



REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL ON 30 JUNE 2021

SUBJECT: EDUCATION RECOVERY MONIES

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

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Council of plans to spend additional monies to support education recovery.
- 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 an Education Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Council agrees:

- (i) the distribution of funding of £1.9m for school year 2021/22 as set out in this report and Appendix 1, based on consultation with Head Teachers;**
- (ii) the plans to continue with additional cleaning until December 2021 at a cost of £0.3m;**
- (iii) to allocate funding of £0.6m for the estimates for sanitiser, self-isolation and pay award contingencies;**
- (iv) funding of £0.06m for two posts within HR, ICT & Organisational Development for the increased employment administration and payroll processing demands associated with the additional posts within Education; and**
- (v) to fund the shortfall of £1.5m through Covid funds held in reserves for additional support for schools recovery.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The First Minister announced plans on 16 February 2021 for an additional allocation of £60m to local government in 2021-22 to further support education recovery. The Moray allocation is £0.981m.

- 3.2 This funding is in addition to a number of grants including 2 additional funding streams to provide budget for additional staffing, i.e. £50m for additional teachers and support staff of which Moray received £0.8m and £30m for additional teachers of which Moray received £0.48m. These allocations were not fully spent as there was a delay in advertising and recruiting to some of the Covid posts. Therefore there was a balance of £0.45m. Details of funding received to date as well as how this has been allocated is shown in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.3 The rationale for the first tranche of monies in August 2020 was to build capacity, provide additionality and in particular to support those primary schools who had who had experienced low participation and engagement during the first lockdown from April to June 2020. This was evidenced in the surveys undertaken. A number of schools benefited from an additional teacher or part of a teacher (8 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers were employed) or additional Pupil Support Assistant hours (ranging from 10 hours to 21 hours across 10 schools).
- 3.4 For the secondary schools we provided additional teachers based on roll with the four largest secondary schools gaining 2 FTE and the remaining 4 1 FTE each. Some schools opted for Principal Teacher raising attainment posts whilst others decided to have teachers supporting the broad general education i.e. S1-3.
- 3.4.1 Schools who received additional Covid posts for the current session have evidenced, within their self-evaluation profiles, the impact of this to support children as they returned from the first lockdown, moved in to a second lockdown as well as further recovery to full-time school. Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs) were used effectively within school hubs during January to March in 2021 in order to support children who were not engaging with remote learning. Covid teachers were used in a variety of ways including reducing class sizes at the start of session 2021, working with groups of children or individuals or targeting areas of the curriculum for example literacy and numeracy. In some instances they were used to work with children who had been affected negatively during Covid lockdown to support their wellbeing in order to be better prepared to integrate back in to school. The Remote Learning survey as previously reported to Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee on 26 May 2021 (para 9 of the minute refers), evidenced clear progress across all actions identified in lockdown one through self-evaluation findings in the second lockdown survey. The Covid posts contributed to some of the positive outcomes and impact including quality of offer, interventions to improve progress in attainment as well as supporting children's wellbeing. Schools were clear that to support this further, additional capacity and resource would be required to strengthen further engagement in participation and engagement in learning on return to school.
- 3.5 The latest offer letter, as per paragraph 3.1 above, provides local authorities with flexibility in how the funding can be used for the following purposes.

- To employ a variety of school staff to meet the needs of children and young people in their local areas and ensure that levels of teaching and support staff in schools can be maintained in the 2021-22 academic year. This may include, for example, teachers, classroom support staff, facilities management staff, staff to support any wider rollout of testing initiatives to promote safety in school (if necessary and applicable), and administrative staff to relieve burdens on senior management teams.
- To employ early years practitioners to support the transition from ELC to primary school by, for example, embedding play-based pedagogy in early primary, supporting information sharing and organising transition activities.

3.6 To support the expansion to 1140 hours for Early Learning and Childcare, a team of Early Intervention teachers and Learning and Teaching teachers have been employed in Moray to support the early intervention agenda with our nurseries as well as looking at the quality of the learning experience. Play pedagogy has been embraced across all establishments and a very successful training programme has ensured that practitioners across primary schools are also trained in this pedagogical approach. Along with this, the ELC team have worked closely with the Moray nurseries as well as with all partners to ensure that each child moving to Primary 1 this year has a Learner Profile and Strategies (LPS) so that quality information is being passed on to Primary schools to support transition. Due to this strategic approach, the monies will not initially be used to support transition. The team of teachers will continue to work with nurseries and play pedagogy approaches will be supported through further professional development sessions as required. In addition, three new Quality Improvement Officer posts will provide additional capacity across the Quality Improvement team with one officer linked with each Associated Schools Group ensuring greater support and challenge for school improvement including scrutiny of play pedagogy as well as emerging literacy strategies in primary 1 in particular.

3.7 In order to plan for any additional monies it was important to consider key priorities within Moray. One key priority is to Raise Attainment and the raising attainment strategy provides a clear plan and direction including targets for both primary ACEL attainment as well as secondary senior phase. Progress to achieve this is ongoing with strides being made to improve key indicators. Covid-19 has seen two lockdowns affecting school pupils with the latest seeing all pupils out of school for a large part of January to March 2021. P1-3 returned first with some senior phase pupils, followed by P4-7 and more secondary pupils. The remote learning offer continually improved from the previous lockdown and the use of digital technology to support learning also increased. Covid-19 posts have supported transition between and within stages identifying gaps in learning and intervention strategies which will result in closing attainment gaps which have emerged during the pandemic.

3.8 Senior leaders in schools have spent an inordinate amount of time in managing schools, in providing childcare for key workers, managing remote learning, planning for phased reopening and recovery as well as introducing lateral flow testing for staff, S4-6 pupils and then more recently S1-3 pupils. Additional staffing should support leaders to work with individual and groups of children and young people and to provide time for leaders to lead school

improvement and recovery priorities in line with National Improvement Framework priorities. In addition to this there has been an increase in the number of violent and aggressive incidents as children returned to school as well as more children being unsettled and not in a position to learn. There has been a particular focus on redeveloping social skills and re-establishing routines which were not evident during lockdown. For many children learning was taking place across the week rather than in school hours and this took time to readjust to timetables. As recovery continues and in reference to the above, additional time is required for child's planning and education planning which has caused difficulties for those school leaders who have a class commitment and also for practitioners and support staff who are required to contribute to these planning documents. Workload for all staff has increased exponentially and we are trying to plan for an unknown situation in session 2021/22. Education has continued to provide a full service plus additional asks during the pandemic. In addition, for many families, education has been one of few stabilities during this time and flexibility of staffing has been crucial. Staff have also been required to cover those self-isolating, shielding, unwell and pregnant.

3.9 Taking this into consideration rationale for use of remaining recovery monies are:

- to release those primary Head Teachers with a teaching class commitment to concentrate on leading school improvement for session 2021/2022
- to raise attainment in Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) particularly in those schools where a positive trend is not in place.
- to build capacity in leadership across schools and the Education system
- to meet SG expectation that Moray accommodates 17 Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs). Our vacant posts do not equate with this and so Covid monies will be used to fund the additional required
- to create posts for our current NQTs to be eligible to apply for
- to have equity of support for primaries through use of additional funding ie to support schools who did not benefit from this session's funding

3.10 The rationale was shared with Head Teachers with plans in place to undertake the following

- Provide 5 schools who use Head Teacher Relief (HTR) Devolved School Management (DSM) budget to appoint an NQT with 0.2 FTE cover for the day that the Head Teacher would normally provide class cover for the NQTs non-teaching day.
- Provide 9 further schools with a class committed Head Teacher with 0.6 FTE cover to release them from their teaching commitment
- Fund an NQT for 4 schools who are struggling to create classes according to current limits
- Support school improvement, particularly ACEL achievement in 8 schools by providing them with an additional teacher.

3.11 Secondary schools can all evidence the impact of their additional Covid teachers who have been used in a variety of ways and in particular to support the tracking and monitoring of pupils across the senior phase as they prepared for their Alternative Certification Model (ACM) for this session. Due

to the success of this, funding of additional posts (2 FTE for the 4 larger schools and 1 FTE for the smaller schools) will continue.

- 3.12 Deployment of the options above, plus consideration of the underspend of Covid monies, left funding of approaching £0.5m.
- 3.13 Over the course of the last 2 sessions in particular there has been an increase in the level of need in terms of Additional Support Needs (ASN) of our children. The ASN budget is fully allocated for session 2021/2022 with no monies set aside for contingency or emerging need. Therefore it is recommended that £0.1m of the Covid monies is set aside to support any emerging need and to provide additional PSAs if required during the session.
- 3.14 Covid has also seen an increase in support required for families who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) with increased demand on the EAL team in Moray. Therefore it is also proposed that an additional 1.0 FTE Teacher, at a cost of £0.05m is appointed to the team so that children and their families can be supported further.
- 3.15 For the remainder of the non-committed budget and in order to employ a variety of school staff to meet the needs of children and young people locally, a group of Head Teachers, across primary and secondary, were consulted to gauge what posts would add greatest value to schools as we move forwards in our recovery in the Covid-19 pandemic. The suggestions were very similar across schools and were shared with Head Teachers at a weekly briefing session. As a result an e-form was shared with Head Teachers with the following options for additional posts with a request for a first option and a second option:

