

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education Operational Delivery Committee
<b>DATE</b>	12 March 2020
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Leadership Development
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	OPE/20/053
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Rob Polkinghorne
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Graeme Simpson
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Gael Ross
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with an overview of current and proposed approaches to leadership development.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the direction of travel in the development of leadership capacity;
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Education Officer to implement and continually review the Professional Learning & Leadership Framework (Draft); and
- 2.3 instruct the Chief Education Officer to develop a visualisation of the Leadership Professional Learning Offer to align Local and National programmes and the ACC Capability Framework in order to clarify routes to Leadership.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

#### **3.1 Why is leadership Important?**

- 3.1.1 Within the National Improvement Framework, Leadership is recognised as one of the most important aspects of the success of any school. Headteachers and teachers who are empowered, and who empower others to take ownership of their own learning, generally have a strong track record of ensuring the highest quality of learning and teaching.
- 3.1.2 School and Early Learning & Childcare inspections currently focus on Quality Indicators 1.3 Leadership of Change. This indicator assesses the leadership capacity across the whole school community and guides distributed leadership and shared accountability and responsibility. This guides us to focus strongly on the development of leadership at all levels.
- 3.1.3 Many Local Authorities, including Aberdeen City, face challenges in recruiting Senior Leaders. It is imperative that we invest in our middle leaders to ensure that there is a pool of talent who are well placed to lead our schools in the future and work hard to attract staff to the city.
- 3.1.4 Strengthening 'the middle' was a key recommendation of the OECD in their review; *Improving Schools In Scotland: An OECD Perspective*. Recommendations include: enhancing the capacity of teachers, practitioners, early learning and childcare settings and schools to collaborate and become mutually accountable for improvement; how they work with other partners; and the role of local authorities and other partners in leading and supporting improvement in education. Strengthening the middle means, among other things, considering what happens above the level of the individual school or early learning and childcare setting and beneath the level of national government in Scottish education.

## **3.2 Developing Leaders of Learning**

- 3.2.1 In order to maximise the impact of the central team, consideration has been given to how on-going processes can be used to develop leadership capacity and capability through a more collaborative culture.
- 3.2.2 A new approach to quality improvement has provided school senior leaders with more focused opportunities for high quality professional dialogue with colleagues in other schools in order to develop a shared understanding of the 'standard' and a mechanism to collaborate for improvement.
- 3.2.3 Quality Improvement Visits now operate in Trios, with leaders from two other schools supporting the quality improvement process. Not only is this helping to develop a shared understanding of standards, it is helping colleagues make connections across our school estate in order to work collaboratively on shared agendas.
- 3.2.4 Aberdeen City Council has a mixed profile of school leaders with some very experienced through to those who are new to a senior position. The Trios approach is helping to cascade the knowledge and skills of our experienced senior leaders to support improvement beyond their own school. This makes best use of available resource across the system. The make-up of each trio has been considered carefully to support this.

- 3.2.5 The initial feedback from schools around this process has been extremely positive and this will continue to be gathered to identify strengths and support planned next steps around the leadership of learning. Many of those who have had opportunities to engage in quality improvement visits outwith their own settings are keen to play a greater role and this enthusiasm will be harnessed as we continue to review our approaches.
- 3.2.6 For the first time all Improvement Events have been open to Senior Leadership teams. The events are themed around How Good is Our school Framework, evaluation information and take into account the National Improvement Framework but ensure that all senior leaders have the opportunity to engage in the strategic direction of the service. Opening improvement events to Leadership Teams, rather than only the Head Teacher, is helping to develop a more consistent understanding of local and national agendas and expectations and time to work collaboratively on a shared improvement agenda.
- 3.2.7 The report to Committee in January 2020, “Empowering the System” (OPE/20/004) highlights changes within the Education Service structure which has been designed to enable and support empowerment. There are early signs that these structural and procedural changes that have followed, offer more collaborative approaches which have impacted positively on the development of a positive culture between the central team and across school Leadership Teams. This ‘one team’ approach is helping to unify the service around a shared agenda and increase the pace of and capacity for improvement in line with the recommendation of ‘Strengthening the Middle from the OECD report *Improving Schools In Scotland*.
- 3.2.8 Middle leaders in secondary schools have harnessed the opportunity to share best practice across Faculties. An initial event last year saw secondary Middle Leaders share innovations and best practice with others and the approach was extremely well received. This event was shaped by Middle Leaders for Middle Leaders and only sought endorsement from the central team, a testament to the professionalism and drive for improvement in our schools. The Chief Education Officer has recently endorsed secondary leaders’ plans to replicate this model in order to share the best practice identified during Quality Improvement visits. This model of Middle Leaders empowering Middle Leaders is to be commended and illustrates how a collective responsibility for the system is being taken forward with minimal direction from central officers.
- 3.2.9 In partnership with The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), 2 full days professional learning opportunities have been delivered in relation to Coaching for Success and Coaching for PR&D. These development opportunities are aligned to the updated Guidelines for Professional Review and Development ‘Unlocking the potential of Professional Review and Development’ and support a coaching approach. Training events in this area have been well received and had a more significant impact on our middle leaders, offering an opportunity for Senior Leadership Teams to develop a shared understanding of a coaching approach which can support and challenge practitioners within professional learning conversations.

3.2.10 Senior Leaders and members of the Central Improvement Team continue to offer a varied and supportive professional learning offer in relation to leadership opportunities. A positive example of this is ACC Routes to Leadership, led by 2 Head Teachers and supported by many other leaders through delivery of high quality sessions linked to national and local need.

3.2.11 Other networks of support for leaders that are currently under review are the Principal Teacher / Depute Head Teacher Primary Forum and the Newly Appointed Heads Group. Both have had positive feedback although capacity to deliver and support these groups has been difficult to maintain due to lead staff changing roles. Sustainability has to be a consideration as we move forward.

### **3.3 Professional Learning & Leadership Framework (Draft)**

3.3.1 All teaching staff require to maintain the professional standards as detailed by the GTCS. The GTCS require that all Local Authorities consider how they are supporting teaching staff to achieve these standards and routinely quality assure approaches to ensure that they are satisfied that appropriate mechanisms are in place to support Professional Review and Development. Members should note that the GTCS refer to the review process as PR&D and that this terminology is used throughout the document. The process of review is not dissimilar from the Continuous Review and Development (CR&D) being rolled out for all other Aberdeen City employees, including school support staff.

3.3.2 The revision of our Professional Learning and Leadership Framework (Draft) (Appendix A) takes account of the need for all teaching staff to develop leadership capacity and the need for a range of pathways to leadership. This has also been developed in line with updated guidance from GTCS 'Unlocking the Potential of Professional Review and Development 2019'. This essentially sets out a direction of travel required to ensure full compliance with the GTCS standards and will continue to be reviewed and updated to support national and local developments.

3.3.3 The Professional Learning & Leadership Framework sets the expectations of school leaders working for Aberdeen City and signposts an associated Professional Learning Programme to ensure that opportunities are available to develop the skills and competencies required. Opportunities are varied and comprise a mix of national and local offers and supportive groups led by skilled senior leaders. This is constantly being reviewed and developed.

3.3.4 It is important that the Professional Learning Programme offers genuine support, progression and a suite of learning opportunities which will be available for all, to support professional learning and leadership within classrooms, schools, and systems leadership levels.

3.3.5 The framework reflects the GTCS professional standards, uses the self-evaluation process from GTCS and articulates with the National Model for Professional Learning utilised by national bodies.

3.3.6 The professional learning and leadership framework has been accredited by GTCS as part of our Professional Review & Development and Professional Update process. Following discussion with Trade Unions on 26<sup>th</sup> February, the QIM and Trade Unions will collaborate further in order to finalise our approach. The quality of the document has resulted in the Leadership of Change Quality Improvement Manager being asked to support the GTCS reaccreditation of other local authorities in this area. This provides a helpful means of maintaining an awareness of the work of other Authorities in this area.

### **3.4 Links with the ACC Capability Framework and other associated standards**

3.4.1 The ACC Capability Framework supports the development of leadership stating that distributed leadership, alongside individual capability, underpins our cultural and organisational change journey. Therefore, the levels within this assume that everyone has a part to play in terms of a leadership role, whether they are paid to be a manager or leader of people or not. We define leadership as - 'The art of moving others to a common goal' and this notion of leadership cuts across all levels.

3.4.2 Every member of staff has a responsibility for delivering our purpose as an individual but also for supporting others to do the same, therefore we are working hard to make the connections, where appropriate to ACC Capability Framework to ensure we provide as broad an offer as possible and that we increase uptake of the quality learning opportunities available across the organisation through the Learning Academy.

3.4.3 The Care Inspectorate also have clear standards for staff with regard to our duties to keep children safe. It is important that we consider how best to present a cohesive offer that effectively harmonises all expectations and development opportunities.

### **3.5 Aligning Frameworks and Standards to our Professional Learning and Leadership Framework, developing our Steps into Leadership.**

3.5.1 The Leadership of Change Improvement Group and the Building Capacity Team is drafting a visual Steps into Leadership offer as part of the wider Professional learning programme to exemplify potential pathways to leadership. This is likely to be a live digital document which is responsive to evaluation evidence and new opportunities available. Although likely to take a significant investment of time it is thought that this approach will help illustrate how the many sources of professional learning can support an individual's leadership journey and take full account of the workforce plan recently presented to the Staff Governance Committee.

3.5.2 Officers would anticipate that a digital tool could be operational by the end of this academic year.

### **3.6 Steps taken to increase Leadership Opportunities**

3.6.1 National leadership programmes tend to be of high quality but are often hosted in the central belt. Engagement with national agencies, both through ACC and

the Northern Alliance has resulted in opportunities being made available more locally and this has increased attendance levels.

- 3.6.2 Increasingly, Leadership professional learning is being well attended, including the ACC Routes to Leadership sessions, designed and run by ACC school leaders for ACC school staff. Consistent application and attendance at Leadership professional learning led by Education Scotland and Leadership Programmes at the University of Aberdeen show that there is an interest in this area of development. Opportunities are available to all staff whether in promoted post or not and these provide the opportunity to develop leadership knowledge and skills. Opportunities for systems leadership has also been offered in partnership with Education Scotland and more recently through the Northern Alliance.
- 3.6.3 In partnership with the Northern Alliance there has been a significant increase in Leadership professional learning support. The Leadership of Change Quality Improvement Manager represents ACC on the Northern Alliance Leadership Workstream and is also working in partnership with the University to develop the use of the Northern Alliance Learning Hub to enable digital collaboration and shared learning. Regular updates are provided through newsletters and links to the Northern Alliance website have been made more accessible through the EduSharepoint Site to ensure colleagues in schools recognise and take up these offers.
- 3.6.4 A tracking system has been set up to review access to leadership opportunities, support 'talent spotting' and consider appropriate support, challenge and planned next steps for those attending. This includes monitoring uptake across schools as it is important that leadership opportunities are promoted across our local system. Closer partnership working within the Quality Improvement Team allows discussion to take place in recognition of aspiring leaders through Quality Improvement visits and although at the early stages, capturing this data in partnership with Head Teachers through the PR&D process is invaluable for building capacity and sustainability within the organisation. Currently this tracking shows a continued interest in the uptake of leadership development offers.
- 3.6.5 Through EduSharepoint site all professional learning offers are made available to all staff and opportunities from the Northern Alliance and other Partners are also shared. We will continue to build on this approach as a resource to share information with all Education Staff and work closely with partners to share wider opportunities in this way.
- 3.6.6 Initial conversations have taken place with Aberdeen University and Skills Development Scotland to consider a more joined up approach to Leadership Development and this will continue to be developed over the coming months in collaboration with People and Organisation. It is hoped that a shared offer, where colleagues in the respective organisations can access supports across the system can be developed along with job shadowing opportunities to broaden perspectives and help all leaders gain a wider appreciation of the system. It is hoped that these offers will be exemplified through our digital tool.

- 3.6.7 Following the implementation of Office 365 and continued work in partnership with Microsoft, planning for a new professional learning offer will ensure careful consideration is being taken to think creatively about the way in which this is being delivered and where possible digital solutions used to support this. With ongoing difficulties to access professional learning during the school day due to staffing vacancies, Microsoft Teams and digital solutions such as Webinars will be used to capture professional learning and allow us to begin thinking differently about the best learning experience.
- 3.6.8 Improved use is being made of colleagues in People and Organisation with some school leaders being offered coaching and mentoring. This approach has been welcomed by those who have benefited and will be further promoted and made clear on our digital tool.
- 3.6.9 Quality Improvement Visits have highlighted that some school leaders may benefit from a handbook designed to share effective approaches to developing teacher agency. This work is currently being scoped and likely to utilise the skills of our experienced leaders to support its development.
- 3.6.10 Access to a high quality mentor and coach can be invaluable to staff who are new to a post or new to the city. We continue to look increasingly at our offer of providing high quality mentors to all and have agreement in principle to work across partners in relation to a coaching approach.
- 3.6.11 The ethos and reputation of an organisation does much to attract staff and leaders. The service continues to collaborate, innovate and share successes to ensure that Aberdeen is seen as an attractive option for staff.
- 3.6.12 As part of the Early Years Expansion and in support of a growing workforce, we want to nurture the seeds of leadership in our own existing workforce. This will enable us to develop a workforce that is valued, trusted, supported, skilled, confident and continually improving. With investment in staff training, programmes to support leadership development will be rolled out from February 2020, including 'Leading Change' a programme for Senior Early Years Practitioners and 'Stepping into Leadership' for Aspiring Early Years Practitioners. Use of identified best practice will support these programmes from both within and beyond ACC.

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

- 4.1 Currently, funding for a number of leadership opportunities are supported by Scottish Government through Education Scotland, however planning for ongoing and developing Leadership Professional Learning will need to be taken into account when considering the allocation of current and future Professional Learning budgets.
- 4.2 Into Headship Funding is supported by Scottish Government at this time, however there is an uncertainty about the length of time this will continue and this may have an impact on the service or individuals supporting this qualification.

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 *The Standards In Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000* places an obligation on Local Authorities to secure improvement in all schools, therefore it is essential that these schools are well led and that leadership opportunities are developed to ensure this.
- 5.2 As of August 2020 and in relation to Section 90A of the *Education (Scotland) Act 1980*, *The Head Teachers Education and Training Standards (Scotland) Regulations 2019* identifies the need for all newly appointed Head Teachers to have completed the Standard for Headship. This is awarded in relation to practitioners completing the Into Headship programme and therefore it is a requirement for us to meet the needs of our school communities and professional standards.

## 6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
<b>Financial</b>	Funding for required qualifications.	L	Currently supported by Scottish Government.
<b>Legal</b>	Failure to deliver on legal duties	L	Actions and proposed actions satisfy these legal duties.
<b>Employee</b>	Risk of employees unable to access appropriate training due to current staffing difficulties.	L	Support in place from the Local Authority Education Service to identify a variety of ways to provide leadership opportunities.
<b>Customer</b>	Potential for children or young people to be disadvantaged by not having access to a quality educational experience with strong leadership.	L	Close monitoring of leadership support by the Education Service through the revised education structure and Quality Improvement Calendar.
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk of reputational damage for school and service	M	This report will provide some assurance that plans being implemented are effective

## 7. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
<b>Prosperous Economy</b>	Children who have their learning and wellbeing needs well met are more able to contribute to a prosperous economy. This requires schools to be well led.



<b>Design Principles of Target Operating Model</b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Customer Service Design</b>	Review of performance data enables the service to be shaped to support continued improvement.
<b>Organisational Design</b>	Seeks to ensure the best use of resource in the system.
<b>Governance</b>	Overseen by the Chief Education Officer and Quality Improvement Managers and by the Education Operational Delivery Committee.
<b>Workforce</b>	Ensures that colleagues in schools and settings have the skills and knowledge to support their roles and responsibilities and anticipated standards.
<b>Process Design</b>	Revised monitoring arrangements ensure that any vulnerabilities in the system are quickly addressed.
<b>Technology</b>	Supports increased use of technology to improve outcomes for children and young people through simplifying messaging to staff around anticipated standards.
<b>Partnerships and Alliances</b>	Promotes and makes use of wider partnership support as appropriate.

## **8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Equality &amp; Human Rights Impact Assessment</b>	Required
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty</b>	Applicable

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

## **10. APPENDICES**

Appendix A - Professional Learning & Leadership Framework (Draft)

## **11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS**

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