



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**SUBJECT: IMPROVEMENT AND MODERNISATION PROGRAMME: RAISING
ATTAINMENT: IMPROVED WELL-BEING OUTCOMES
(PASTORAL CARE)**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To update Committee on progress in the development of the Raising Attainment: Pastoral Care project within the Council's Improvement and Modernisation Programme (IMP) and seek direction on the development of the project.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) 1 of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to exercising all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- i) Notes the inclusion of data in relation to the impact child planning workload for Primary Schools (See Appendix 1a & 1b);**
- ii) Notes the arrangements made to date and the work that is underway to ensure that existing resources are allocated to maximise their impact on the objectives of this project;**
- iii) Notes that work will continue to explore and develop approaches that would contribute to the Business Case outcomes via other projects and funding with similar aims such as the Whole Family Well-being and SEF funding;**

- iv) **Requests that a monitoring report be provided to committee in 12 months on the extent to which the project outcomes have been addressed through these alternative routes;**
- v) **It is recommended that the matter of administrative support for the child planning process in schools is referred to the school business administration project for consideration of an appropriate solution; and**
- vi) **Agrees to cease this project (other than v) above) as part of the Improvement and Modernisation Programme in light of the above and on the basis that none of the options identified as part of the Pastoral Care Outline Business Case offer a sustainable solution that would continue beyond the time limited funding.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council established an Improvement and Modernisation Programme (IMP) to deliver transformational change across the authority, which was first approved by the Council on 12 December 2018 (para 5 of the minute refers).
- 3.2 The original IMP contained eight workstreams, one of which focused on Education related projects. A further report to Moray Council on 12 May 2021 (para 13 of the minute refers) outlined two Education workstreams for development: Raising Attainment (Curriculum Breadth and Digital) and Raising Attainment (Well-being). The Raising Attainment: (Well-being) workstream contains a project relating to Pastoral Care in primary schools which aims to improve outcomes for learners through early intervention.
- 3.3 The purpose of the Pastoral Care project is to promote and safeguard the health and wellbeing and safety of pupils in partnership with parents, support staff and partners to ensure all children, young people and their families receive the right support at the right time no matter the level of need.
- 3.4 The outcomes that this project intended to achieve are:-
 - Increased attendance at school for some children;
 - Reduction in exclusions;
 - Reduction in violence and aggressive incidents; and
 - Increased attainment and achievement.
- 3.5 These outcomes are closely aligned with the ASN Review and the broader IMP raising attainment workstream outcomes (**Appendix 1**).
- 3.6 Since the project was approved as part of the original IMP, the COVID pandemic has further heightened concerns regarding the well-being of children and young people and the consequent impact on the workforce in Moray Council schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings. These concerns include reports of delayed progress in developmental milestones such as language for children making the transition from ELC to

Primary 1 and the increase in the number of children and young people exhibiting challenging behaviour which undermines learning and attainment.

- 3.7 It is also important to acknowledge the growth in the nature and scale of service demand arising from escalating numbers of children and young people assessed as having Additional Support Needs (ASN), which is a national pattern, and the number of children in Child's Planning. Both bring increased workload for Head Teachers (HTs), some of whom are class committed which is impacting on their workload and time to lead school improvement.
- 3.8 In light of these concerns, at the Special Meeting of the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 14 December 2022, "Committee agreed to defer the report to get more information on the scope of the child planning workload within the primary schools and whether partners have the capacity/resources to support the collaborative work required to support the child's plan" (para 10 of the minute refers).
- 3.9 This has been addressed by collating child planning data from 2 sources: SEEMIS in relation to the number of Child Plans in relation to each Moray Primary School (**Appendix 1a**); and a questionnaire to all 46 Moray Primary Schools. A total of 10 questionnaires were returned, which represents a quarter of schools (**See Appendix 1b**).
- 3.10 Viewed together, both sources of data show that:-
- there is a wide variation in workload impact in terms of completing child plans across Moray Primary Schools, ranging between up to 3 hours to up to 16 hours;
 - most primary schools that responded reported an increase in time spent in completing child plans in the last 3 years;
 - Growth in time spent was attributed to the growing trend in children needing support and more complex issues requiring to be addressed;
 - there is a wide variation in terms of number of child plans held by each school which cannot be solely attributed to the size of the school roll. This ranges from 50 child plans for Millbank to 3 for Logie.
 - when Head Teachers were asked to rank their preferred improvement options, of the 5 options additional admin clerical support was the first choice and a Senior Leadership Team member with a dedicated remit for pastoral care was the fifth choice; and
 - other comments submitted included the fluctuations during the year for the completion of child plans and the particular admin challenges for smaller schools.
- 3.11 Based on this information, it could be concluded that while there is variation from one primary school to another, the growing number and complexity of child planning issues is increasing the workload for Head Teachers and their staff.
- 3.12 In order to provide support for this workload in primary schools, the ECLS Committee agreed on 7 June 2023 to amend the Devolved School

