

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	<b>Education &amp; Children's Services</b>
DATE	<b>20<sup>th</sup> September 2017</b>
REPORT TITLE	<b>Allocation of additional Pupil Support Assistants</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/17/044</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Gayle Gorman</b>
REPORT AUTHOR	<b>Lesley Stopani</b>

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

This report is to inform committee of the allocation of the additional funding of £976,000 for Pupil Support Assistants.

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

It is recommended that committee note how the resource of £976,000 has been allocated, as detailed at section 4 of the report, in order to raise attainment by meeting the needs of children and young people.

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

- 3.1 Council at its budget meeting on 22 February 2017 allocated a sum of £976,000 to allow for further expansion of Pupil Support Assistants to help raise attainment and the Director of Education and Children's Services was instructed to report to this Committee on how the additional funding would be allocated to support efforts to raise attainment.
- 3.2 The annual audit of need requires all of our primary schools to review the needs of individual children in relation to the SHANARRI indicators (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Respected, Responsible, Included). This creates a picture of need across the whole city. In providing allocations account is taken of the roll related requirements within each school, such as health and safety and this informs the core allocation of PSAs. A formula based approach is then used to enhance the core allocation of Pupil Support Assistants, thereby increasing entitlement in direct relation to the identified additional support needs of pupils.
- 3.3 Additionality is provided to support schools in further implementation of mainstreaming, particularly where teaching staff is not available as we transition from previous models. The process for identifying need is via the annual ASG Transition Conference where the needs of P6 and P7 pupils are discussed. This process leads to the identification of vulnerable learners who will require additional support to prepare for and transition successfully in to secondary school.
- 3.4 To address the rise in the number of children being given a diagnosis of an ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition) the Autism Outreach team is being enhanced. A Principal Teacher, based at The Centre of Excellence, has been appointed and the compliment of teachers has been increased. The addition of skilled PSAs to this team will further enhance this provision and support the presumption of mainstream.

- 3.5 In order to create greater capacity at local level and to enable schools to deploy support more timeously in response to identified needs a local pool of staff, to be accessed by Associated Schools Groups, will be created. This allocation has been made on a roll related basis.
- 3.6 A number of children and young people who are in care are accessing educational provision outwith Aberdeen City. In order to maintain their learning within an appropriate environment an allocation of Pupil Support Assistant hours is given following the development of a robust Child's Plan.

There is a need to promote the use of British Sign Language, which can be met by providing a specialist Pupil Support Assistant. The role of this PSA will be to deliver training to improve practice.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The additional funding is being targeted to the needs of learners across the city as detailed in the table below. The initial allocation, April – December 2017, has been made to primary and secondary schools to ensure that the additional staff can fill these roles timeously. This allocation will be monitored and if appropriate a revised allocation will be made from December – April 2018. The BSL co-ordinator and Autism Outreach posts are being progressed and it is anticipated the recruitment process will be completed before the October break. Through the CSSF (Children's Specialist Service Forum) approval has been given for Pupil Support Assistant hours to be allocated to support children and young people who are looked after and accommodated outwith Aberdeen city. Partnership Forums have been advised of their allocations and colleagues within Associated School Groups are planning the deployment of the resource in order to meet the needs of learners who require targeted support.

School	Contractual Weeks	Weekly hours per post	Corporate fte	Posts	Salary (Inc on – costs) £
Primary Additionality	39	25	15.1	29.8	463,780
Secondary Additionality	39	27.5	2.7	4.9	84,040
BSL Communicator	39	27.5	0.6	1	17,090
Autism Outreach team	39	27.5	1.1	2	34,180
Out of Authority	39	27.5	2.2	4	68,360
Partnership Forums	39	25	9.1	17.9	278,390
<b>Total</b>			<b>30.8</b>	<b>59.6</b>	<b>945,840</b>

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications.

## **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

### **6.1 Financial**

Without adequate, timely support, from additional Pupil Support Assistants, learners with additional support needs may not make the progress they should. Furthermore, failure to provide sufficient support within our mainstream provision can lead to more costly targeted and specialist interventions

### **6.2 Employee**

A lack of early/accessible intervention can contribute to an elevated level of distress in children/young people and could therefore have a negative impact on staff. Additional Pupil Support Assistants will help reduce the risk by being able to implement timeous and effective strategies.

New staff are more likely to require training, which may have to be delivered by employees who have greater experience. This will require careful management and support to minimise the impact on workload / capacity.

### **6.3 Community**

Children and young people who do not have a positive school experience are more likely to have reduced school attendance and this can have a negative impact on local communities. Pupils not attending regularly are unlikely to achieve a positive destination and can be at risk of being at harm.

This investment mitigates against the risks to children and young people as they would be more supported in their local school environment by additional support staff.

### **6.4 Technology**

No identified risks.

### **6.5 Legal**

Reduce potential legal risks associated with Tribunal cases regarding perceived lack of additional support.

## **7. IMPACT SECTION**

### **7.1 Economy**

The creation of additional posts will have a positive effect on employment, providing additional opportunities for those who wish to work within this sector. It is anticipated this will impact positively on the local economy.

In the longer term improved attainment for individual children and young people will promote their chances of securing positive and sustained destinations, which will enable them to make an ongoing contribution to the local economy.

## **7.2 People**

The allocation of this additional resource to children and young people who require assistance to access learning, will have a positive impact on many with protected characteristics, including those experiencing poverty. It will impact on the ability of children and young people to engage more successfully with their learning, leading to improved outcomes.

The creation of the specific post to support the extended use of British Sign Language will have a positive impact on those who experience hearing impairment. There will also be a positive impact on staff who will have access to the support which will be made available to them.

The increased allocation of Pupil Support Assistants to Associated Schools Groups will enable senior staff to access additional support more timeously. The provision of support at an early stage / when a child or young person faces a specific barrier to their learning is key to maintain engagement in learning. This local support will enable early and proportionate intervention.

There is evidence of increased numbers of children and young people being given a diagnosis of an ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition). The addition of Pupil Support Assistants to the Autism Outreach team will supplement the support already provided by the teachers in the team. Increased capacity in schools to support this vulnerable group of learners will be widely welcomed.

Looked After Children can be some of the most vulnerable learners. In some cases the success of an educational placement has a significant impact on care arrangements. In order to maintain a place within mainstream provision investment in a Pupil Support Assistant can be an effective support by providing the continuity of a trusted adult, which the young person may not have experienced.

The increased level of support will have a positive impact on the confidence of parents and carers as schools demonstrate an increased capacity to meet the needs of children and young people.

The employment opportunities will have a positive impact on those who secure posts. They will benefit from the experience of working in a rewarding environment in which the positive impact of their intervention is demonstrable.

The additional cohort of support staff available across the service will have a positive impact on the current cohort of staff working within the Education service. It will increase the capacity of schools and services to meet the needs of individual children and young people.

## **7.3 Place**

Engaging children and young people in learning and raising their attainment will allow them to develop the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. As adults and citizens of Aberdeen City they will have a more positive impact on their community and will be less dependent on the support services provided by the council.

## **7.4 Technology**

It is anticipated that the provision of additional staff within classrooms will provide opportunities for increased numbers of children and young people to access technological assistance to support their learning. This will be achieved by creating

greater capacity within the classroom allowing a broader range of tasks to be planned and supervised.

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Audit of additional support needs (2017)  
Exclusion & Attendance data (2016/17)

**9. APPENDICES (if applicable)**

None

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