

**REPORT TO EDUCATION LEARNING & LEISURE COMMITTEE –
30 OCTOBER 2008**

SERVICE PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline progress on tackling priorities in the Service Plan 2008-11 and to invite views from Members.

2 Background

- 2.1 On 22 May 2008 (Item 8, Page 388), the Committee approved a new Service Plan for 2008-11 and agreed to receive a mid year progress report in October and an annual review and update the following March.

- 2.2 The current Service Plan sets the following priorities

- Development of A Curriculum for Excellence
- Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- GLOW
- Review of the future direction of Community Learning and Development
- Developing a new integrated strategy for Sport and Physical Education
- Developing a new strategy for Culture
- Establishing priorities for the School Estate and facilities for community learning and leisure
- Establishing a new Management Information System and improving arrangements for performance management
- Further developing self evaluation within Quality Assurance frameworks
- Responding to external audits and inspections of the Service and the Council
- Developing the Single Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Government

3 Progress

Development of A Curriculum for Excellence

- 3.1 Aberdeenshire's Curriculum Framework 3-18 has been prepared by a cross-service working group. It details the principles and entitlements for curriculum design and delivery. It sets out the proposals in a supplementary Consultation Document.
- 3.2 The Framework is currently out for consultation with all our stakeholders and partners. The results of the consultation will be subject to a further report to Education, Learning and Leisure Committee in December 2008.
- 3.3 All establishments are planning aspects of Curriculum for Excellence with a view to commencing national implementation in August 2009.

- 3.4 Two Curriculum for Excellence Officers continue to support and advise schools across Aberdeenshire. They are working closely with CSN and CSGs to develop fresh approaches to curriculum delivery.

GIRFEC

- 3.5 A Joint Children's Services Management group has been established. The purpose of this group is to ensure that the vision for Aberdeenshire's children – "Every child in Aberdeenshire will be valued and helped to realise their potential" – is put into action.
- 3.6 Revised joint working arrangements have been put in place with existing multi-agency strategy groups reviewed and re-designed to report to the Joint Management Group. Strategic development support to the Joint Management Group and to multi-agency strategy groups is provided by three strategy development officers (one each within Education, Health and Social Work).

GLOW

- 3.7 The GLOW team has been enhanced this session and working to very good effect. The action plan is entirely on course and aspects are ahead of schedule. For example, the 'Virtual School' has already gathered some interesting work to be shared across the Service. The schools across Aberdeenshire are involved in games based learning initiatives which are attracting national recognition.

Future Direction of Community Learning and Development (CLD)

- 3.8 A review that takes account of Scrutiny and Audit Committee's findings and recommendations from recent HMle's inspections has been completed. A report on the future direction of CLD has been circulated to Area Committees for consideration along with a draft Community Learning and Development Strategy. Comments from the Area Committees will be fed back to the Education, Learning and Leisure Committee in the Spring of 2009 who will be asked to make final decisions on future direction.

Development of a New Integrated Strategy for Sport and PE

- 3.9 A working group of staff from Sports and Leisure, Active Schools, primary and secondary schools, NHS Grampian and Sportscotland has agreed the framework for a new strategy that will link the development of sport, PE and active recreation to the broad priorities in the national sports strategy, Reaching Higher. A draft strategy should be submitted to committee for consideration early in 2009 once the findings of Scrutiny and Audit Committee's investigation into sport and leisure provision are known.

Development of a New Strategy for Culture

- 3.10 Following work on the Cultural Pathfinder project with Aberdeen City Council it is proposed that a cultural plan is produced for both areas with common objectives but it is also proposed that separate strategies are produced for each Council area that take account of local circumstances and the resources

available. A number of priorities have been identified by consultants working on the Pathfinder. A report is due to be submitted to the next meeting of the committee in December.

Priorities for the School Estate and Community Learning and Leisure Facilities

- 3.11 A comprehensive audit of the condition of all buildings managed by the Service and reviews of the adequacy of provision of sports facilities and pitches have been carried out. The Education Learning and Leisure Capital Plan and Asset Management Strategy was agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee in June, 2008. A report on projects and proposed timescales was approved by Education Learning and Leisure Committee in August 2008.
- 3.12 The Capital Plan includes proposals for £143.5 million to be spent in building new primary schools, a replacement for Alford Academy, site acquisition for Mearns Academy, as well as a replacement swimming pool for Fraserburgh. It also allocates £5.1 million to enhance primary schools and £6.2 million to enhance secondary schools, enabling critical refurbishment issues to be addressed. £350k will be spent this year to upgrade Peterhead Swimming Pool.
- 3.13 The ELL Service along with Transportation and Infrastructure (Property) are progressing site acquisition issues in order that building can progress.
- 3.14 The management of individual projects is key and a facilities management workshop was held in September where the standard design brief for new ELL buildings was focused on. Each project will have a project design team to carry the specific management relating to it and there will be regular reporting on each project to Area Committees.
- 3.15 The ELL Capital Plan and Asset Management Strategy will be reported on annually to ELL Committee.
- 3.16 The Director and Chair of ELL Committee are in regular dialogue with Scottish Government ministers with regard to the funding gap in the ELL Capital Plan and the Service awaits details of the implementation of the Scottish Futures Trust.

