assessed will therefore be critical. A sub-group of the Carers Strategy Steering Group is considering eligibility criteria for adult carers, whilst the Young Carers Development Group is reviewing the existing Integrated Children's Services Tiers of Intervention to ensure that young carers' needs are in future appropriately assessed against both the Carers Act's requirements and the principles of GIRFEC. Their findings will inform the final strategy put forward for approval in March 2018.
- 4.3 It is understood that funding will be available through the financial settlement for the implementation of the Carers Strategy and it is anticipated that this may be known by December 2017. If this detail is available prior to the date of the committee meeting it will be provided as an addendum.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Integration Scheme will need to be amended by Aberdeen City Council and NHS Grampian so that the duties to set eligibility criteria in relation to adult carers under the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 can be formally delegated to the IJB.
- 5.2 Eligibility criteria for young carers will though be linked to the current Integrated Children's Services Tiers of Intervention and approval of these will be sought from the Integrated Children's Services Partnership Board, in order to achieve multi-agency support, before being submitted to Council along with the final strategy.
- 5.3 Statutory Guidance is due to be published in relation to various areas associated with the Act's implementation. Their publication may help to determine the final version of the strategy and the action plan thereafter.

## **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

- 6.1 There is a risk that partners across Children's Services are not prepared for the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 and the new provisions that it introduces. The Carers Strategy – 'A Life Alongside Caring' and the associated preparatory work that has and is being undertaken by the Steering Group and specifically by the Young Carers Development Group, should ensure that those partners are well placed to meet their legislative duties under the Act.

### **Financial**

- 6.2 The financial settlement in relation to the Act's implementation is not known as at December 2017. Therefore, even though it is known that access to the Young Carers Statement (ie. assessment) will be required and that services will need to be developed for those young carers who do not meet the children's social work eligibility criteria, it is not possible to plan the level of such services at this stage. Publication of the financial support available will need to be responded to quickly by the Young Carers Development Group.

### **Employee**

- 6.3 There are none.

### **Customer / citizen**

- 6.4 Delays in the development of new or additional services may impact upon those young people and their families who may benefit from the new entitlements. However, the establishment of the Young Carers Development Group and its

planned consultation with young carers and anticipated commissioning of additional services should mitigate this risk.

#### **Environmental**

6.5 There are none.

#### **Technological**

6.6 There are none.

#### **Legal**

6.7 The Carers Act has introduced the concept of a Young Carers Statement as a distinct assessment of need and entitlement to support. This was deliberate and in response to consultation with young carers at the time that the Act was drafted. However, this potentially places the Young Carers Statement at odds with the concept of the single Child's Plan introduced by the Children & Young People Act 2014. However, both are intended to comply with the principles of GIRFEC and national and local guidance should ensure that the relationship between the two assessments is clear.

#### **Reputational**

6.8 Planning for the implementation of the Carers Act has been on-going for some time and is being overseen by a Steering Group acting jointly for the Health & Social Care Partnership and for the local authority.

### **7. IMPACT SECTION**

#### **Economy**

7.1 The Carers Act is intended to support carers to live a life alongside their caring responsibilities. By focussing support to young carers through their contact with schools, the aim is to ensure that they are able to participate fully in education and employment opportunities.

#### **People**

7.2 An Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment will be completed in respect of the final strategy.

7.3 The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 brings a number of new and different obligations for staff. A dedicated resource will be made available to ensure that the Act as a whole is implemented. Appropriate information and training will be given to all staff along with revised tools and processes, including to those working with and supporting young carers as well as parents of children who are disabled.

#### **Place**

7.4 The exact number of young carers in the city is unknown as many will be unaware of that description or its implications. The Carers Act and publicity that will surround its implementation will in part address that. However, the significance of the support that they provide to their cared-for parents, siblings or other relatives is a significant factor in a community's ability to sustain and support itself. Their greater recognition and entitlement to support is also crucial to a community's maturity and empowerment.

#### **Technology**

7.5 Digital technology will be used to provide advice and support to carers where possible and appropriate. Social media will also be key to providing and maintaining contact with young carers.

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 Report to Integration Joint Board: Carers Strategy – ‘A Life Alongside Caring’, 12 December 2017.

**9. APPENDICES**

9.1 Appendix One: Aberdeen City Draft Strategy for Carers 2018 – 2020 ‘A Life Alongside Caring’.

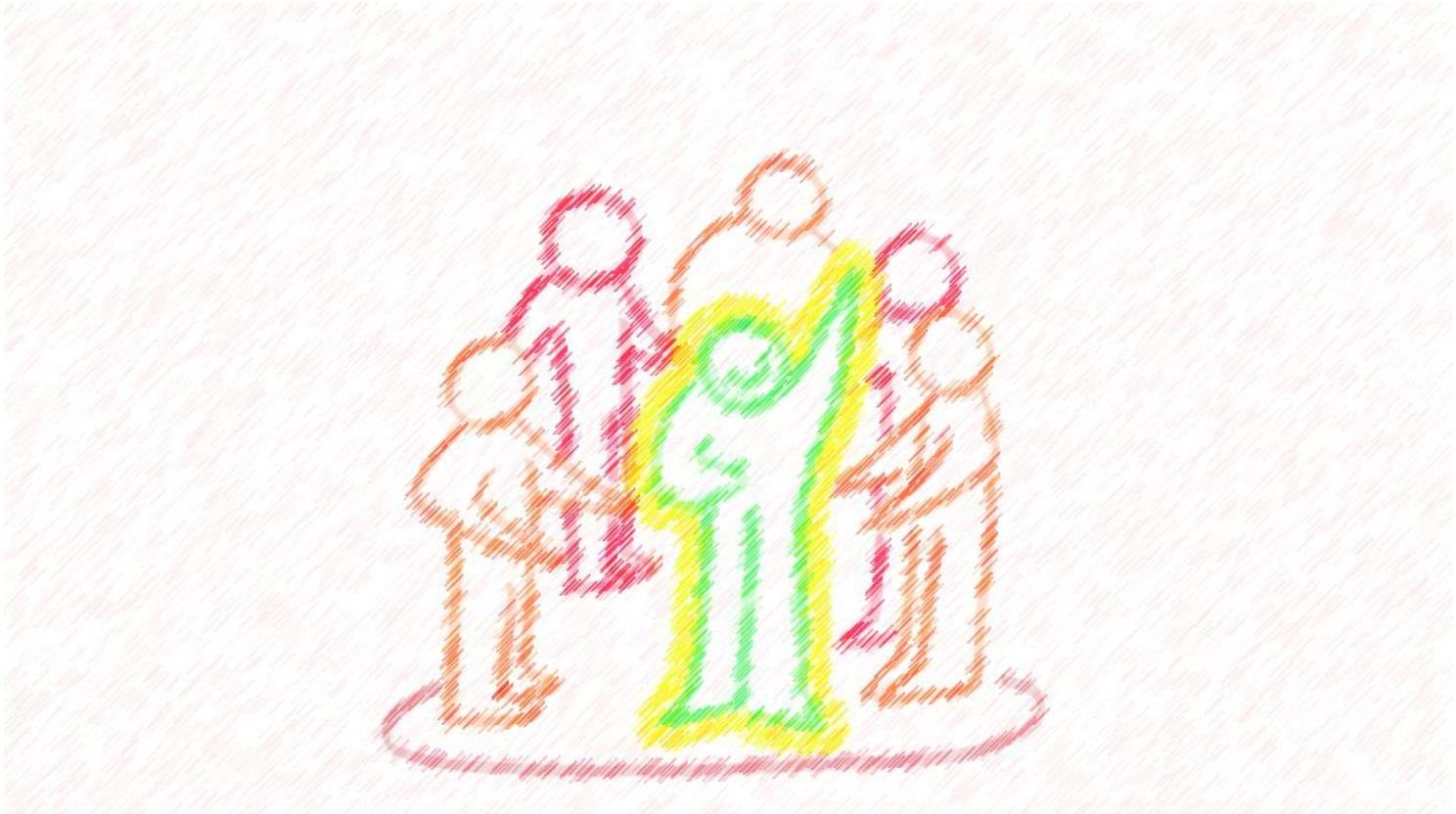
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**Aberdeen City Draft Strategy for Carers  
(2018 – 2021)**



**A Life Alongside Caring**

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# 1. Introduction

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 comes into effect. The Act extends and enhances the rights of carers in Scotland. This is to help improve their health and wellbeing so that they can continue to care, if they so wish, and support their ability to have a life alongside caring.