Primary

- An additional NQT, if available as we received additional fully funded NQTs this year
 - Funding to provide Depute Head Teachers (DHTs) with additional management time i.e. releasing them from class commitment
 - An additional teacher to support smaller class sizes as a mitigation against gaps in attainment from lack of engagement during lockdown
 - Additional PSA hours – to support groups of children
 - Additional Classroom Assistant (CA) hours
 - Additional Inclusive Practice Consultant (IPC) hours
 - Funding to cover any additional McCrone cover i.e. non class contact time for any additional posts
- 3.16 The Scottish Government has allocated a number of additional fully funded NQTs for secondary schools in Moray. Therefore Secondary schools have been offered the following options in an e-form:
- An additional primary qualified teacher to support literacy/numeracy in S1-3
 - Additional PSA hours
 - Additional IPC hours
 - Any other posts and the rationale for these

3.17 The e-form closed on Monday 7 June with the options below from across schools. The Head of Education, Quality Improvement Managers and the Business Support Team Manager, reviewed the requests against the rationale and school self-evaluation evidence. In addition, a clear aim of the Best Value Audit Report is to improve attainment and outcomes for children and young people across Moray as well as meet the needs of all learners as we recover from the impact of the pandemic on Education over the course of the last year. Based on this the requests to realise this ambition and Moray Council priority as well as mitigate against the impact of Covid on learning across Moray and further support recovery is as follows:

Post	Number	Cost
Additional teacher	14.0 FTE	£771,092
DHT cover	6.0 FTE	£330,468
PSAs	13.0 FTE	£168,480
CA	5.0 FTE	£65,000
IPC	2.0 FTE	£55,684
PT Cover	0.2 FTE	£11,016
McCrone cover	1.2 FTE	£66,000
PT Raising Attainment	2.0 FTE	£121,002
DHT	1.0 FTE	£68,617

3.18 Additional teachers have been allocated to support schools to create additional classes either due to roll data, to reduce multi-composite classes or to allow smaller class sizes to support progression in learning. DHT cover has been provided to release them from their class commitment allowing them to be used more effectively to support school improvement, child's planning processes and to add leadership capacity to drive improvement. PSA hours are being allocated in order to support those children who have not fully engaged during the latest lockdown or where there are identified gaps in learning. In addition, the level of Additional Support Needs has risen during the pandemic and there are concerns regarding some children moving in to Primary one due to the loss of time in Early Learning during the pandemic. Classroom assistant hours are allocated to those schools who have a small amount of hours and this is to provide additional support for teaching staff who are planning a higher level of differentiated learning activities. IPC posts have been allocated to those schools who require to work with families and the community to support learning and health and wellbeing. PT cover will allow management time to release the PT to support school improvement. This is not provided through Devolved School Management Budget. Two secondary schools will benefit from PTs of Raising Attainment to further support early intervention strategies and improve attainment further for particular pupils, groups or cohorts of pupils. One secondary school will benefit from an additional DHT to line manage the Covid posts, to strengthen further work to sustain a positive attainment trend and to put in place sustainable processes to support achievement and attainment for all.

3.18 A full breakdown of all funding for Covid is shown in Appendix 1. The shortfall of funding is around £1.5m. It is therefore proposed to seek Council approval to fund this from earmarked reserves for Covid to provide additional support for schools recovery and to meet the requests from HTs in light of the

extraordinary impact that Covid has had on children and young people and in particular the additional health and wellbeing needs arising from this.

