

ANGUS COUNCIL

19 OCTOBER 2017

THE TAYSIDE CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE

REPORT BY MARGO WILLIAMSON – CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ABSTRACT

This report provides an update to Council on the progress made in establishing a children's services improvement collaborative comprising Angus, Dundee and Perth and Kinross Councils, NHS Tayside and other local and national partners.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Angus Council:

- (i) Note the background information and progress made to date.
- (ii) Note the recommendations in Lisa Bird's secondment report.
- (iii) Approve the approach to establishing an education improvement collaborative as noted in section 4.2, and
- (iv) Requests the Strategic Director - People to bring a progress report back to Council in October 2018.

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

This report contributes to the following local outcome(s) 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
- Individuals and families are involved in decisions which affect them
- Individuals are involved in their communities
- We have improved the health and wellbeing of our people and inequalities are reduced

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In December 2016 a common report, *Strategic Collaboration and Enhanced Partnership Working (Angus, Dundee and Perth and Kinross Councils – Education and Children's Services)*, was approved at the respective Full Council/Committee/Executive Board meetings of Angus, Dundee, Perth and Kinross Councils and NHS Tayside (report 428/16 refers). The report set out the potential for extended collaborative approaches between the above named organisations working in close partnership with the Third Sector and private enterprise as appropriate.

- 3.2 The report identified that working together in this way was essential to plan to address the national agenda in terms of tackling poverty, closing equity gaps, raising attainment and improving the health and wellbeing of all children, young people, families and communities. It concluded the work could be taken forward at pace but that should be balanced against the need to ensure it was done in conjunction with all appropriate stakeholders. A commitment was made to bring a further report before Council in October 2017 which provided information about a joint strategy and delivery plan.
- 3.3 Since that time the Tayside Children's Services Collaborative has developed and agreed a joint Integrated Children's Services Plan (ICSP) – *The Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and their Families 2017-2020* (Appendix 1). This plan reflects shared leadership towards multi-agency cross-border collaboration in the planning, management, commissioning, delivery, evaluation and improvement of services to children, young people and families. It also reflects a shared and longstanding commitment to implementing Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). It has as its clearly stated ambition that:
“Our children and young people will have the best start in life and Tayside will be the best place in Scotland to grow up”
- 3.4 In February 2017 Lisa Bird, a senior civil servant, was seconded from the Scottish Government to work with the Directors in Tayside to provide support and challenge for the work that was being developed. This unique role enabled her to do this whilst simultaneously informing aspects of the work being developed nationally in response to the Education Governance Review Consultation. Lisa Bird's Secondment Report (Appendix 2) provides the detail of the next steps for the Tayside Children's Services Collaborative. The report's 34 recommendations have been considered and accepted by the Strategic Group for Tayside's Children whose membership comprises of the Chief Executives of the main partners of the Collaborative.
- 3.5 On 15th June 2017, the Deputy First Minister published the government's response to the Education Governance Review focusing on the empowerment of schools and communities to deliver excellence and equity for all learners. The Next Steps Report (<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/06/2941>) stated that up to seven Improvement Collaboratives would be created. It is intended that each of these would:
- Provide excellent educational improvement support for headteachers, teachers and practitioners through dedicated teams of professionals. These teams will draw on Education Scotland staff, local authority staff and others;
 - Provide coherent focus across all partners through delivery of an annual regional plan and associated work programme aligned with the National Improvement Framework;
 - Facilitate collaborative working across the region, including sharing best practice, supporting collaborative networks and pursuing partnership approaches.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 The Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families identifies five priorities:
1. Our children will have the best start in life, they will be cared for and supported to learn in nurturing environments.
 2. Our children, young people and their families will be meaningfully engaged with learning and combined with high quality learning experiences, all children and young people will extend their potential.
 3. Our children and young people will be physically, mentally and emotionally healthy.
 4. Our children and young people who experience particular inequalities and disadvantage will achieve health, wellbeing and educational outcomes comparable with all other children and young people.
 5. Our children and young people will be safe and protected from harm at home, school and in the community.

Five working groups have been established to reflect each of the priorities listed above:

- Group 1: Pre-Birth & Early Years
- Group 2: Learning & Attainment
- Group 3: Mental Health & Well-Being
- Group 4: Looked After Children, Care Leavers & Young Carers
- Group 5: Safeguarding & Child Protection

Membership of all groups has been established. Each group is in the process of developing a detailed delivery plan which will detail the key areas of collaboration linked to each priority area until 2020; i.e. for the duration of the Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families.

- 4.2 The approach to collaboration as outlined in 1.5 is already embedded and planned across all groups, including the Learning and Attainment priority group. This approach will ensure educational improvement is established as a core priority within broader children's services. This group includes Chief Education Officers from the three local authorities and has already brought together collective approaches to school quality improvement in partnership with Education Scotland. It is this Learning and Attainment priority group that will fulfil the (to be statutory) function of an education improvement collaborative as identified in the Next Steps Report.
- 4.3 The governance arrangements and delivery mechanisms outlined in Chapter Four of Appendix 2 are designed to ensure local authorities maintain a key strategic role in leading children's services at a local level. Each of the local authorities will retain their own governance and scrutiny arrangements, through committees and other means, to govern education and children's services. Further work may require to be undertaken in this area in future once the new Education Bill 2017 has been consulted upon and ultimately enacted.
- 4.4 Following the publication of the Next Steps Report the Scottish Government and Local Government have worked together to clarify and agree how best to implement regional collaboration. Through this process it was agreed that the Regional Director role be positioned as a Regional Improvement Lead. A member of staff from one of the Tayside local authorities will be selected by the three Chief Executives to co-ordinate consistent improvement activity as outlined by Scottish Government. It is intended that this appointment will be made by the end of October.
- 4.5 Work will continue with the Scottish Government to agree specific aspects of how the new collaboration arrangements for education improvement will be delivered across Tayside. Areas to be agreed include clarifying what the role of Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate will be in providing support and challenge for the Collaborative.
- 4.6 A briefing session, with the leads for all of the priority groups, for all Elected Members in each of the Community Planning Areas will be arranged before the end of the year, this will provide an opportunity for discussion and scrutiny of each of the action plans.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It is anticipated that any resources implications arising from this report will be met within existing budgets.
- 5.2 The workforce implications relating to the Collaborative are under review. .. Further information will be brought to Council as and when it is available.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2017-2020 is the first joint plan to be produced by the three Community Planning areas of Angus, Dundee and Perth and Kinross. Its production was a significant first step in presenting the aspiration of our collaboration with and for children and families. By working together and sharing resources we seek to improve outcomes for all.

- 6.2 The Learning and Attainment Priority Group is designed to fulfil the function of an educational improvement collaborative. Through it we will deliver on the expectations for children and young people, staff and parents as outlined in the Next Steps Report.
- 6.3 A Regional Improvement Lead will be appointed to co-ordinate consistent improvement activity within the Tayside Children's Services Collaborative.
- 6.4 On-going work with the Scottish Government will continue as outlined in section 4.5 above.

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

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Appendix 1: The Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families
Appendix 2: The Tayside Children's Service Collaborative: Secondment Report.