The Act places a duty on local authorities and health boards to prepare a local Carers Strategy covering both adults and young carers. Aberdeen's strategy consequently encompasses all ages and relates equally to young carers as it does to adult carers. The strategy sets out how the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACH&SCP) and the Integrated Children's Services Partnership (ICSP) intends to deliver the requirements of the Act particularly in relation to: -

- identifying both adult and young carers,
- understanding the care that they provide and their support needs, and
- providing comprehensive and easily accessible information on the type of support available as well as how and where to get it.

The role of unpaid carers is highly valued. One of the priorities of ACH&SCP's Strategic Plan is to: -

***“Value and support those who are unpaid carers to become equal partners in the planning and delivery of services, to look after their own health and to have a quality of life outside the caring role if so desired.”***

The AH&SCP is committed to delivering on the nine National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes. Outcome six is: -

***“People who provide unpaid care are supported to reduce the potential impact of their caring role on their own health and wellbeing.”***

ACH&SCP's commitment is that the significant role of unpaid carers will be recognised, that their views will be included, that their health and wellbeing will be nurtured and the impact of their caring role on their everyday lives reduced.

The ICSP are committed to ensuring that young carers are seen as children and young people first and foremost and that any caring responsibilities that they undertake are appropriate and have regard to their age and maturity.

The development of this strategy was co-ordinated by a Steering Group with representatives from the AH&SCP, the ICSP, third and independent sectors, and carer representatives. It was informed by the output from various workshops, a Carers Conversation programme, and the work of various sub groups of the Steering

Group looking at the different requirements of the legislation. Following consultation with relevant stakeholders, the strategy was approved by the Integration Joint Board (IJB) on XX, XXXX, XXXX, the Integrated Children's Services Board (ICSB) on XX, XXXX, XXXX, and Aberdeen City Council on XX, XXXX, XXXX. It will be published on the AH&SCP's and the ICSP's websites and will be reviewed and refreshed in three years time.

Delivery of the strategy will be driven by a Carer's Strategy Implementation Group (CSIG) which will have a similar membership as the Steering Group in that it will again include representatives from the AH&SCP, the ICSP, third and independent sectors, and carer representatives. The IJB, ICSB and Aberdeen City Council will oversee the delivery via annual reports on progress.

## 2. Legislative Changes

There are four key legislative 'drivers' which significantly change the way in which we work with carers:

- a) Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013
- b) Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014
- c) Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- d) Carers (Scotland) Act 2016

### a) Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013

The Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 (SDS), gives people a range of options for how their social care is delivered, and empowers them to decide how much on-going control and responsibility they want over their own support arrangements. The Act places a duty to offer people four choices as to how they receive their social care support. The choices are:

- **Option 1** - Direct Payments (i.e. money is paid directly to the individual and they arrange their own support by employing care staff or buying services from one or more organisations).
- **Option 2** - Individual Service Fund (i.e. the individual selects the support they require and either the local authority or a third party arranges it. Payment is arranged by the local authority).
- **Option 3** – Local authority arranged care (i.e. the individual asks the local authority to choose and arrange the support that they require).
- **Option 4** - A mix of options 1, 2 and 3.

The Act contains some other duties and powers. For example, a power to support carers and a duty to provide support and information to help individuals make an informed choice.

Carers may be asked to get involved with helping the cared-for person decide what kind of support they want and what option they choose. They may also be asked to ensure that the support they get works for both the carer and the cared-for person and that it complements the care provide by the care. If an Adult Carer's Support Plan (ACSP) or Young Carer's Statement (YCS) indicates that support for the carer is required, they should also be offered the four options under SDS for the provision of that support.



## **b) Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014**

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 provided the framework for integrating health and social care services.

ACH&SCP was established on 1 April 2016. The main purpose of this integration is to improve the well-being and outcomes of people who use health and social care services, particularly those whose needs are complex and involve support from health and social care at the same time. One of the high priorities of the ACH&SCP's Strategic Plan, is to improve outcomes for, and the lives of, carers. Following an open and transparent process there are two carers who are now members of the Integrated Joint Board (IJB), demonstrating the partnership's commitment to carers. Aberdeen was one of the first partnerships to make such appointments in Scotland.

Our challenge is that for both the carer and the cared-for person, we are able to evidence how our integrated services will provide them with an improved quality of experience. This is likely to have to be achieved at a time of severe pressure on resources.

## **c) Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014**

The Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 became law on 27 March 2014 and contained several changes to how children and young people in Scotland are cared for. The Act strengthens the rights of children and young people in Scotland in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and encourages Scottish Ministers and Public Bodies to think about these rights and how they relate to their work. It has also created new systems to support children and young people and to help identify any problems at an early stage, rather than waiting until a child or young person reaches crisis point. The Act also enshrined the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) into legislation. The central aim of GIRFEC is to make Scotland the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up in. GIRFEC also introduced the Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included (SHANARRI) indicators by which all children's outcomes should be assessed. The Act also: -

- ensured that Health Boards and Local Authorities make a Named Person available to every child and young person.
- increases the powers of Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People
- made changes to early learning and childcare.
- provided extra help for looked after children and care experienced young people.
- provided free school dinners for children in Primary 1-3.

## **d) Carers (Scotland) Act 2016**

This Act will come into effect from April 2018 and aims to give carers and young carers new rights, whilst bringing together all the rights carers currently have, under one piece of legislation.

Importantly, the Act brings changes to how carers can access support through 'Adult Carer Support Plans' and 'Young Carers Statements'. Under previous legislation, a carer had to provide 'regular and substantial' care in order to access a support plan. This has been removed and all carers will be entitled to one, if they want one. Additionally, the new Act requires a focus on assessing the needs of the carer separately from the needs of the cared-for individual.

The Act also brings a range of new duties and powers:

<b>Adult Carer Support Plans &amp; Young Carers Statements</b>	These plans will replace carers' assessments and consider a range of areas that impact on a carer. Young Carer statements must also be produced.
<b>Eligibility Criteria</b>	Eligibility criteria for access to social care services for carers must be published. However, not all support offered to carers will be subject to the criteria.
<b>Carer Involvement</b>	Carers must be involved in both the development of carers services and in the hospital discharge processes for the people they care for.
<b>Local Carers Strategies</b>	Local Carers' strategies, such as this one, must be produced and reviewed within a set period.
<b>Information and Advice</b>	An information and advice service must be provided for relevant carers, with information and advice about rights, advocacy, health and wellbeing (amongst others)
<b>Short Breaks Statements</b>	To prepare and publish a statement on short breaks available in Scotland for carers and cared for persons.

### **3. Consultation and Engagement**

In order to inform the development of the Strategy and its Action Plan, we have sought the views of carers across Aberdeen. The Carers Strategy Steering Group included representatives from ACH&SCP, the ICSP, the third sector, the independent sector and carers.

In addition, we have spoken to many carers throughout the city through a programme of 'Carers Conversations'. This programme had a number of parts including:

- a large-scale event for Carer Organisations
- a large-scale public 'drop-in' event for carers
- survey consultation including the City Voice survey and a 'Carers Conversation' questionnaire developed by the group
- formal and informal carer's conversations – attending carers meetings; 1:1 conversations and group conversations.

It is estimated that approximately 1000 carers were able to provide their views on what is important to them in this way. These consultation and engagement activities were valuable sources of information and it is intended that similar events will be repeated throughout the lifespan of this strategy to test how we are doing with its implementation as well as providing an opportunity to revise if necessary.

### **4. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights**

The principles of equality, diversity and human rights are the underpinning rights for all carers. Carers reflect the diversity of Scotland's population. We will work to ensure that carers are aware of their rights under this legislation and that no carer is disadvantaged due to age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity, race; religion or belief; or sex or sexual orientation, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

All children and young people have an established set of rights and principles based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These say that nobody should treat a child or young person unfairly and that when adults make a decision about a child or young person it is what's best for the child or young person that should be the most important thing to consider. The child or young person must have their say too.

As an adult or young carer, being aware of their rights and those of the person they care for can help both get fair access to things that most people take for granted.

## 5. Vision, Principles and Values

We recognise that our services across health, social care, education, third and independent sectors need to better support children, young people and adults in a caring role including, in some areas, improving practices and culture. Without carers' vital contribution the health and social care 'system' could not survive.

The focus of Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership is on support in localities, rather than institutional care; increased personalisation of services and choices; and working to improve the outcomes for carers.

The Integrated Children's Services Partnership focuses its work through outcome groups based on the SHANARRI indicators. Each of these looks to ensure that services are developed to meet the needs of all children and young people including young carers.

### Vision

***Caring is recognised for its vital contribution. Organisations communities and citizens work together to ensure that carers in Aberdeen are fully valued, respected and supported.***

### Principles

Under-pinning the vision and values stated throughout this strategy, are the 'Equal Partners in Care' (EPIC) Principles:

- Carers are identified.
- Carers are supported and empowered to manage their caring role.
- Carers are enabled to have a life outside of caring.
- Carers are fully engaged in the planning and shaping of services.
- Carers are free from disadvantage or discrimination relating to their role.
- Carers are recognised and valued as equal partners in care.

<b>V A L U E S</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality of Access</li> <li>• High Quality</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Localisation</li> </ul>
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<b>S T R A T E G Y</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify all those with a caring role in Aberdeen City (even those who may not see themselves as carers). (EPIC 1)</li> <li>• Meaningfully engage on an ongoing basis with carers. (EPIC 2)</li> <li>• Support carers to maintain their health and wellbeing. (EPIC 3 &amp; 5)</li> <li>• Increase the profile of carers and the recognition of their unique contribution. (EPIC 4)</li> <li>• Further develop our staff to increase carer support. (EPIC 2)</li> <li>• Ensure Aberdeen becomes the most 'Carer Positive' City in Scotland.</li> </ul>
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**We want Carers in Aberdeen City to be able to say:**



## 6. Who is a carer?

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 defines a carer as: -

***“an individual who provides or intends to provide care for another individual (the “cared-for person”)”***

***A “Young Carer” is someone who is under the age of 18, or over 18 but still at school.***

***An “Adult Carer” is someone who is 18 years old or over and not a Young Carer.***

A carer can come from all walks of life; be any age, including young children; employed, in education or neither; and they can have other responsibilities in terms of family to look after.

A carer can provide care for a few hours a week or 24/7. The care they provide can be light touch or intensive. Some carers have to care for more than one person, which presents unique challenges. They may have had a caring role their whole life or it may be for only a short time.

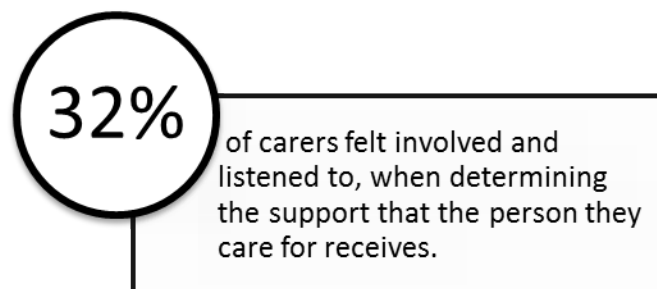
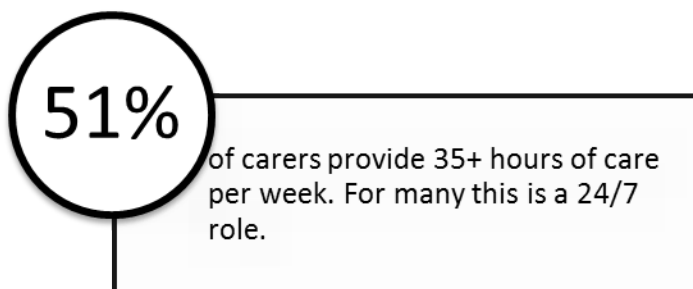
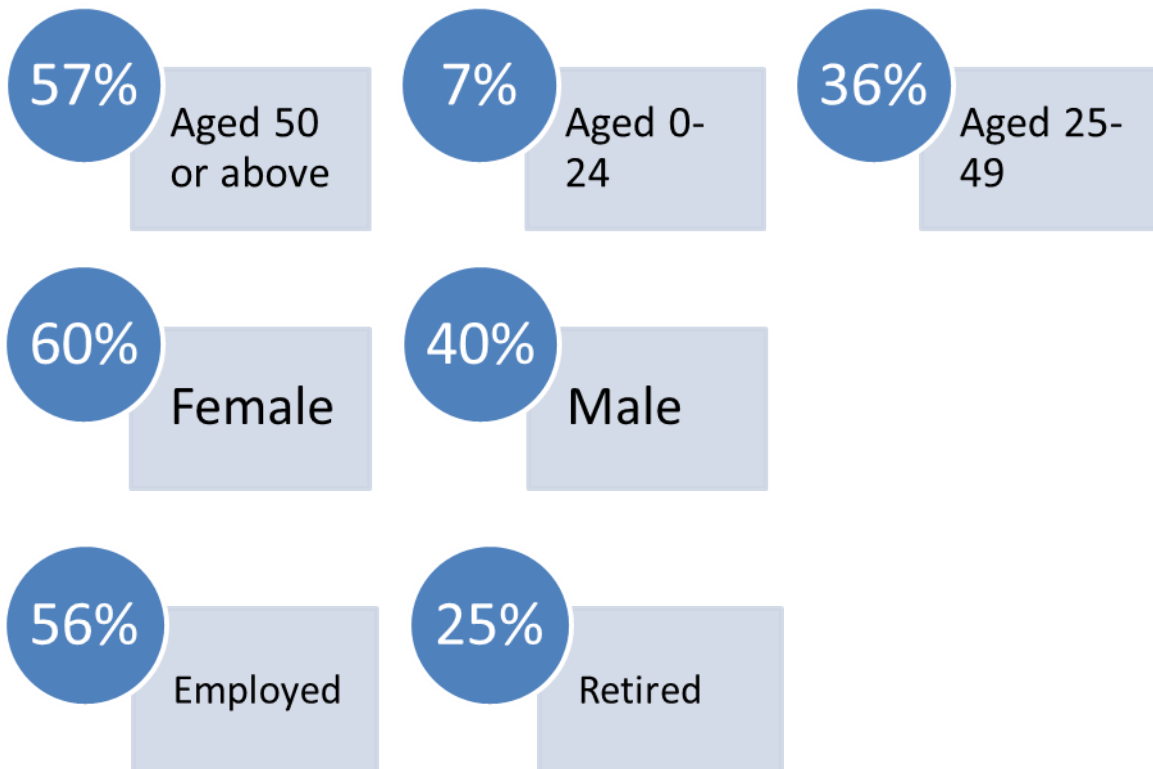
The “cared-for person” can often be a family member, friend or neighbour. They can also be young or old and have a range of care needs from support within the home, to help with getting out and about, to end of life care. Some cared-for people may have multiple care needs.

Many people providing care do not see themselves as a ‘carer’. They are first and foremost a husband, wife, son, daughter, or friend, who is undertaking acts of kindness, perhaps sometimes seen as duty, for their loved one.

There are, however, some communities of carers we know very little about, most notably: refugees, asylum seekers, gypsy travellers and carers who themselves have disabilities, including learning disabilities.

For the purposes of the legislation and this strategy though, all of these people are defined as “carers”.

## Carer Profile Aberdeen City



## Carer's Stories

"I was at school when my father had his first heart attack. I remember being very unsure as to what was really happening. Going to school and not knowing how to express how I felt and how to handle the instability of the future. It was equally difficult as my mum was upset. I had never witnessed my mum upset before. In many ways I felt I had to lie to my mum and play down what was happening so she wouldn't worry so much. This led her to believing that I wasn't as concerned about my father as I should be.

As an adult I am better equipped to deal with these emotions and circumstances.

My daily routine consists of going to work full time. During my break at work I will call my father and see how he is. I tend to see my father about 4 times a week. I am extremely active in my community and attend various meetings. I have learned to juggle my time to fit caring for my father, working and attending meetings. There's always a constant worry if you hear the telephone ring and it's late at night or an unknown number as your first thought is that something is wrong with dad. I have very little time to attend social activities with friends as dad comes first. If I do attend anything I try and bring him along too.

I like him enjoying an evening even if it's only for an hour or so. Positively it's enabled me to be more understanding of the struggles that people go through and it's made me a more caring and non-judgmental person. Even though I have had to juggle time and put my caring role first there are many positive sides to caring. It can provide you with a whole host of knowledge and in fairness I've never met a better chess player than my dad! Caring is not an easy job. You will be tired, stressed, worried, unsure, and anxious at times too but there is help at hand. If you feel this way you need to tell someone so support can be provided."



My husband was diagnosed with Alzheimer's and vascular dementia over 18 months ago following over a year of noticing changes.

He thinks he is still capable of most things but can no longer work the microwave which he has been using for years. The intruder alarm is now also a problem and other everyday things. It seems that number order is a problem along with his memory for names and places.

For me it is extremely difficult to leave him because of these things and the fact that he wants to be with me all the time. Also, recently we have entered the realms of delusion and I fear for what might happen if he was alone or out. These experiences really frighten me.

When this came into our lives I was already extremely exhausted with caring for my elderly mother and family with health problems. On top of these I am now feeling grief as bits of my husband – of 53 years – character which made me love him are fading as he changes. I love him deeply and the changes hurt. I am depressed and frightened for the future as I do not know how I will cope without help. He can do many things including driving and does not believe he has any problem whereas I am losing such a lot of my life. And not just the luxuries! I stopped having coffees with a couple of friends as he didn't want me to go. I have forgotten what it is like to look around a shop. Now, I badly need new underwear!! I REALLY need quiet time and I cannot get it.

We have a small group of friends and as he doesn't feel there is anything wrong I can hardly ask them to amuse him. He would wonder what was going on. It all sounds and feels so bad, but when the moments come when he lets me help with tasks like tablets or injections or trusts my word on his doubts or delusions it is wonderful.”

Cara's mum has a long history of poor mental health. Cara (14) is increasingly taking the role of a young carer due to mum's poor health both physically and emotionally. She can present as mature but it can be a pseudo-maturity as she will often revert to being "young" when mum's mental health is good. She has had several house and school moves and has fallen behind with education due to this.

Cara is socially isolated and is increasingly using social media. Mum has a lack of awareness of internet safety and there is concerns regarding inappropriate TV programmes on Netflix.

This is what Cara says: -

'Being a young carer is like role reversal – parenting a parent. I have to remind my mum to take her medication or to eat breakfast. It is a stressful complicated life. I want to go out with my friends but I can't because I am too worried about something happening at home.

One day my French teacher was very cross at me after I had been up all night with my mum and I found it hard to concentrate in class. I usually love French but all I wanted to do was go home and check up on my mum. It was the longest day. All I did was worry about my mum. I stopped going to French class after that.'

## 7. How many people are carers?

It's difficult to estimate the numbers of carers for a number of reasons including:

Caring activities can often be seen as just a part of the relationship and the term 'carer' can seem alien to people.

Caring often starts at a low intensity so can go unnoticed.

Accepting the identity of carer means acknowledging the other person needs care, which can be difficult.

There may be a general lack of awareness of the role of a carer

Accurately identifying the number of young carers is even more challenging. Many young people will not identify themselves as a young carer for a number of reasons.

- They do not realise that they are a carer or that their life is different to their peers.
- They don't want to be any different from their peers.
- They believe that the school will show no interest in their family circumstances.
- They want to keep their identity at school separate from their caring role.
- It's not the sort of thing they feel can be discussed with friends.
- There has been no opportunity to share their story.
- They are worried about bullying.
- They worry that the family will be split up and taken into care.
- They want to keep it a secret and/or are embarrassed.
- They see no reason or positive outcome as a result of telling their story.

It is our responsibility to educate not only professionals to assist in the identification but also to inform young carers and people who support them of their right to identify themselves if they so wish and what this would mean for them.

The Scottish Health Survey (SHeS) estimates that there are 759,000 adult carers and 29,000 young carers (under the age of 16) in Scotland.

These individuals are critical to health and social care in Scotland, as the estimated value of the care provided is huge and nearly the equivalent of the entire NHS Scotland budget<sup>1</sup>:



Figure 1

**It is difficult to come to an accurate figure for how many carers there are in Aberdeen. We can provide many different answers looking at different sources to estimate how many carers are known:**

<b>Adult Carers with a Carers Assessment</b>	<b>542 carers<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>Adult Carers registered with Social Care databases</b>	<b>801 Carers. <sup>3</sup></b>
<b>Adult Carers known to the commissioned Carers' Support service</b>	<b>1200 Carers<sup>4</sup></b>

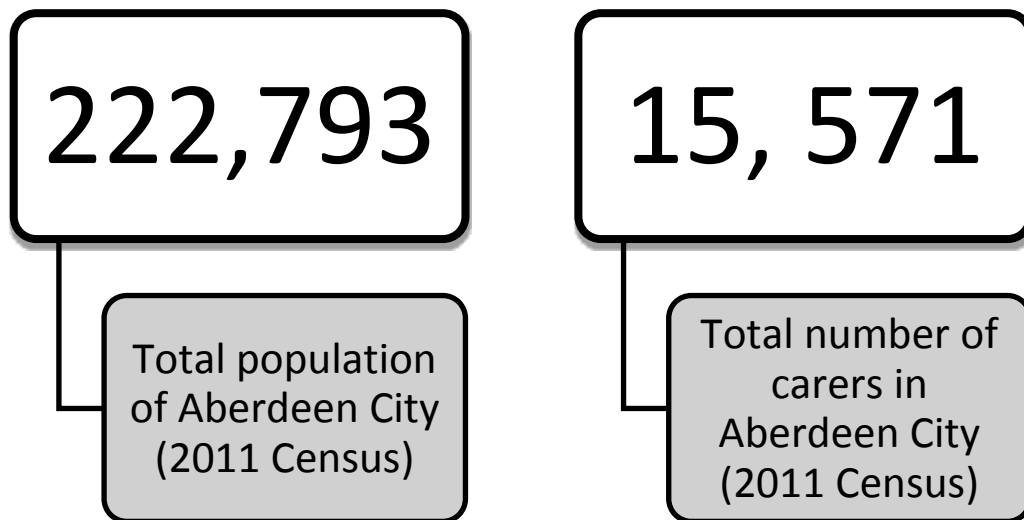
<sup>1</sup> <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/reports/e-hubs/transforming-health-and-social-care-in-scotland>

<sup>2</sup> Unpaid carers with a carers assessment recorded on Aberdeen City's CareFirst system as of July 2016.

<sup>3</sup> People recorded on Aberdeen City's Care First system with role of unpaid carer as of July 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Carers on the VSA Carers' Database as of September 2016.

However, if we consider the 2011 census data, we get a much larger answer:



<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, according to the report Scotland's Carers (2015)<sup>6</sup>, the Scotland Census 2011 may be a poor reflection of the number of carers in Scotland.

Whilst the census identified that 10% of Scotland's population are carers, the Scottish Health Survey (SHeS) estimates this figure at 17% of the adult population.

The main difference between the two surveys appears to be those carers who only care a few hours a week. Generally, the SHeS is thought to provide the best estimate.

This means we could have up to **37,874** carers in Aberdeen City, approximately **1,300** of which could be young carers aged between 0 and 14.

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<sup>5</sup> Scotland Census Results & Data <http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/census-results>

<sup>6</sup> Scotland's Carers (2015) Report <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0047/00473691.pdf>

## 8. What impact can caring have?

The National Carer Organisations (NCO) have produced a Best Practice Framework for Local Eligibility Criteria for Unpaid Carers ([link](#)). In it they have identified eight areas of a carer's life which may be impacted by their caring role. Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership are using the framework to help determine their Eligibility Criteria for adult carers as, by considering each of the areas of impact, we can ensure we have a comprehensive assessment of a carers needs and begin to identify appropriate support to help minimise any potential adverse impact of the caring role. Each of the eight areas may not be impacted upon for all carers and not every carer will be impacted upon to the same degree, but the areas are relevant for consideration for all carers both young carers and adult carers and in all circumstances.

At the beginning of 2016, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership undertook a 'Carers Conversation' programme ([link to summary](#)). What carers told us in that could all be linked to the 7 areas identified by the NCO and some of what they told us is reflected in the narrative against each of the areas below: -

**Health & Wellbeing** – This is perhaps the most obvious area where the impact of the caring role is seen. The impact could be on mental or physical health or well-being and could range from feeling a bit worried about things to depression; from a general feeling of tiredness to serious joint and/or muscle damage; or from perhaps having to assist with lifting and moving the cared-for person.