- 3.19 In addition to the requests above, contingency has been made for continuation of additional cleaning in schools from August 2021 to December 2021. New guidance is awaited although at this time there is no indication that mitigations will be greatly reduced.
- 3.20 Contingency plans have also been made to continue with the purchase of hand sanitiser with a budget of £200k set aside for this. As there may be further instances for staff to self-isolate due to being a close contact, testing positive or due to restrictions for those who are pregnant, a further £100k has been earmarked for contingency purposes. Finally all of the posts above are pre any pay award. An estimate has been made for a pay award of 3% and £141k budget as a contingency.
- 3.21 The additional staffing elements noted above have created a significant increase in the employment administration and payroll processing transactions required. While some of this stems from the number of movements within the ASN workforce, it is also associated with the demands arising from the vacancy administration, recruitment, processing of appointments and changes to posts and payroll processing from the increased number of posts being created as part of the Covid recovery within Education. It is estimated that there is an increase of approximately 30% of employment administration and payroll processing compared with pre-covid levels. It is therefore requested that an additional 2 full time posts are created for a 12 month temporary period to enable the increased volume of administrative work to be undertaken.
- 3.22 The requests above are accurate at the time of writing this report. However discussions are ongoing with the NQTs who have been allocated Moray for a placement which is resulted in ongoing changes. This will impact on the number of teacher posts above and costs may increase slightly if a main grade teacher is required to fill a post currently earmarked for an NQT.
- 3.23 In order to review progress and impact of this spend across Education, Head Teachers will gather evidence of impact and report this to the Quality Assurance Team in Education during planned visits taking account of and reviewing progress towards the attainment targets set in the raising attainment strategy. In addition all Self Evaluation profiles will include an evaluative paragraph regarding additional Covid posts and impact within the school. The Corporate Management Team will review progress regularly and where necessary highlight exceptions and notable good practice to Council. This information will be used to inform reporting to ECOD committee on BGE and senior phase progress.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

This report was informed by the priorities within the Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan and in particular to Our People, Our Place and Our Future

and A Growing and Diverse Economy and Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray.

(b) Policy and Legal

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

(c) Financial implications

Corporate Management Team Additional Expenditure Warning
When the Council approved the budget for 2021/22 on 3 March 2021 (paragraph 3 of the Minute refers) it balanced only by using one-off financial flexibilities. The indicative 3 year budget showed a likely requirement to continue to make significant savings in future years. All financial decisions must be made in this context and only essential additional expenditure should be agreed in the course of the year. In making this determination the council should consider whether the financial risk to the Council of incurring additional expenditure outweighs the risk to the Council of not incurring that expenditure, as set out in the risk section below and whether a decision on funding could reasonably be deferred until the budget for future years is approved.

The full financial implications are detailed in Appendix one with Covid reserves proposed to fund this.

Schools

14 teachers @ £0.77m
2 ASN teachers @ £0.11m
DHT cover @ £0.33m
14 PSAs @£0.18m
5 CAs @ £0.07m
2 IPCs @ £0.06m
PT cover @ £0.01m
1.2 FTE McCrone Cover @ £0.06m
PT raising attainment £0.12m
DHT grade 1 £0.07m
EAL teacher @ £0.06m
ASN contingency @ £0.01m

Contingency for Covid costs from August 2021 onwards

Cleaning £0.28m

Sanitisation, pay award and self-isolation £0.6m

The budget required for two temporary (12 months) full time posts to address the employment administration elements noted above are as follows:

2 @ Grade 5 £60,400 including on costs

(d) Risk Implications

There could be financial risks from the plan should there be a requirement for an NQT to be replaced by a teacher as there is an additional cost. There are risks associated with filling all of the posts and

for them to be in place in a timely manner at the start of term which would mean a delay in work being undertaken.

(e) Staffing Implications

The additional posts will add additional workload to schools, our Human Resources department and the Business Support Team Manager as well as Educational Support Officer, Staffing. The high volume of recruitment across the Council puts additional pressure on the payroll department also. Employment administration and payroll support is requested as follows:

HR Assistant @ Grade 5 12 months
Payroll Administrator @ Grade 5 12 months
Additional posts in schools will be
14 teachers
1.2 McCrone Teachers
2 ASN teachers
13 PSAs
5 Classroom assistants
2 Inclusion Project Coordinators
2 PTs Raising Attainment
1 DHT Grade 1
EAL teacher

(f) Property

There are no property issues arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

The needs analysis in the report identifies the appropriate actions to

- address low participation and engagement
- raise attainment across the schools
- reduce the attainment gap for ASN and EAL pupils

This will assist Moray Council in meeting its obligations under the Fairer Scotland Duty as well as its public sector equality duty in promoting equality of opportunity on the grounds of race and disability.

(h) Consultations

The Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), the Head of Education Resources and Communities, the Head of Financial Services, the Human Resources Manager, Quality Improvement Managers, the Business Support Team Manager, the Equal Opportunities Officer and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer, have been consulted on this report and agree with the sections of the report relating to their areas of responsibility.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That Council considers the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the educational experience and outcomes of children and young people in Moray as well as their wellbeing and supports recovery and raising

**attainment further by endorsing the additional posts and capacity
required for session 2021/22.**

Author of Report: Vivienne Cross, Head of Education (Chief Education
Officer)

Background Papers:

Ref: