



**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
13 FEBRUARY 2019**

**SUBJECT: NORTHERN ALLIANCE: REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
PROGRESS UPDATE**

**BY: ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR (EDUCATION AND SOCIAL
CARE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the Education Operational Delivery Committee of the further development of the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan (Phase 2).
- 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 the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee considers and notes:-

- (i) **the progress of the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan;**
and
- (ii) **that a grant of up to £1,086,067 has been allocated to the Northern Alliance to enhance the Regional Improvement Collaborative's activities and capacity building**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Northern Alliance is a Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) between eight local authorities, across the north of Scotland: Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Eilean Siar (Western Isles), Highland, Moray Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands. The Northern Alliance is committed to improving the educational and life chances of children and young people.
- 3.2 Each RIC was asked by a joint Steering Group, consisting of the Scottish Government, Education Scotland and Local Government to produce a Regional Improvement Plan, The Regional Improvement Plan is tasked with outlining how the RIC intends to reduce inequalities and target improvement in the four national priorities from the National Improvement Framework (NIF).

- 3.3 The Northern Alliance Committee Regional Improvement Plan was submitted to Committee on 27 June 2018 (para 8 of the minute refers). The Committee resolved to note the content of the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Plan and to endorse the work of the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborative. The Plan was submitted to Education Scotland on 3 September 2018 and signed off by the HM Chief Inspector of Education/Chief Executive of Education Scotland on 17 October 2018.
- 3.4 In support of the delivery of the Regional Improvement Plan the collaborative produced a workforce plan/resource bid, which identified the resources required to ensure workstreams are effectively resourced and supported. The workforce plan/bid was submitted on 3 September 2018 to Education Scotland. The Scottish Government on 2 November 2018 made a grant of up to £1,086,067 to support RIC activity and capacity building over the current school year (1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019).
- 3.5 The Scottish Government has requested an update from the RIC in December 2018/January 2019 on progress towards securing additional staffing and networks as identified in the workforce plan/resources bid.

Emerging Literacy workstream:

- 36 schools in Moray are committed to be involved in the workstream
 - School support consists of initial whole-day training (for schools new to the workstream) and six network sessions throughout the year (for all schools)
 - There is a skeleton school improvement plan insert for the 2018/19 session which can be used by schools, following their self-evaluation, and linked to the whole-school Emerging Literacy audit
 - Practitioners have access to online resources to support the observation/ assessment of and planning for learning in early literacy, language and communication
 - Practitioners have access to and are signposted to online training resources which can be used as part of whole-school CPD
 - There is an early Level Literacy and English progression framework linked to the Benchmarks. This is being woven into the network sessions.
 - The Emerging Literacy workstream is in the process of working with early years, schools, educational psychology and allied health professional teams at local level to plan for sustainability of the approach in to the 2019/20 session and beyond.
- **Numeracy Workstream:**
- NA Numeracy Progression completed and made available to school July 2018 (Early, First, Second)
 - General agreement that each Local Authority (LA) follows its own path, subsequently sharing what has worked
 - Baseline collected from P3 and P4s in December 2017 using Gloss (Baseline) assessments.

- **1+2 Modern Languages workstream:**
 - Developing 1+2 in secondary Broad General Education (BGE) - building on last year's Scotland wide languages roadshows and sharing and comparing models across authorities
 - Started to share NA models and strategic documents to support schools.
 - Planning development of sustainable training to meet the varying needs of primary teachers
 - Gathering of authority strategies to identify baseline of activity (using Government Survey responses and Insight data to establish current picture and measuring improvement)
 - Identifying of key workstreams for 1+2 this session including P1-S3 entitlement, Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)/business links, Transition, Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL)
 - Establishing collaboration and partnerships: Scottish Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, Education Scotland, University of Highland and Islands, Initial Teacher Education and Aberdeen University
 - Trialling development of smarter communication – using 'Teams' on Glow.

- **Community Learning and Development Workstream:**
 - Across the workstream smaller groups are analysing data/information and measurements
 - The group is identifying how they might target family learning within each of the 8 LAs
 - Link in with Emerging Literacy to explore interdependencies.

- **Leadership Development workstream:**
 - Development groups established with all NAs represented
 - 3 meetings (including Orkney)
 - Leadership frameworks developed and discussed
 - 2 specific outcomes identified:
Leadership development strategy for NA confirmed
'All schools (or group of schools) are able to articulate their approach to leadership development at all levels.

