

ANGUS COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 24 FEBRUARY 2015

CONSULTATION ON THE SECONDARY SCHOOL WEEK

REPORT BY MARGO WILLIAMSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – PEOPLE

ABSTRACT

With the implementation of the Developing our Young Workforce (Wood Commission) recommendations over the next seven years, we need to ensure that our secondary school curriculum structures and secondary school week arrangements are appropriate for our young people. We constantly review our approaches to Curriculum for Excellence in conjunction with our attainment and achievement data. It is necessary for us to consider how our secondary curriculum builds quality vocational and academic learning time and increases flexibility to support joint arrangements with further education and work placements. This paper requests Committee approval to consult widely on any possible changes to the secondary school week to improve outcomes for our young people.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Approve a wide and detailed consultation with all stakeholders regarding any possible changes to the structure of the secondary school week.
- (ii) Following consultation, request a full report on the outcome for change to the structure of the secondary school week.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/COPORATE PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

Our children and young people are confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 All Angus Secondary Schools moved to a thirty five period week in 2012. This arrangement allows for thirty teaching periods of fifty minutes and five form time periods of thirty minutes each. Form time provides an opportunity for teachers to work with small groups of pupils to review their learning progress, identify next steps and access study support. The current model is efficient in terms of teacher deployment where the teacher concerned is also a Form Tutor.
- 3.2 A number of Scottish local authorities have moved to or are moving to a thirty three period week to improve the pupil experience in light of developing Curriculum for Excellence and on efficiency grounds.
- 3.3 There is currently an evaluation being carried out into the use and value of Form Time across all our eight secondary schools. This work is being led by a Quality Improvement Officer and the evaluation report will be available by March 2015.

4. CURRENT POSITION

4.1 A Short Life Working Group was set up to identify viable options and to work up proposals for a revised Angus Secondary School Curricular Framework. The group met on four occasions and identified that there are five possible options to be considered as part of any consultation. These are:

1. No change to current arrangements;
2. Individual school flexibility within the current thirty five period structure;
3. Individual school flexibility within the school week;
4. Individual schools moving to a thirty three period week structure;
5. All Angus Secondary Schools moving to a uniform thirty three period week structure.

4.2 The earliest that any change could take place to the structure of the school week would be session 2016-2017 to allow for full consultation with all stakeholders and adequate time to design timetable changes.

5. PROPOSALS

5.1 It is proposed there is wider consultation with regard to the model that best fits the needs of individual schools and Angus Council. Comprehensive consultation with all stakeholders including young people, parents and staff is required. Critical analysis of feedback will be made to ensure the needs of individual schools are met whilst retaining a coherent secondary school day and curriculum across all our eight secondary schools.

5.2 Information relating to the consultation along with the preferred outcome will be brought back to Committee for consideration.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs associated with the consultation relate in the main to staff time and will be met from existing resources. A full cost benefit analysis of any preferred options will be undertaken as part of the exercise and will be detailed in the future report to this committee as noted above..

7 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no Human Rights implications arising from the consideration of this report.

8 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The issues contained in this report do not fall within an approved category that has been confirmed as exempt from an equalities perspective.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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