

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

---

COMMITTEE	<b>Education and Children's Services</b>
DATE	<b>1 June 2017</b>
REPORT TITLE	<b>Excellence and Equity</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/17/032</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Gayle Gorman</b>
REPORT AUTHOR	<b>Eleanor Sheppard &amp; Lynn Scanlon</b>

---

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

The purpose of this report is to:

- Advise committee on the steps being taken to address the National Excellence and Equity Agenda;
- Inform committee of the main details of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity Funds for Aberdeen City and their relationship to the National Improvement Framework (NIF) Plan; and
- Seek Committee approval of the NIF Plan to be published in August.

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

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Note the revised national expectations summarised in this report;
- b) Endorse the actions for improvement contained in the draft National Improvement Framework Plan;
- c) Instruct the Director of Education and Children's Service to undertake further consultation to help finalise and publish the NIF Plan; and
- d) To instruct the Director of Education and Children's Services to undertake further consultation on the National Improvement Framework (NIF) Plan and to delegate authority to the Director to submit the final NIF Plan to the Scottish Government as required by the end of August.

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

#### **3.1 Scottish Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity Funds**

The First Minister launched the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) in February 2015 to achieve equity in educational outcomes for all children and young people irrespective of their economic background. It is underpinned by the National Improvement Framework, Curriculum for Excellence and Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).

On the basis of the number of children and young people living in SIMD deciles 1&2, 4 primary schools (Riverbank, Tullos, Bramble Brae and Manor Park) were identified as Scottish Attainment Challenge Schools in 2015/2016. In 2016/2017 a further 3 Secondary schools (Torry, Northfield and St Machar) were added to the National programme. These 7 schools will continue to be part of this initiative in 2017/2018. Scottish Attainment Challenge schools were invited to submit bids to fund interventions and all bids were successful.

Details of the funding for 2015/2016 and 2016/2017:

School	Year 1		Year 2	
	SAC Bid 2015 - 16	SAC Allocation 2015 - 16	SAC Bid 2016 - 17	SAC allocation 2016 – 17 – 8 months
<b>Bramble Brae</b>		23 356	66 556	57 219
<b>Manor Park</b>		28 815	80 776	72 145
<b>Riverbank</b>		31 388	84 886	65 605
<b>Tullos</b>		29 738	63 593	82 906
<b>Total</b>		<b>113 297</b>	295 811	<b>277 875</b>
<b>Secondary</b>				
<b>Northfield</b>	N/A	N/A	49 438.02	49 438.02
<b>St Machar</b>	N/A	N/A	79 206.04	79 206.04
<b>Torry</b>	N/A	N/A	64 658.97	64 658.97
<b>Kincorth</b>	N/A	N/A		
<b>Total</b>			193 303.03	<b>193 303.03</b>

We anticipate that bids will be submitted by eligible schools for 2017/2018.

From April this year a further £120m will be provided directly to Head Teachers to use for additional staffing or resources they consider will help reduce the poverty related attainment gap. This Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is allocated directly to schools and targeted at those children most affected by the poverty related attainment gap.

The funding will reach schools in every local authority area in Scotland and will be distributed on the basis of the numbers of pupils in P1-S3 known to be eligible and registered for free school meals.

Pupil Equity Funding is provided on top of the existing £50m Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) funding and will continue to provide targeted support for those authorities and schools supporting children and young people in greatest need.

The following table shows the current PEF funding for Aberdeen City.

PEF Funding	Funds allocated	Total number of pupils
Primary	£2,140,800.00	1784
Secondary	£556,800.00	464
Special	£48,000.00	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,745,600.00</b>	<b>2288</b>

### **3.2 The Standard's in Scotland's Schools etc. Act**

The National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education was launched by the First Minister in January 2016. The Framework supports The Scottish Government ambition to achieve excellence and equity for every child in Scotland and builds on the Raising Attainment for All agenda. Importantly it places a legal duty on local authorities to actively address the poverty related attainment gap.

The National Improvement Framework identifies 4 key priorities for action:

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

The Framework is underpinned by a series of new planning and reporting duties designed to support transparency and accountability. These legal duties have been integrated into the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 through amendments contained in Part 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

The Scottish Government has published statutory guidance to support education authorities to carry out their new legal responsibilities.

### **3.3 Legislative changes**

The statutory guidance clarifies how the 2000 Act has been amended through the 2016 Act in order to:

- impose duties on education authorities to enhance equity and promote a reduction in inequalities of educational outcome experienced by pupils as a result of socio-economic disadvantage;

- impose a duty to secure improvement in the quality of school education with a view to achieving the strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework; and
- impose duties in relation to annual planning and reporting; and annual school improvement planning.

### **3.4 The duty of due regard**

From August 2017 a new duty of having ‘due regard’ will be established. This means that all strategic decisions must be taken with due regard to how they will address, or help to address, the disparity of educational outcomes which exist between our most and least disadvantaged and at the same time raise attainment for all.

In order to demonstrate ‘due regard’ education authorities must seek and have regard to the views of head teachers, pupils, parents, trade union representatives, voluntary organisations and others as the authority thinks appropriate.

### **3.5 Other duties of education authorities in pursuance of the NIF priorities**

In addition to paying “due regard”, Education Authorities must ensure that improvement activity within schools is consistent with the four strategic priorities of the NIF (see section 3.2) and also produce an annual report of progress made in pursuance of the priorities.

### **3.6 Planning and reporting cycle**

A revised approach to planning and reporting based on the NIF priorities aims to improve the quality of information to:

- children, young people, parents and carers;
- support education authorities and Community Planning Partnerships in planning and delivering services; and
- support the development of national education policy.

It is anticipated that these planning and reporting arrangements will form a continuous coherent annual improvement cycle, providing a line of sight between national improvement activity and efforts to raise standards within individual schools and Local Authorities.

### **3.7 School Improvement Planning (SIP)**

School Improvement Plans (SIP) should be informed by the priorities of:

- the National Improvement Framework;
- the appropriate Local Authority strategic plans; and
- the priorities of the school community plan.

The process should be underpinned by consultation and engagement with stakeholders.

SAC and PEF plans should be incorporated within school improvement planning documentation thereby reducing the need for additional bureaucracy. The tackling bureaucracy working group approved the new SQUIP documentation. In addition the group issued a statement to all schools stating that reference to tackling bureaucracy must be included in each SQUIP plan submitted.

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

The Local Authority Business Plan and The Directorate Service Plan are aligned with the priorities contained in the NIF. The Directorate Service Plan contains actions relating to the new duties.

A draft NIF plan (see appendix A) has been developed and will be refined as year-end data becomes available.

The current School Improvement Planning process has been revised to ensure alignment with the statutory guidance.

The Education Scotland Attainment Advisor has worked in partnership with Officers in the Local Authority and a number of Head Teacher training events have taken place to support schools to produce robust and clear plans.

The Council is taking steps to increase the update of Free School Meals through a publicity campaign.

A PEF booklet is being routinely updated and shared with schools to aid school planning. The quality of the booklet has been recognised by Education Scotland.

The seven local authorities within the Northern Alliance have worked in partnership ensuring a consistency in approach to the planning for the Pupil Equity Fund. They have also developed a number of key improvement agendas linked to raising of attainment. These have included early years' literacy and assessment and moderation. There are plans to expand the development work across the Northern Alliance to the area of numeracy.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The cost of all improvement actions will be undertaken within schools existing budgets and with support from funding allocated through either SAC funding or PEF funding.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Local Authority is well placed to discharge the new duties as outlined in the Statutory Guidance.

## **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

**Financial** – Costs associated with PEF and SAC funding are met by The Scottish Government. As a result the risk around PEF and SAC is deemed to be low.

**Employee** – Not having a clear plan to close the poverty related attainment gap could result in a lack of coordination of approach. This lack of coordination could result in employees feeling overwhelmed by a lack of focussed improvement to address the poverty related attainment gap and moral would be negatively affected. The draft NIF Plan and school SQIP Plans will help mitigate this risk and ensure that this risk remains low.

**Customer / citizen** – School leaders not understanding the poverty related attainment gap and associated barriers would significantly reduce the impact of funding as spending would not be focussed on the areas most likely to improve the long term outcomes of children and young people. A range of Continuing Professional Learning and professional challenge from the Quality Improvement Team will support colleagues to effectively identify appropriate interventions. This range of professional learning and support will mitigate the risk. As a result the risk is deemed to be low.

Due to difficulties in recruitment there is a medium risk of not being able to carry out some of the improvement actions. Failure to recruit staff could negatively impact on our ability to deliver planned improvement. The service continues to work closely with HR colleagues to mitigate the risk.

There is a medium risk that Committee not endorsing the draft NIF plan would lead to a lack of focus and therefore impact. This is being mitigated by giving Committee early sight of the draft plan.

**Environmental** – The interventions planned to address excellence and equity are unlikely to present any environmental risks. This risk will be reviewed when all SQIP and PEF plans have been received and quality assured.

**Technological** – The interventions planned to address excellence and equity are unlikely to present any technological risks. This risk will be reviewed when all SQIP and PEF Plans have been received and quality assured..

**Legal** – Aberdeen City Council has a range of new legal duties outlined in the report. Failure to amend our working practices to align with the new legislation could result in legal challenge. The draft NIF will ensure that we address all of the new duties and mitigate this risk. The risk is low.

**Reputational** – Not effectively addressing the excellence and equity agenda could present a reputational risk to the Council in terms of how effectively it works to close the poverty related attainment gap. Effectively finalising the NIF plan and close monitoring of impact will enable the Council to positively report on progress made in closing the poverty related attainment gap. The risk is low.

## 7. IMPACT SECTION

### Economy

Implementing improvement in attainment will help break the cycle of deprivation and support developing the young workforce. These changes will positively impact on our economy and support the theme of Aberdeen Prospers.

The most significant and overarching aim is to address the poverty related attainment gap which will significantly impact on the economy of the city.

## **People**

Successful implementation of the NIF plan will lead to improve 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.

This approach has potential to significantly and positively impact on a number of individuals as support will be tailored to their very individual needs.

The Pupil Equity Fund aims to improve the outcomes of some of the most vulnerable who are eligible for free school meals. Schools are guided to look at the needs of individuals and identify any barriers to their achievement.

## **Place**

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

## **Technology**

The Education Scotland National Improvement Hub and Endowment Trust site will support innovation across Aberdeen City.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 through amendments contained in Part 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

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

Draft NIF Plan

## **10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

Name	Eleanor Sheppard
Job title	Transformation and Improvement Manager
Email address	<a href="mailto:esheppard@aberdeencity.gov.uk">esheppard@aberdeencity.gov.uk</a>
Phone number	01224 522707

Name	Lynn Scanlon
Job title	Quality Improvement Manager
Email address	<a href="mailto:lyscanlon@aberdeencity.gov.uk">lyscanlon@aberdeencity.gov.uk</a>
Phone number	01224 522044

## **HEAD OF SERVICE DETAILS**

Name	Helen Shanks
Job title	Head of Education
Email address	<a href="mailto:hshanks@aberdeencity.gov.uk">hshanks@aberdeencity.gov.uk</a>
Phone number	01224 522473