Management Scheme (DSM) for schools without enhanced provision so that the Head Teacher is non-class committed at a roll of 121 and above and the Head Teacher is class committed for 2 days at a roll of 95-120. For primary schools with enhanced provision, the Head Teacher is non-class committed at a roll of 90 (para 13 of the minute refers)

3.13 While the above investment may fall short of the scale of the transformational change envisaged by this project, it is nonetheless aligned to the IMP objectives and makes effective use of current recurring resources to support these.

3.14 It is acknowledged that there is ongoing administrative support required for the child planning process and that a solution requires to be found to effectively address this. However, IMP funding drawn from reserves to enable change and transformation is not a suitable solution for a recurring service pressure. A separate item on this committee agenda provides an update on the school business administration support review and this may offer a more appropriate route to consider a solution for child planning administrative support, therefore, it is proposed to refer this matter to that project for consideration.

Outline Business Case (OBC)

3.15 Work has progressed on an OBC to ensure that options for the use of the temporary funding from the IMP investment could be utilised. The resulting OBC identifies that the delivery of positive health and well-being outcomes for Moray learners would benefit from a consistent pastoral care approach across Secondary, Primary and ELC settings.

3.16 The OBC was originally presented to a Special Meeting of this Committee on 14 December 2022 and presented a range of options which were subsequently further developed by Officers. The revised Outline Business Case presents 4 options.

3.17 **Option 1 (Do nothing):** In light of the Council's challenging financial situation, insufficient resources are available to fund a test of change that would have a measurable impact and/or could be mainstreamed.

3.18 **Option 2 (minimal):** make further minimal improvements within the parameters of the current 'as is' model. This may include funding additional teaching hours to release class committed head teachers from teaching and/or increase PSA hours. This option would be in addition to the 2 extra days provided to HTs who have a school roll between 95-121 pupils and the support provided by NQTs. It should be noted that HT class commitment was adjusted permanently by ECLS in June 2023 addressing this point and so this option is removed.

3.19 **Option 3 (intermediate):** Fund a Principal Teacher of Pupil Support for a single Primary School and associated ELC settings for a 2 year test of change.

- 3.20 **Option 4 Intermediate (Moray team Remote):** Fund 2 Pastoral Care Officers for a 2 year period. Each Pastoral Care Officer would be responsible for primary school clusters in 4 ASG areas (i.e. both posts combined would cover all 8 ASGs).
- 3.21 The above options were evaluated against a range of critical success factors. These criteria are strategic fit, affordability, scalability and the ability to be evaluated.
- 3.22 While options 3 and 4 were considered as offering a strategic fit, the cost of undertaking a 2 year test of change has been estimated as between £100,000 to £200,000 depending on the grade of the post.

Wider Context and Overview

- 3.23 Since the inception of the Pastoral Care project there have been a number of significant developments that influence this area of work and the considerations to take it forward. This includes a number of important national developments in terms of thinking how best to support the delivery of improved well-being outcomes to children, including a Whole Family Well-being holistic approach. The considerations are set out below.
- 3.24 Council financial position - this project was originally initiated in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic and at a time when the Council had a more positive budget position with scope for investment. The initial estimated cost of £100,000 to £200,000 to undertake the pilot is now therefore not considered to be affordable. In this context, the future cost of mainstreaming the pilot -if it was deemed to be viable- would not be financially sustainable at the current time.
- 3.25 Covid impact and increasing needs – the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on children and young people and their families is acknowledged as well as the ongoing issues facing families in the current economic climate and this must be built into future core service delivery plans. These needs are now very evident and schools are striving to ensure that individual needs are met within the current system. The ASN Review is considering how to plan for this in future by taking account of developing need and learning taking place through the moderation exercise that is currently underway to assess ASN needs and support in schools across Moray to ensure the best is made of current resources.
- 3.26 Demands from supporting child's planning process – the evidence of this impact is being seen in the increasing number and complexity of cases in the child's planning process. There is a need to ensure that support is in place to make this as effective as possible. As noted above, an adjustment has been made to DSM to ensure more head teacher time is available in smaller schools.
- 3.27 Alternative funding with similar aims – recognising these issues of increasing demand, alternative funding streams have been emerging which have similar aims and new services will emerge, for example the counselling service for

school pupils. The Whole Family Well-being Fund (WFWF) (£500m over 2022-26) was put in place by the Scottish Government in response to the covid pandemic. It aims to help to support holistic family services to reduce the need for crisis intervention and to shift incrementally towards prevention and early intervention. Funding is disseminated through children's services partnerships who are required to drive the delivery of services in their area. The Moray Partnership (Girfec Leadership Group) is currently developing proposals for the use of local funding. Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) announced in November 2021 is a further example of funding aimed at improving outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty related attainment gap. This is being phased over 4 years with Moray set to receive £675,000 by 2025/26.

- 3.28 Directing of existing funding and resources – the council has already made decisions to support the issues outlined above through deployment of transformation funding as well as core budget both on a temporary basis towards Additional Support Needs (ASN) services and by permanently reducing the class contact time for Head Teachers in smaller schools to support the child planning process. A number of posts within the broader ASN central services have been temporarily held vacant to provide flexibility to meet future demand and to align to the service models that will emerge from the ASN review work. These resources will also support the aims of the Raising Attainment Wellbeing project outcomes as the services adapt to new approaches.
- 3.29 Emerging service delivery models in other authorities – the issues in Moray are not unique and other local authorities and children's services partnerships have also been working on solutions to support better outcomes for children, young people and their families. This is an area of developing work but there are a number of alternative models emerging that use a multi-disciplinary, cross service and cross agency approaches. The experiences of these new service models are of interest to the Children's services partnership in the use of the WFWF and how partnership working can best support the intended outcomes. This offers an opportunity to ensure the maximum impact from funding with similar aims to the planned IMP project.
- 3.30 Lack of sustainable models identified from investigation of options in OBC – as noted above, it has not been possible to identify a service model for across Moray within an affordable financial envelope or to identify an ongoing source of revenue funding to take forward any pilot.
- 3.31 Taking all of this into account, it is proposed to:
- Continue to develop proposals to develop services to meet the requirements for the WFWF and increasing SEF funding;
 - Continue work to identify available resources that can be re-deployed to support this project and ASN project aims;
 - Take forward the need to support the administrative elements of child's planning through the school business administration review; and
 - Close the rest of the project.

- 3.32 It is not therefore proposed to progress any of the options outlined in the Business Case and Committee is asked to cease this project as part of the Improvement and Modernisation Programme.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The Improvement and Modernisation Programme is the development of the commitment in the Corporate Plan to a programme of modernisation and improvement to contribute to a financially stable Council.

The report also relates to “Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray” as part of the LOIP and the priority “provide a sustainable education service aiming for excellence” as part of the Corporate Plan.

(b) Policy and Legal

None.

(c) Financial implications

The recommendation not to proceed with any of the options outlined in the Business Case is due to affordability and so there are no financial implications if this is accepted.

(d) Risk Implications

The most significant risk arising from this report is that if no systems wide improvement action is undertaken then there is a risk that well-being outcomes for children could deteriorate. However as noted in the report there are emerging funds and services that have similar objectives. Therefore, there will be ongoing work to develop services to address these needs and mitigate the risks.

It should be noted that to date the children’s services partnership have struggled to resource the development work for the WFWF alongside other priority work and so there is a risk of ongoing delay for this development and use of the WFWF funding.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

(f) Property

None

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

For the purposes of this report an Equality and a Socio Impact Assessment is not required as no change is proposed.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

There are no immediate climate change implications directly arising from this report.

(i) Consultations

Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Head of Finance, Quality Improvement Manager (East), Quality Improvement Manager (West), Head of HR, ICT and Organisational Development, Acting Head of Education Resources and Communities, a sample of primary head teachers and Democratic Services Manager.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The original aim of this project was to promote and safeguard the health and wellbeing of children to ensure that all children and their families receive the right support at the right time.

5.2 This aim continues to be relevant. However, due to the affordability gap and the continued development of different approaches to delivering positive wellbeing outcomes to children, none of the test of change options identified as part of the Business Case are now considered to be financially viable or sustainable. There are also opportunities to explore other approaches developed by other local authorities and to consider how the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund contributes to similar aims.

5.3 It is therefore recommended that pastoral care ceases to be part of the Improvement and Modernisation Programme and the approach to supporting the delivery of wellbeing outcomes continues to be developed within current resources.

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Background Papers:

Ref: SPMAN-1468114179-65 / SPMAN-1468114179-61
SPMAN-1468114179-64 / SPMAN-1468114179-62