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**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON  
30 OCTOBER 2019**

**SUBJECT: ACCESS TO COUNSELLING SERVICES**

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

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the introduction of funding by the Scottish Government for access to counselling services through schools.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 It is recommended that Committee:**

- (i) **scrutinises and notes the content of this report; and**
- (ii) **agrees to a further report with detailed plans of how this will operate across Moray**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Scottish Government have confirmed they will be providing £12 million funding to local authorities for 2019/2020 to support delivery of the access to school counselling service, in line with the commitment set out in the Programme for Government published last September. The initial tranche of funding will be supported by a further £16 million in each of the three financial years 2020/2021, 2021/2022 and 2022/23 and baselined in the Local Government Settlement thereafter.
- 3.2 The delivery of the service is a joint approach between national and local government and will enable children and young people to be supported more efficiently and effectively with issues affecting their mental health and wellbeing. The provision of counselling will help school staff to engage children and young people with appropriate support services from within their local communities at an early stage.

- 3.3 The funding is being distributed based on a fixed sum of £45,000 allocated to each Local Authority, seven per cent on “schools located in remote rural areas” (as defined by the Scottish Government’s urban/rural indicator), and the remainder distributed on secondary pupil numbers. Moray will receive £208,000 in 2019/2020 which will increase to £270,000 the following three years.
- 3.4 The set of aims and principles for delivery of counselling through schools (**Appendix 1**) was received mid-September. The aims and principles have been agreed to ensure the policy intent behind the commitment of increasing access to children and young people, while enabling local authorities to ensure any provision is complimentary and linked to existing local provisions. Access to counselling will be available to all children and young people aged 10 and over in primaries and secondaries across Moray.
- 3.5 A short life working group comprised of representatives from Education, Health, Social Work and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector was established in March 2019 to begin looking at models of support that would work in Moray and complement services already being delivered. A number of proposals are currently being considered, but will have to be reviewed in light of the aims and principles for implementing counsellors in schools which was issued by the Scottish Government recently. As such it still has to be decided if we will employ directly or commission a service.
- 3.6 Details of plans for the implementation of access to counselling services must be reported to the Scottish Government by 31 December 2019 and will be submitted to Committee for approval prior to this date.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

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

The report was informed by the priorities within the Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan and in particular to Ambitious and Confident Children and Young People and A Growing and Diverse Economy.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

This report relates to priorities in the Scottish Government’s programme for Government 2018.

**(c) Financial implications**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

**(d) Risk Implications**

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

Recruitment of suitably qualified counsellors could prove challenging in Moray.

**(f) Property**

There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

An Equality/Socio Economic Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform Committee on performance.

**(h) Consultations**

Chief Executive, Senior Officers in Education and Social Care, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant, Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Manager, and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

**5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 That Committee are aware of the additional monies Moray will receive to provide access to counselling services for young people and that a further report will be received with a detailed delivery plan.**

Author of Report: Lynne Riddoch, Education Officer

Background Papers:

Ref: