

**ANGUS COUNCIL  
CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE  
2 APRIL 2015**

**Service Review – Review of School LG Support Staff**

**Background**

Reference is made to the three year budget approved by Angus Council on 13 February 2014. Savings PSL–S–14(P) and PSL–S–15(S) related to a 15% reduction in the budget for Local Government staff in primary and secondary schools over the three year period 2014 – 2017. The total saving approved amounted to £823K over the three year period. A service review was established in April 2014 to plan how to manage the agreed saving. A core review group comprising representative's from Head Teachers, Human Resources, Finance, ASN, and Extended Pupil Support was put in place. In addition two further focus groups with a wider staff representation were also established. This review concluded in January 2015.

**Outcome**

The review recommended:

- A reduction of secondary school devolved budget for LG staff.

The review identified that there is scope to reduce the devolved budgets to primary and secondary schools. Currently the number and type of LG staff provided to a school is related to the relative size of the school roll. The formula has over the years evolved to reflect a range of central government initiatives. The formula for allocating support (LG) staff to primary and secondary schools was reviewed in 2012 and a minimum requirement for secondary schools as a 'core' staffing level set. There is scope to reduce the budget for LG staff by around 1 FTE for each secondary school and for the numbers of staff to still be over the minimum requirement set in 2012. This will release a saving of £240K per annum, £120k in financial year 2015/16 and an additional £120K in 2016/17

- Refocusing the work of the Early Intervention Assistants in Primary Schools to focus on early years.

The review recommended that the role of the current Early Intervention Assistants in Primary Schools be refocused on early years as part of the Council's early year's strategy. This revised role can be funded from the new monies received to support the implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. This will release a saving of £500k per annum, £333K in 2015/16 and an additional £167K in 2016/17.

- Further exploration of the potential to develop a cluster approach to school support services.

It was recommended that further work be undertaken to explore the potential for the development of a cluster approach to the provision of school technical and administrative support, including a review of the functions of the school office and the respective roles therein. This proposal has the potential to identify future saving through the more effective and efficient use of such staff. The current review group has been tasked with continuing to undertake this further piece of work.

- Funds available from the Scottish Government in relation to free school meals be used to cover costs of lunchtime supervision associated with this new initiative.

This proposal will release a saving of £75K per annum.

- Support for Learning Assistants (SLA), Secondary School Assistants (SSA) and Primary School Assistants (PSA) roles be amalgamated into a single role.

The review recognised that there are a number of different support roles within schools, each with staff on different pay grades. The review recommended that Support for Learning Assistants, Secondary School Assistants and Primary School Assistants roles be amalgamated into a single role. This will introduce a greater degree of flexibility, allowing staff to be focused where the need is greatest and to be used more effectively and efficiently in supporting schools. This would involve reviewing the roles and remit around 200 staff currently undertaking these roles. The current review group has been tasked with progressing this piece of work in consultation with Human Resources and union/staff representatives.

### **Conclusion**

The recommendations of the review, as well as releasing the savings agreed by Council in February 2014, will also provide for more flexible and efficient support for schools in the future. Specifically the amalgamation of SLA's, SSA's and PSA's into a single role will allow staff to be used flexibly to meet the specific needs of individual pupils and for staff to be used more efficiently in responding to the needs of the whole school community.

### **Contact for further information:**

**Tim Armstrong, Head of Children and Young People Services**

**Email: PEOPLE@angus.gov.uk**