**Relationships** – Caring for a loved one can often be upsetting particularly if the person is physically deteriorating or their personality is changing. This can affect the carer's emotions and in some cases their experience can be similar to grief or feeling bereaved. Relationships with family and friends can become strained.

**Finance** – The caring role can affect the carer's ability to work which in turn can affect their finances. The act of caring can incur additional expenses with the cost of transport and/or parking whilst attending medical appointments. Having to buy specialist equipment or products, replacing clothing, turning up the heating or doing more laundry all bring added expense. If the cared-for person was the main earner and their condition has meant that they have had to give up work this affects the overall household income. Some carers told us that they had taken out a loan or fallen behind with bill payments as a direct result of their caring responsibilities.

**Life Balance** – Dedicating time to caring can mean that the carer often cannot find time to socialise or even just have some "me time" to do things that they want to do for themselves. Often they put the needs of the cared-for person first and don't have

the time or the energy to fully consider their own needs leading to these being neglected.

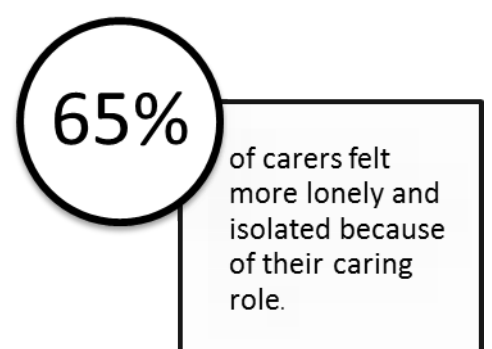
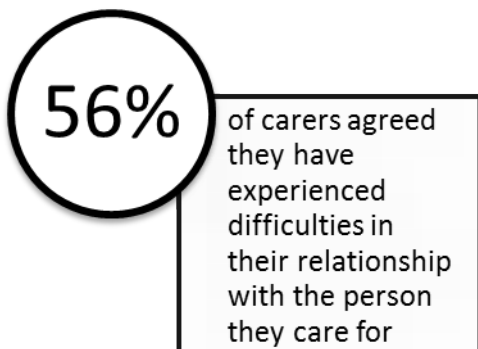
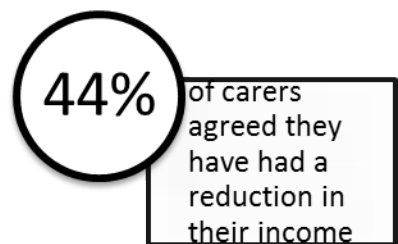
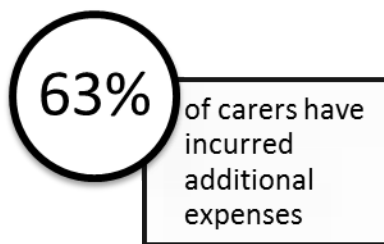
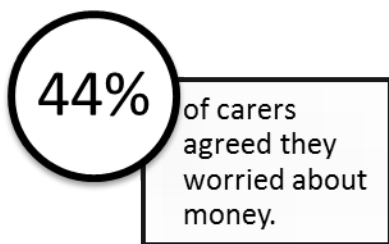
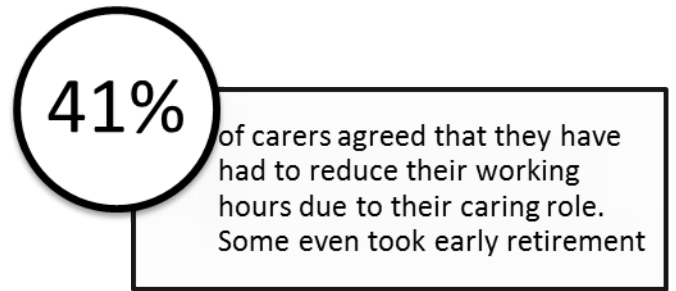
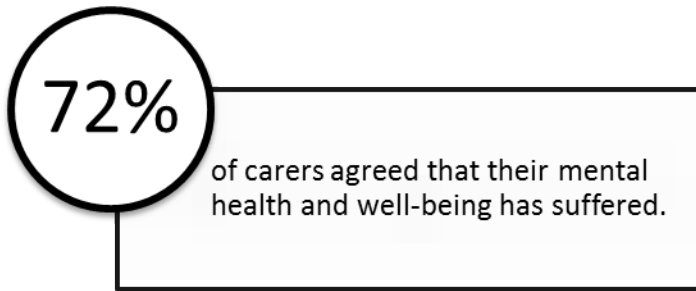
**Future Planning** – In some situations it can be difficult for the carer to make any plans whether they are short, medium or long term. This can be in any area of their life from their career, their education and development, or even their social life. Even a simple invitation to a night out at the weekend may be impossible to accept. For some, future planning may include ensuring care will continue for the cared-for person should the time come when the carer is no longer around to do it themselves.

**Employment and Training** - Caring can affect the carer's ability to work and access to training opportunities. It can also impact on their choice as to what type of employment they do or training they undertake, where they work and how many hours they do. They may be forced to delay starting work or training at all, have to give up work or a course, take early retirement, or reduce their working hours as a result of their caring role. They may not be able to focus on career development, or apply for promoted posts and may be restricted to particular jobs in certain areas that allow them to continue to provide care. Carers told us that not all employers understand the caring role or are flexible enough to accommodate it.

**Living Environment** – In some cases a carer may have to adapt their home to accommodate the needs of the cared-for person. This fundamentally changes their own living experience. Other carers do not live with the person that they care for but their living environment can still be impacted upon. Some carers told us that they are considering moving house to make their caring role easier.

#### Particular Impact on Young Carers

In addition to the principles noted above, the assessment of the impact of caring upon a young person needs to consider the SHANARRI indicators. For example, caring responsibilities may impact negatively upon a young carer's participation in education and their educational attainment, especially if professionals in school are unaware of the situation within which they live.





## 8. Where are we now?

This section of the strategy examines where we are now and what carers told us about how they feel. It also identifies what support carers feel that they are currently able to access and what services are provided across Aberdeen City and whether the demand is being met.

### Services currently available

- Within Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership there is provision within the Care Management Standards and National Eligibility Criteria for a consideration of the risks and priorities relating to carers. As with the criteria for any social care service, risks must be substantial or critical to be eligible for support. Eligibility Criteria for carers will be developed specifically in line with the requirement of the Carer (Scotland) Act 2016. The Carers Assessment and Support documentation and process is being reviewed in consultation with carer representatives and a new form will be designed and made available to support the development of Adult Carer Support Plans.
- Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership commission a third sector provider to provide a Carers Support Service for adult carers over 18. The current contract with them runs until September 2019 although there is likely to be a variation required initially to reflect the new legislation. There are five elements to the service :-
  - Information, advice and signposting;
  - Support and well-being;
  - Awareness and training to support the caring role;
  - Carer consultation;
  - Advocacy, and
  - Co-ordination of provision of a Carer's Support Point at Aberdeen Community and Healthcare Village.
- The Integrated Children's Services Partnership also have guidance on Eligibility Criteria for children and young people. The Eligibility Criteria Matrix for Children in Need in Aberdeen has three levels from children who are vulnerable with low priority needs through to children and families in crisis needing urgent intervention. Young Carers whose caring responsibilities are adversely affecting their development are at Level 2 on this current matrix – "children with moderate priority needs requiring targeted intervention". Again the guidance will be reviewed to meet the needs of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 and a process for the identification of young carers and the development of Young Carers Statements devised.

- Aberdeen City Council currently commissions a third sector provider to support young carers who already meet eligibility criteria for children's social work.
- There are many more other informal supports for carers available. These range from third party providers who, although not directly commissioned to deliver carer support will do this at the same time as they are delivering services to the cared-for person. The support carers need can often come in the form of existing services such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau, Housing, Energy, Benefits or Financial Advice teams, Mental and Physical Health Services etc. Friends, family, neighbours and existing social and faith groups can also be a source of valuable support for carers. In many cases the support required for the carer is to put them in touch with these groups, help them make the connection and encourage them to make full use of what is available.

## **What carers told us**

From the Carer Conversation programme, which principally involved adults, carers told us that, in general, they feel that they do not have access to any formal support. Only 20% identified that they had a Carer's Assessment. Those who had had one had mixed opinions on the impact that it had. Many identified that it had a positive effect saying that it helped to feel that someone had listened to them and that they were seen as an individual in their own right as well as providing information and help for them to access support such as Attendance Allowance. Others felt that it had been a waste of time, a paper exercise that did not improve their situation.

Carers did cite support groups and various activities that they were able to participate in such as a "Knit and Knatter" Group or a fortnightly "Dementia Café".

The strongest theme that emerged when carers were asked to describe any forms of support that they received, was that of support that they received from friends and family, whether this was sharing the caring role; allowing for "me time"; or simply being there to listen to the carer's concerns and frustrations. The majority stated that they got no support whatsoever, and that they felt they were on their own.

The two things that carers said would have the most impact upon their caring role were: -

1. the provision of regular and appropriate respite, and
2. the cared-for person themselves receiving adequate services in their own right.

**Carers told us they would like to see more of: -**



We have not had the same level of contact with young carers to date. Similar conversations with young people will be a feature of the implementation of this strategy.

## **9. Where do we want to be?**

We will put in place a range of processes and procedures to enable unpaid carers to access support and services which will deliver on the EPIC principles and meet the requirements of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. In Aberdeen we also want to ensure that we get it right for all young carers.

The following paragraphs provide a high level overview of our intentions under each principle and the Action Plan in section 11 contains more detail on how and when we will deliver. Successful implementation of the Action Plan will be driven and managed by a Carer's Strategy Implementation Group (CSIG) consisting of senior officers of ACH&SCP and the ICSP, as well as third sector partners and carers representatives, with specific responsibility for the actions. An annual 'statement of progress' will be presented to the IJB, the ICSB, and Aberdeen City Council for scrutiny and subsequent wider publication.

### **I was supported to identify as a carer and was able to access the information I needed.**

ACH&SCP values carers and the support that they provide to cared-for people. As a measure of that value the partnership intend to ensure that appropriate resources are aligned to support carers and meet the requirements of the new legislation. We will provide a dedicated officer with lead responsibility for carers in Aberdeen City.

The current Carer's Support service is commissioned from a third sector provider. The current contract ends in September 2019. Prior to this date we will review the existing contract and enhance the arrangements through a formal variation to meet the requirements of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. When the contract is due for renewal the specification will take account of the new requirements, learning from the first 18 months of the Act's implementation.

Recognising that carers come from all areas of our wider population, we will seek to engage with them in a variety of ways that is appropriate to their needs, but is also familiar to them. For example, we will utilise social media such as Facebook and Twitter. All communication and engagement will take account of any particular needs of carers in relation to the nine protected characteristics as described by the Equality Act 2010.

A dedicated Information and Advice sub group will be convened, reporting to the Carers Strategy Implementation Group and it will develop and manage the information available to all carers ensuring that it is continuously updated and improved. The dedicated Information and Advice service for carers which is already commissioned may need review and further development in future. A

Communication and Engagement Plan will be developed by the sub-group. The type of information made available to carers will be: -

- Information on their rights, including those set out in the Carer's Charter ([link](#))
- Income maximisation
- Education and training
- Information on the role of the Named Person in supporting young carers under the age of 18
- Advocacy/Brokerage
- Health and well-being
- Bereavement support
- Emergency care planning
- Future care planning

It is clear that we need to increase the identification of young carers in Aberdeen. It is our responsibility to educate not only professionals to assist in this but also to inform young carers and people who support them of their right to identify themselves if they so wish and what this would mean for them. We will ensure that we sensitively identify young carers within schools via awareness raising, training and continuous professional development building on the principles of GIRFEC.

A series of awareness raising events will be run to help people understand the role of adult and young carers and the challenges that they face and we will maximise every opportunity at other events and in other strategies, policies and guidance to raise the profile of carers and enable people across Aberdeen City to identify as a carer if that is what they wish to do. This will include supporting people to end their caring role if that is what they wish to do.

## **I am supported, as a carer, to manage my caring role.**

Both the ACH&SCP and the ICSP already have Eligibility Criteria for access to social care services which make reference to carers. The ACH&SCP will prepare and publish Eligibility Criteria specifically for carers, including those who don't reach the threshold for social care intervention, so that it is clear who is eligible to be supported and what criteria will be used for determining that eligibility. The Eligibility Criteria will also make it clear what support and advice is available for anyone who does not meet the criteria for formal support. In preparing the Eligibility Criteria we will involve and consult with carers. The criteria will be reviewed every three years in line with the Carer's Strategy.

The ICSP will review the existing eligibility criteria for the level of service that a young carer can access based on their needs. These criteria will be incorporated within the GIRFEC model of tiered intervention and the Eligibility Criteria Matrix for Children in Need in Aberdeen.

All young carers will have a right to access a minimum level of advice and information. We will develop a tiered approach to service delivery ranging from the pro-active and comprehensive availability of information and advice for young carers with low level needs; through support from a commissioned service for those with moderate needs and requiring early help such as support via a short break; to support from a specialist and individualised service to promote the young person's resilience, for those with high level needs.

Similarly, both the ACH&SCP and the ICSP already have an assessment process which identifies outcomes and needs for social care services and also what support will be provided to meet those needs.

ACH&SCP will review the template and the processes used for these assessments in order that they meet the needs of adult carers under the new legislation and are able to inform the Adult Carer Support Plans. In particular we will ensure that emergency arrangements and future planning are areas that are covered. We will give consideration to those caring for the terminally ill ensuring that they plan for their life after caring, including young carers who may be left without a parent or other significant adult in their lives. We will use NHS Grampian's Palliative and Supportive Care Plan template for this purpose. The responsibility for the methodology of care and support planning will remain with ACH&SCP.

We will develop Young Carer's Statements (YCS) to provide a framework for the identification of individual needs and personal outcomes, based on the SHANARRI indicators, for supporting young carers who have been identified either by a professional or by themselves. A YCS is separate from other forms of assessment that a young person may be entitled to, such as a Child's Plan or Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP). This is to address some of the barriers that have previously been acknowledged that prevent young carers being identified. Careful consideration will however be given as to how a YCS sits alongside these other forms of assessment.

A YCS will include the nature and extent of care provided, or to be provided, as well as the impact of caring upon the young carer's well-being and day-to-day life. It will also include information about whether a young carer has in place arrangements for emergency care planning (sometimes referred to as contingency planning), future care planning, anticipatory care planning and advanced care planning (for when the cared-for person is receiving end of life care). A YCS will also show if support should be provided in the form of a break from caring.

We will ensure that we have clear procedures about who will complete a YCS, how it will be completed and by when. We will look at the role of the Named Person, school nurses and any commissioned services to ensure that the most appropriate person undertakes the assessment.

Young carers will be provided with information about what to expect when they request, or accept the offer of a YCS. All Statements will be reviewed within a given time frame, particularly if the health of the young carer or the cared-for person deteriorates, or if the cared-for person is being discharged from hospital.

A key stage for young carers is the point at which they transition from being a young carer to an adult carer. This age group is often characterised by life transitions such as the transition to college, university and work; living away from home; wanting to reduce the caring role; or not wanting to be a carer at all. These may impact upon and change the caring role and/or the need for support. This should be reflected in the YCS. When a young carer transitions to being an adult carer, the YCS will still be considered relevant until an Adult Carer Support Plan has been provided. We will not wait until the young carer reaches 18 to start this process.

In response to what carers told us that they wanted, we will seek to maximise the opportunities for carers to access support groups and activities. As required by the legislation, we will prepare and publish a 'Short Breaks Statement' by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018. The statement will cover both traditional and bespoke commissioned respite services and endeavour to provide more innovative and flexible arrangements. A 'Short Break' will be further defined as a short break away from the caring role. Short Breaks will be based on assessed needs and will be outcome focused. Our aim is that Short Breaks will be planned, reliable, and positively anticipated by carers and the cared-for person. We also recognise that young carers may need to combine their caring role with other family activities, responsibilities, education and employment.

Recognising the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 and the fact that carers are entitled to have choice and control over how their support is delivered we will ensure that, as part of the process to prepare the Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carer Statements, that the four options are explained and offered to all carers who are eligible. In addition, we will ensure that the use of Telecare options is explored to further assist with the caring role.

## **I am listened to and involved in planning the services and support which the person I care for receives.**

Engaging with service users and carers is vital in ensuring that services and support which are delivered are high quality and appropriate. We will develop a Service User and Carer Engagement protocol that will ensure that service users and carers are involved in planning services and support for both carers and cared-for people. The protocol will include specific sections on hospital discharge and commissioned services.

In terms of hospital discharge we will review patient admission documentation to ensure that it prompts consideration of and engagement with carers at an early stage, building on our person-centred approach. Using funding from the Scottish Government we ran a pilot on hospital discharge using a care assurance tool and the learning from that has informed our future approach.

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 brings a number of new and different obligations for staff and we will ensure that they are trained appropriately to understand these responsibilities and also in the use of the Service User and Carer Engagement protocol.

It is essential that we know who our carers are in Aberdeen City. We will develop and maintain a database of all known carers which will be used for communicating and engaging with them. The database will be developed and maintained in full alignment with relevant Data Protection legislation, based entirely on an informed and explicit willingness of carers to be included in this.

The Carers Conversation programme used to develop this strategy was very successful and well-received. We plan to repeat that on a regular basis as a means of monitoring the impact the implementation of the strategy is having and of understanding how carers are feeling and whether anything has changed that we need to take account of.

There are two carer representatives on the IJB and we commit to provide on-going support to them to ensure that their voice is heard appropriately. The carers representatives will change over time and we will develop recruitment and selection protocols to inform and support future appointments.

We aim to involve young carers in every step of the implementation of the new strategy from the development of the YCS to what is needed from a young carers' service. We need to take into consideration young carers' willingness to take part and ensure that any involvement meets their needs as well as ours. As such different approaches will be taken from group activities to one-to-one consultations where appropriate.



## **I am supported to have a life alongside caring, if I choose to do so.**

All of the commitments in this strategy are about ensuring that carers are supported to have a life alongside caring if they choose to do so. We will monitor the implementation of the strategy and report on this to the IJB, the ICSB and Aberdeen City Council on an annual basis to ensure that it is having the desired effect on reducing the impact of caring upon the health and well-being of carers. In addition, we will seek to promote the Carers Positive Award in Aberdeen City to signify the importance that we place on the value of the caring role.

## 10. How will this strategy reduce the impact of caring on the health and wellbeing of Carers

Area	Issues	What might help?
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health (stress, worry, depression)</li> <li>• Sleep &amp; energy levels</li> <li>• Physical health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respite</li> <li>• Additional services for the cared-for person</li> <li>• Support groups and activities for carers</li> <li>• Information and advice</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strained relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling</li> <li>• Respite</li> <li>• Additional services for the cared-for person</li> </ul>
<b>Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced income</li> <li>• Additional costs</li> <li>• Debt or money worries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support to maintain employment</li> <li>• Access to benefits such as Carers Allowance</li> <li>• Help with heating/travel costs</li> </ul>
<b>Life Balance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced ability to socialise</li> <li>• Feeling too tired/stressed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respite</li> <li>• Additional services for the cared-for person</li> </ul>
<b>Future Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Careers advice</li> <li>• Training opportunities</li> <li>• Socialisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support groups and activities for carers</li> <li>• Information and advice</li> </ul>
<b>Employment &amp; Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unable to work</li> <li>• Reduced hours</li> <li>• Restricted opportunity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional help with care</li> <li>• Support from employers: flexibility and understanding</li> </ul>
<b>Living Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptations</li> <li>• Location</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and advice</li> <li>• Link to relevant services to support</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to education</li> <li>• Restrictions on positive destinations</li> <li>• Ability to engage with education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on opportunities available</li> <li>• Young carers supported in schools, colleges and universities</li> <li>• Additional help with care to enable participation in education</li> </ul>

## **11. Carers Strategy Action Plan**

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Education &amp; Children's Services</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>25 January 2018</b>
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>Update on the Implementation of Reclaiming Social Work</b>
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	<b>ECS/18/011</b>
<b>DIRECTOR (Interim)</b>	<b>Bernadette Oxley/Helen Shanks</b>
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	<b>Graeme Simpson</b>

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-**

At the 1 June 2017, meeting of the Education & Children's Services Committee, the Service was asked to bring a report to committee on the update of Implementation of Reclaiming Social Work.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that the Committee –

- (a) Note the progress made in implementation of the Reclaiming Social Work model; and
- (b) Note the identified changes to the initial Reclaiming Social Work model as detailed at section 3.12 and 3.13 of the report to enable the Service to deliver full implementation of the model.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. In January 2015 the Council agreed to the implementation of the Reclaiming Social Work (RSW) model for Children's Social Work. This model moved away from the traditional structure where social workers were allocated a number of cases (usually between 15-20+) which they worked, more often than not, on their own. Under this model social workers were responsible for assessing risk which ultimately contributed to decisions around whether it was safe for children to remain at home or not.
- 3.2. Experience of the traditional structure would suggest that staff at times felt isolated and burdened by a fear of getting it wrong. As a consequence practice was more risk adverse, contributing to increasing numbers of children in local authority care. Additionally if a worker left or was on leave, while other members of the team would oversee their cases and respond to crises, cases would not be worked. This resulted in drift in the plans for children being advanced.
- 3.3. While the Service structure is an important consideration the RSW model requires equal consideration to be given to a number of other core principles including:

- Staff/Skills – Supporting staff to enhance their knowledge and application of systemic practice while providing skilled supervision which both supports and challenges staff
  - Shared Values - believing in direct work to support children to remain in their families where it is safe to do so.
  - Strategy – A whole system approach with a focus on reducing LAC numbers but investing in development of the workforce.
  - Systems - reduce bureaucracy to enable increased staff time to be spent in direct work with children and families.
  - Style – Being risk informed not risk averse, being a learning not blaming service
- 3.4. To support the implementation of the model it was important that staff and service users clearly understood what the purpose of the service was. Simply put our mission is:
- “To protect children from significant harm and where possible to support their family to care for them. For those children who cannot be kept safe within their family to provide them high quality care.”**
- 3.5. To deliver this we will:
- Provide children and families with meaningful support, building on their strengths helping them to care for their children.
  - Treat people with dignity, respect and empathy at all times.
  - Work to reducing inequalities for children and their families who experience, often multi-layers of disadvantage.
  - When it is not safe for children to be cared for by their families we will work swiftly and effectively to protect them whilst being open and transparent with families with their collaboration wherever possible.
  - Support the continuous development of a credible, knowledgeable and professional workforce
  - Deliver on our statutory responsibilities keeping our interventions with families to a minimum.

These aims are directly aligned to the objectives of the Target Operating Model.

- 3.6. The implementation of RSW saw cases being allocated to a Unit. (A unit consists of 4.5 staff – 1 x Consultant Social Worker; 0.5 x Clinical Practitioner; 1 x Social Worker; 1 x Children’s Practitioner and 1 x Unit Coordinator.) The Consultant Social worker has responsibility for managing the work, delegating tasks to other members of the Unit according to their skills and experience. As a result all members of the Unit contribute to the assessment of risk.
- 3.7. Feedback from staff operating within a Unit model mirrors that of other Local Authorities who have implemented RSW whereby staff feel supported and better able to manage situations of risk and support families to affect change without the need for the child to be accommodated. This acknowledges that there will still be a need for children to be accommodated in situations where unacceptable levels of risk exist.
- 3.8. The RSW model was not solely about the redesign of the social work fieldwork teams. It was a whole service redesign with the underlying principles being adopted across all parts of the service. Committee has already been updated on the redesign of the Residential Service and their move to incorporate a philosophy of care strongly aligned to systemic practice. In addition the wrap around services

which deliver both Early Help and Intensive Support have been redesigned to take account of the new commissioned arrangements.

### Update on the Implementation of the RSW Model

- 3.9. Since the implementation of RSW the recruitment of Consultant Social Workers has proved far more challenging than was anticipated. Despite considerable effort to recruit at both a local and national level our ability to attract experienced social workers to Aberdeen has proved limited. While we have been able to support a small number of our existing social workers grow into the Consultant Social Worker role the numbers able to do so has still meant that we are significantly short of the required number of Consultant Social Workers to fully implement the model.
- 3.10. As a consequence of the recruitment challenges structurally it has been necessary to operate with both new Units and traditional teams. While both Units and Teams have tried to bring a systemic focus to their intervention operating two different models has brought challenges for both children and their families as well as staff.
- Children and their families held by teams have experienced a higher turnover of social workers than we would want. In part this been due to our need to engage agency social workers to cover critical vacancies in the service. Some agency staff have stayed and bought into the work we are doing others have left after a short period.
  - Agency staff have not had the same opportunity to access systemic training and therefore have not been as able to adapt to the systemic approach we are seeking to deliver. They have also been clear that they are here on a temporary basis.
  - Social Workers yet to go to a Unit have expressed feelings of “being left behind” impacting on morale.
- 3.11. In recognition of the above factors along with the ongoing recruitment challenges the current structure of having Units and Teams within the same area of service delivery is considered unsustainable.
- 3.12. The service is acutely mindful of the financial pressures facing the Council. We recognise that the initial RSW model did incur added staff cost pressures. We also want to reduce our reliance on agency staff and bring greater stability to the workforce. To achieve this we would propose to reduce the number of Units from 26 to 18. (We potentially have 18 consultant social workers to lead each of the Units.)
- 3.13. To accommodate the workload of a reduced number of Units there will need to be an increase of social work capacity in most of the remaining Units, as detailed in the table below. (For three Units the existing configuration is assessed as being appropriate to the workload.)

<b>Current Unit model</b>	<b>Proposed Unit model</b>
1 x Consultant Social Worker	1 x Consultant Social Worker
0.5 x Clinical Practitioner	0.5 x Clinical Practitioner
1 x Social Worker	2.5 x Social Workers
1 x Children’s Practitioner	1 x Children’s Practitioner
1 x Unit Coordinator	1 x Unit Coordinator
<b>Total Staff 4.5</b>	<b>Total Staff 6</b>

- 3.14. The challenges which have contributed to the above proposal are not unique to Aberdeen. Most other authorities that have adopted the RSW model have already moved to increase the number of qualified social workers in each unit. Observations

would suggest that such has not adversely detracted detracting from the core principles of the model but has required some adjustment to the role to the Consultant Social Worker. Critical however is the need to retain a focus on evidence based systemic practice. This proposed change would allow for a consolidation of the delivery of front line statutory social work services, ensuring that we have sufficient qualified staff to deliver high quality targeted intervention where there is a statutory basis to do so.

- 3.15. For the past 3 years, the service has carried out twice yearly Case File Audits. This has enabled the Service to accurately determine the number of open cases as well as the complexity of the workload. These audits have enabled a growing understanding of the workload of each team/unit as well as the whole service. It has assisted in identifying where potential pressure points exist. While there will always be limitations to the data, the growing richness of it, is allowing for more informed Service planning as to how Aberdeen City Council is choosing to implement RSW to fit its own needs.
- 3.16. The case file audit carried out in November 2017 evidenced that Children's Social Work were working with approximately 1760 children/1220 families. The "weight" of this work is determined by the complexity of the case as well as other key factors such as travel implications and the volume of additional pieces of work associated with each case. Work has been undertaken which has verified that the proposed reduction in the number of Units, with an increased capacity, can absorb the Service workload.
- 3.17. These changes will enable the service to fully implement the structure in the coming months. As noted the service potentially has the required number of Consultant Social Workers although we will need to recruit a number of additional social workers. This change will ensure a far greater level of consistency of service delivery for children and families and will ensure staff feel supported to deliver the practice standards that we as a service require.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. Full implementation of the RSW model as detailed above will reduce some existing cost pressures particularly that of engaging agency social work staff to cover critical posts. In addition reducing the number of units will significantly bring down the operating costs of the RSW model.
- 4.2. Delivering a stable and consistent operating model will also better allow the service to focus on a number of its other strategic priorities including reducing the number of children who are accommodated including those in high cost out of authority residential placements.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

#### **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

- 6.1. Financial – The proposed changes will be delivered at no additional cost to the Council indeed they will realise some savings. The changes will also assist in reducing the number of agency staff. Level of risk - low.



- 6.2. Employee – Extensive consultation has been undertaken with staff and unions to explain the context and rationale for proposed changes. Feedback acknowledged the need for and support of the proposed changes while also appreciating this was a further change. There was strong support for retention of a structural model that supported systemic practice. There is growing evidence that such is being positively received by children and families while also delivering improved outcomes. Evidence of caseload management activity highlights that the work is effectively being managed and our staffing resources are being deployed effectively. Level of risk medium.
- 6.3. Customer / citizen – Social work intervention is most effective when staff are working in a safe and stable structure utilising a clear theoretical practice base within manageable caseloads. Feedback from service users has to date been positive and encouraging. The Service will ensure that in delivering full implementation of the RSW model that every effort is made to minimise the impact on service users. As noted earlier the service has engaged an independent evaluation to determine the impact of Reclaiming Social Work. Level of risk low.
- 6.4. Environmental – There are not environmental risks associated with this report.
- 6.5. Technological – The service is continuing to explore ways in which technology can assist in freeing social workers time to allow for direct work with children and families. Level of risk low.
- 6.6. Legal – There are no legal risks associated with this report.
- 6.7. Reputational – Aberdeen City Council is the first authority in Scotland to implement the RSW model. Considerable interest has been shown in the model by the Scottish Government and other local authorities. In addition service users and local stakeholders are also interested in the impact this model has to service delivery. Success of the model will enhance the City's reputation. Level of risk low.

## **7. IMPACT SECTION**

### **1.1. Economy**

- 1.1.1. Effective management of the work across Children's Social Work is critical to ensuring that resources are being deployed to greatest effect. The successful implementation of RSW is a stated objective of the Councils' Strategic Business Plan and will deliver a transformational change as to how Children's Social Work engages with and delivers services ensuring children are safe and responsible. This vision is fully consistent with "children are our future" priority of Local Authority Outcome Improvement Plan.
- 1.1.2. The model is intended to be cost neutral by the end of the five year implementation period. Achieving this cost neutral position is contingent on recommissioning services from Third Sector partners as well as reducing the numbers of children placed in out of authority residential placements. While the proposed changes to the Unit model will reduce the cost of the model work is well underway to complete a recommissioning of all our services. Our ability to deliver on the second element has been affected by the recruitment challenges. Having a fully implemented Unit structure along with a newly commissioned Intensive Support service it is anticipated delivery on the second element will be significantly advanced in the coming year.

## **1.2. People**

- 1.2.1. The Council's decision to support the implementation of RSW model is aimed at delivering improved outcomes for those children, and their families, assessed as being at risk of harm and in need of statutory intervention. The model seeks to free social work staff up from bureaucratic processes to deploy their knowledge and skills in direct work with children and families. In addition the model is intended to support more children to remain in their families resulting in a rebalancing the profile of the population of looked after children. An EHRIA was completed in respect of this report and additional measures were identified.
- 1.2.2. Evidence and direct feedback from children and families who have experienced this new model of delivery is encouraging and highlights that families feel more empowered to contribute to finding solutions to their own difficulties. These changes will diminish the reliance for some families on social work intervention and reduce the instances of children and families being re-referred. The impact of these changes will be incremental as more and more Units go live. An independent evaluation of the impact of the model is being undertaken and will be concluded in spring 2018.
- 1.2.3. The Care Inspectorate are working with the Scottish Government to develop a new model of Inspection for local authorities. This model will be confirmed in early 2018 with inspections commencing in April 2018. At some point over the coming months it is highly likely that aspects of Aberdeen City Children's Social Work Services will be inspected and providing evidence of the impact of RSW will be central to any inspection.

## **1.3. Place**

- 1.3.1. The vast majority of social work services are delivered to families who experience economic deprivation. By supporting families to find solutions to their own difficulties and enhancing their resilience the effective delivery of social work services has an important role to play to positively improving the experience of living in Aberdeen.

## **1.4. Technology**

- 1.4.1. A key driver within the RSW model is to free social work staff up from unnecessary bureaucratic processes. Modern technology has a valuable contribution to play and while some significant progress has been made there is still more to be achieved. Working with colleagues in ICT we are continuing to look at how professional social work time can be maximised to deliver direct work with families.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

## **9. APPENDICES (if applicable)**

None

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