Establishment of a New Management Information System (MIS)

- 3.17 All primary schools have migrated to a new MIS. The secondary schools migration has begun but is involving more work than originally envisaged. This is, however, on course for completion by December 2008.
- 3.18 A review of current performance indicators for sport, the arts, libraries, museums and community learning and development has been carried out. New PIs are being developed through discussion with staff to ensure they are relevant and used to measure trends and improve performance. New software is being used to provide performance information for CLD. Its use is currently being rolled out. Following the modernisation review, a new Projects

and Performance Manager will take up post in November to oversee and co-ordinate work across Lifelong Learning and Leisure.

Development of Self Evaluation and Quality Assurance Frameworks

- 3.19 Several new publications have been released by HMle to support self-evaluation across services.
- 3.20 A day has been planned to review self-evaluation processes in educational establishments. This will contribute to the wider ranging Quality Improvement Framework which will be developed for all aspects of the Education, Learning and Leisure Service.
- 3.21 The Head of Lifelong Learning and Leisure is a member of a Scottish Government Working Group that is developing a self assessment framework for sport and culture. This work is at an advanced stage and may be piloted in Aberdeenshire.
- 3.22 All of this work within the Service will be enhanced with the formation of the Performance Management Unit.

Responding to Audits and Inspections

- 3.23 The Council's Education functions were inspected during September/October 2007 with a final report published in March 2008. This was a very positive report which highlighted the key strengths of the Education Learning and Leisure Service. The strong dynamic leadership of the Director was highlighted along with highly effective and productive working relationships between elected members and senior officials within the Council. Several areas of leading edge practice were exemplified within the report. The INEA 2 Action Plan for Aberdeenshire's Education, Learning & Leisure service was passed by EL&L committee in August 2008. The work to take forward the Main Points for Action identified within the Report are all progressing accordingly to plan.
- 3.24 A joint inspection of services to protect children in the Aberdeenshire Council Area took place in October/November, 2007. The report on the outcomes of this inspection was published in April, 2008. The main conclusion of the inspection was that when children in Aberdeenshire were identified as being at risk, action was taken to protect them and keep them safe. Key strengths were identified, as were areas for improvement. A multi-agency action has been drawn up to address the main points for action and a Project Board established to oversee the implementation. The EL&L Service has developed comprehensive guidelines for staff. These guidelines, "Protecting Children and Young People in Aberdeenshire" are complemented by a training programme for staff, partners and volunteers.
- 3.25 School inspection reports will continue to be reported to Area Committees. HMle has indicated that future inspections will be of learning communities which will include Community Learning and Development.

Developing the Single Outcome Agreement

- 3.26 The SOA has been confirmed with Scottish Government. Representatives from EL&L Service contributed to the corporate Steering Group and identified how the Service can contribute to local outcomes in the SOA. A report was taken to EL&L Service Committee in August 2008.

4 Proposals

- 4.1 As well as indicating how priorities are being progressed, the mid year progress report provides an opportunity to identify any issues or additional areas of work that could have budget implications. Such pressures can be considered as part of the budget setting process for the following year.
- 4.2 In September a meeting of senior managers in the Service discussed priorities as part of the drive to have policy led budgeting. Future proposals will be taken to Committee on this matter.

5 Policy Implications

- 5.1 The Service Plan links directly to the Council's Single Outcome Agreement and the Council's corporate objectives.

6 Staffing Implications

- 6.1 Modernisation Reviews are being carried out across the Service to ensure staff deployment is consistent with the strategic direction and priorities of the Service.

7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The budget implications of each of the priorities have been considered and are either being met from existing resources or have been identified in more detailed reports to committee.

8 Sustainability Implications

- 8.1 The Head of Service (South) is acting as the lead officer in the Directorate Management Team for sustainability. This will ensure that sustainability implications are fully considered and reflected across all areas of work.

9 Consultations

- 9.1 A number of senior staff have contributed to the report on progress.
- 9.2 The Directors of Law and Administration, Personnel and Finance have been consulted and are in agreement with the terms of the report.

10 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:-

- 1 note progress on tackling the priorities in the Service Plan for 2008-11**
- 2 agree to receive an annual review in March**

**Bruce Robertson, OBE
Director of Education, Learning and Leisure**

Report prepared by:- Rod Stone
23 October 2008