- **Systems Development workstream:**
 - Group reconstituted with new members have met to discuss the school element of this workstream
 - Have agreed in principle a way forward to support improvement by collaborating on a common approach to evaluative language and a means of developing a shared understanding and expectations of standards. How Good is our School (HGIOS) 4 to be used as our supporting framework.
 - Discussion has taken place with our Education Scotland Regional Adviser to plan the delivery of this involving Quality Improvement Officers (QIOs) and Head Teachers (HTs) from across the Northern Alliance.
 - Discussion around sharing our different approaches and local agreements to classroom observations

- Yammar (social network facility) group set up for those involved in this workstream as a means to communicate quickly and share any documentation etc.
- **Early Learning and Childcare (ELC):**
 - Early Years Lead and Early Years Improvement Advisor in post from 1 October 2018 until 31 March 2020. Posts are 0.6 and 0.4 respectively FTE
 - A NA brief for infrastructure projects has been delivered. All other improvement plan actions are ongoing
 - Individual meetings with LAs to discuss progress/challenges with delivering the expansion
 - Representing LA at National ELC Partnership Forum.
- **Data Sharing and Performance Workstream:**
 - Continues to work constructively with Education Scotland to take forward a new process for sharing and interrogating data.
- **Equalities workstream:**
 - Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) group has presented at the Scottish Learning Festival.
 - It has been decided however to open out this group to make it a wider Equalities workstream. The young people themselves have asked that we have some way of identifying and supporting group practice in schools, so that this can be spread across NA and are keen to work with us on a Charter Mark for equalities.
- **Children's Services and Children's Services Planning workstreams:**
 - The Northern Alliance is evaluating the aforementioned workstreams to consider whether it would be more effective to merge the two programmes
 - The collaborative is also reviewing group membership and looking to identify a sponsor and lead for Children's Services.
- **E-learning workstream:**
 - Shetland Islands' Council and Highland Regional Council have appointed staff to the e-Sgoil Management Team
 - The team is currently standardising policies, practices and procedures in order to avoid duplication of effort and ensure that inter-authority delivery is as efficient and streamlined as possible:
 - QA procedures
 - Internet Safety Policy e-learning
 - Pupil, School and e-Sgoil Contract
 - E-Sgoil Handbook
 - E-Sgoil Improvement Plan
 - Working group to develop digital learning pedagogy
 - Working closely with the General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) and Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) to ensure that all practices and documentation comply with national guidelines and agreements.

- **Future delivery Models:**
 - The Sustaining Education in Communities Conference was held on 14 September in Inverness and brought a range of stakeholders together to try and better understand the challenges of teacher recruitment and retention, falling school rolls as well as new models that will enrich rural communities. A presentation highlighting the issues around Education in Rural Communities has been arranged for 6 February 2019.
- **Rural Poverty workstream**
 - The Northern Alliance is working to identify a lead to take this important workstream forward. The Regional Lead is working with HR colleagues to develop a post job/secondment description.

3.7 In terms of next steps, the Northern Alliance will use the allocated funding grant to strengthen resources and collaboration to support learning and teaching in order to improve outcomes for children and young people.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

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

The report is relevant in relation to 2026 Priority 3; Ambitious and confident young people – the focus is to improve the life chances of children by supporting them and their families at the earliest possible stages and as required thereafter to give all children in Moray the best opportunities to achieve their potential.

(b) Policy and Legal

Each Regional Collaborative is required to produce a Regional Improvement Plan in line with Government Strategy. Each local authority within the collaborative maintains their key strategic roles in leading forward educational services at a local level to ensure local needs are best met within existing resources. Each of the eight authorities will retain their own governance and scrutiny arrangements and will remain the accountable body for school performance and all other aspects of the day to day leadership and management of schools as enshrined in legislation.

(c) Financial implications

The grant of £1,086,067 made by the Scottish Government to the Northern Alliance is to be used for the purpose of the Programme and for no other purpose. The funding will be drawn down in March 2019.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

(h) Consultations

Senior Management Officer in Education and Social Care, Quality Improvement Officers, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant, Legal Services Manager (Litigation and Licensing), Equal Opportunities Officer, Human Resources Manager and Tracy 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 the Committee scrutinise and note the contents of this report and agree recommendations.

Author of Report: Graham Jarvis, Acting Corporate Director (Education and Social Care)

Background Papers:

Ref: