

ANGUS COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 14 JUNE 2022

EDUCATION RECOVERY UPDATE

REPORT BY KELLY MCINTOSH, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

ABSTRACT

This report provides Committee with an update of how the expenditure of Covid-19 'recovery' funding for additional education staffing resource, which was delegated to the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate was utilised. [Report 300/21](#) refers. This report also provides Committee with an update on how funding for permanent staff has been utilised and updates on the operational requirements as a result of Covid-19.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Children and Learning Committee:

- (i) Notes the update of the temporary education recovery funding as outlined in section 4;
- (ii) Notes how the first allocation of permanent funding for school staff has been utilised, as outlined in section 5;
- (iii) Notes the updated operational requirements for schools as a result of Covid-19, as outlined in Section 6.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN 2017-30 / COUNCIL PLAN / TAY PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within: The **Angus Community Plan 2017-30**:

- The best start in life for children
- Improved physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing
- More opportunities for people to achieve success

The **Council Plan 2019-2024**:

- We want to maximise inclusion and reduce inequalities

The **Tayside Plan** for Children, Young People and Families 2021-23

- Our children having the best start in life in a nurturing environment
- Our children and young people being meaningfully engaged with high quality learning experiences to extend their potential
- Our children growing up healthy, confident and resilient with improving physical and mental health and strengthened emotional wellbeing

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Reference is made to [Report 143/21 and Report 300/21](#), considered by the Children and Learning Committee in May and September 2021. These reports described the allocation to Angus Council of £1,258,000 of Education Recovery temporary grant funding. The Director of Education and Lifelong Learning was granted delegated authority to plan the expenditure of these monies with Report 300/21 outlining the three main projects identified. An update of these projects is provided at section 4, with the latest financial position detailed in section 8.
- 3.2 In August 2021 Scottish Government announced two separate allocations of funding to be used for permanent school staff.
- 3.3 The first round of funding was an allocation of £1,102,000 and was available for session 2021/22. The conditions for this funding included an expectation that an additional 22 teachers and 11 support staff would be recruited.

- 3.4 The second round of funding available from 1 April 2022 gave a total allocation of £3,084,000. The use of this funding was considered in conjunction with the Scottish Equity Funding allocations to Angus Council and the Care Experienced Children and Young People monies at a meeting of council officers on 20 April 2022.
- 3.5 This funding for additional permanent staff was listed in the Education and Lifelong Learning budget efficiencies for 22/23 (see [Report 95/22](#)).
- 3.6 Section 5, below, sets out the latest updates in relation to this funding and any associated recruitment exercises.
- 3.7 Since September 2021 Scottish Government have continued to issue [Guidance on Reducing the Risks in Schools](#). The latest version was issued on 03 May 2022. The latest updates regarding school operations are detailed in Section 6, below.

4. CURRENT POSITION

Use of temporary covid recovery funding

- 4.1 The Annual Education Plan 2020-21 listed recovery in literacy, especially reading, as a priority. Work to support literacy included a test of change using Sound Reading System (SRS), a carefully constructed linguistic phonic programme which supports teachers to fully understand the structure of the writing system. The success of this resulted in this funding being continued into session 21-22.

The Science of Language and Reading Project (SOLAR) project currently delivers three cross-cutting interventions namely Elklan (speech, language and communication courses); Sound Reading System (SRS), a reading and spelling pedagogy; and Writing across the Curriculum.
- 4.2 51 participants across 9 schools and 11 ELCC settings have completed Elklan courses which introduce the Communication Chain and effective strategies and profiling of receptive and expressive language. Muirfield Primary School is working towards becoming Scotland's first Elklan Communication Friendly Setting and one of their Lead Communication Practitioners is training to become a Let's Talk Tutor and will deliver courses for parents next session.
- 4.3 So far, 117 teachers across 16 schools, have been trained in SRS. Evaluations show that SRS is having a positive impact on learner engagement and learner confidence, as well as significant progress evidenced in decoding (reading) skills and encoding (spelling) skills. SRS has helped increase teacher predictions of learners likely to reach end of level expectations.
- 4.4 The SOLAR team has also raised the profile of writing across the curriculum through delivery of over 20 CLPL and moderation sessions with significant interest being expressed by schools for next session.
- 4.5 The team is currently involved in research and is developing further inclusive pedagogical interventions which will be rolled out to schools.
- 4.6 Within Early Years 12 additional Early Years Practitioners (EYPs) were employed on a temporary contract across 12 identified schools for the 2021-22 session. The EYPs support successful transitions between the nursery setting and Primary 1, along with providing targeted support for children and further embedding play-based approaches. The EYPs were placed within Andover Primary, Burnside Primary, Carlogie Primary, Grange Primary, Hayshead Primary, Inverbrothock Primary, Ladyloan Primary, Langlands Primary, Lochside Primary, Seaview Primary, Southmuir Primary and Strathmore Primary.
- 4.7 All EYPs participated in a Quality Improvement Practitioner Programme delivered by Angus' Improvement Advisor and supported by an Angus Head Teacher who has undertaken the Scottish Coaching and Leading for Improvement programme (SCLIP). Evaluations of the programme show that the EYPs understand that quality improvement is a systematic approach and that looking at data over time is crucial for improvement work. Almost all EYPs in the programme can confidently develop a measurement plan for improvement that includes outcomes and measures. The ongoing improvement projects cover a diverse range of aims which include aspects such as transitions, outdoor play, family engagement and pupil support. Each project involves the EYP working collaboratively with their wider Early Level team. All practitioners acknowledge the significance this programme is having on their practice, empowering them to take meaningful action for improvement and positively impacting on the children's Early Level experience.

- 4.8 Each of our school clusters was provided with up to £75 000 to facilitate recovery within their context. An update on how this funding is being utilised is at appendix 1.
- 4.9 The covid recovery funding has also enabled a focus on the development of a 2-18 tracking and monitoring tool. The funding has enabled a dedicated part-time member of staff to lead on the development of the tool. This work has resulted in the development of a live link from SEEMIS and a monitoring and tracking system which will enable all staff to analyse how children and young people are progressing in their learning.

5. ADDITIONAL PERMANENT FUNDING

- 5.1 The first stream of additional permanent funding for school staff saw 10 temporary primary teachers offered full-time contracts and the secondary staffing formula increased by 10FTE. Two teachers were seconded into Angus Virtual School to support schools with recovery in literacy and numeracy, and the moderation of assessment. Three permanent SPSAs have been recruited and efforts to recruit additional numbers are ongoing.

6. OPERATIONAL UPDATES

- 6.1 The latest Guidance on Reducing Risks in Schools was published on 03 May 2022 and applies until the end of the summer term. The guidance recommends the removal of many mitigations previously in place in schools and provides advice on a small number to be retained.
- 6.2 Angus Council is working to implement the latest guidance, including making amendments to cleaning arrangements as required. Hand hygiene and respiratory/cough hygiene remain important mitigations. Colleagues from the central team have engaged closely with partners at Public Health Tayside to ensure amendments to processes are fully compliant with current guidance. An updated risk assessment template has been produced and shared with trade unions.
- 6.3 Schools are also advised to maintain current arrangements with regards to ventilation. Local guidance has already been issued to head teachers regarding ventilation and advice is available where necessary from colleagues in the Infrastructure directorate. Angus Council was allocated up to £254,000 of capital funding to take forward any required interventions in support of ventilation. Colleagues in Infrastructure have provided technical advice to enable the appropriate expenditure of this funding.
- 6.4 The wearing of face coverings is not mandatory, but it will remain encouraged in indoor communal areas in line with the wider workplace guidance. Any individual who wishes to wear a face covering in a school setting will be supported to do so.
- 6.5 From January to the end of March 2022 there were over 4000 cases of Covid-19 affecting children and young people in our schools, and almost 600 affecting staff. These figures are based on cases being reported to the central team by our schools. Changes to arrangements for testing and reporting cases mean that accurate case number data can no longer be collated. A small number of schools have experienced severe staffing difficulties due to Covid-19 cases. Brechin and Monifieth High Schools both reintroduced remote learning for S3 only on a temporary basis to address this. Airlie Primary School also temporarily closed and provided a remote learning offer.
- 6.6 Some Angus schools experienced disruption due to Storm Arwen. Some schools were closed on a precautionary basis after the storm due to power cuts and to allow for checking of buildings, removal of dangerous trees and emergency repairs. School transport services for schools remaining open were also affected by disruption to the road network. A remote learning offer was in place for all schools unable to open after the storm.

7. PROPOSALS

It is proposed that the Children and Learning Committee notes the use of the education recovery funding as outlined in section 4, the use of permanent funding as outlined in section 5 and the operational updates as outlined in section 6

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The following table sets out the costs associated with delivery of the projects detailed in Section 4:

Project	Projected Cost
Extension of Sound Reading System	£140,000
12 x Early Years Practitioners	£350,000
8 x cluster projects	£600,000
Development of 2-18 tool	£32,000
TOTAL	£1,122,000

- 8.2 Current projections indicate expenditure of £1,122,000. The total allocation available to the Directorate is £1,258,000. The balance of the remaining funding will be deployed throughout the system to augment the identified projects as required.
- 8.3 The costs of additional cleaning and PPE resources for schools for financial year 2021/22 were met from government grant funding and Covid-19 budget uplift. Any additional costs for financial year 2022/23 will be met from existing Education and Lifelong Learning budgets.
- 8.4 The projected full year cost of additional cleaning and PPE resources for school year 2021/22 is detailed in the table below:

Area of Expenditure	Actual spend to 31 March 2022	Projected spend to end of term June 2022	Projected total spends for school year 2021/22
Additional Cleaning	£732,804	£244,269	£977,073
PPE	£182,513	£60,837	£243,350

Costs for school year 2022/23 are anticipated to be significantly lower, due to the removal of the requirement for additional cleaning and provision of some additional hygiene resources. At all times, Angus Council will follow the latest guidance from Scottish Government regarding Covid-19 mitigations. Should there be a requirement to re-introduce measures at any point in the upcoming year this will be done as quickly as practical.

- 8.5 The cost of works relating to ventilation is estimated to be £21,356 as at 31st March 2022. These costs are met in full from the capital grant funding provided by Scottish Government.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached.

10. CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The Director of Children, Families and Justice and all Angus Council head teachers have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- [Report 143/21](#)
- [Report 300/21](#)
- [Report 95/22](#)

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List of Appendices: Appendix 1: Summary of Cluster Proposals

Appendix 1

Cluster	Update on use of funding
Arbroath North	An Active Schools Assistant post was created. With a focus on health and wellbeing the aim of this new post is to increase learner participation in physical activity and sport, and ultimately school engagement through addressing equity and barriers to learning. HTs are monitoring attendance/engagement in activities/groups and gathering regular feedback from school staff and the Active Schools Team. This intervention is a standing item on the cluster agenda, allowing progress to be tracked and monitored. The remaining funding was distributed pro-rata amongst all schools, funding individual projects. Both schools at Abbey View Campus are investing in HWB training for all staff. Other schools have identified Learning for Sustainability and transition as priorities. Each HT continues to evaluate the impact of these interventions.
Arbroath West	An Active Schools Assistant post was created. With a focus on health and wellbeing the aim of this new post is to increase learner participation in physical activity and sport, and ultimately school engagement through addressing equity and barriers to learning. A Support Worker post was created. This position adds to the valued Family Support Team with a focus on improving the attendance and engagements of learners, particularly in the P6-S2 range. The Support Worker is engaging with families and pre-school clubs to increase opportunities for engagement. Both of these interventions have a simple referral system to ensure that the right children receive the support required.
Brechin	Analysis of data identified a gap in First Level reading across the cluster. GL Pass Standardised Assessments were purchased to establish a consistent baseline to identify focus groups and deliver timely interventions e.g. Precision Teaching. The funding has also been used to increase capacity of the staff team: 0.2 FTE of a class teacher and 3 FTE School and Pupil Support Assistants. This has afforded a real and relevant leadership opportunity for an existing PT within the cluster. Robust evaluation processes are in place and involve regular monitoring and tracking of progress. This has resulted in the first cohort of learners achieving their identified, individual targets and the standardised assessments are now being used to identify the next group of learners.
Carnoustie	There was agreement across the cluster of the need to improve Health and Wellbeing for learners as part of the recovery phase. Funding has been used to increase School Pupil Support Assistant hours by 3 FTE and to deliver Outdoor Learning activities across the cluster. Individual schools each have their own systems in place to identify individuals and groups of learners who will benefit from interventions focused specifically on developing resilience and social skills.
Forfar	Forfar Head Teachers collaborated to identify focused areas of improvement agreeing literacy, outdoor learning/play and a refresh of their cluster vision and aims to strengthen partnership working. An action group comprising staff from across the cluster are working on literacy recovery; and additional staffing is in place to lead literacy improvements through the use of to Read Write Inc and Fresh Start. A continuing focus on developing reading for pleasure is planned and supported by the Forfar Academy librarian. Following whole school audits involving a range of stakeholders, outdoor learning and outdoor play have been enhanced across the cluster. Training has taken place to increase the knowledge, skill and confidence of staff – this will ensure increased capacity around the sustainability of this improvement.
Kirriemuir	The cluster has had to refocus this recovery work due to the challenges around releasing staff to engage in the planned moderation of writing. Given that each school had already identified Learning for Sustainability as an individual priority, it was agreed that this would be the cluster approach to support learners and their emerging needs through recovery. All cluster schools have allocated funding for individual projects which include professional learning for staff and improvement of the school grounds. Impact will be measured through cluster moderation, providing time for planning, reflection, professional dialogue, and improvements in outcomes for learners.

Monifieth	<p>Monifieth HTs collaborated and agreed to appoint an additional School Pupil Support Assistant at MHS. This post will support individuals and groups who attend or have been referred to HEART (Healthy, Engaging, Achieving, Relating, Thriving) provision. The HEART team is a resource specifically dedicated to support young people experiencing adversity. There is an already well-established referral process in place. The remaining funding enabled the primary schools to contract Angus Alive to provide outdoor learning opportunities for small groups and individuals. A review of data was undertaken to identify priority children to engage in these interventions e.g., pupil leadership, P7 transition, and specific activities for children with additional support needs ASN. These are monitored by class teachers and support staff. Staff have benefitted from a range of professional learning opportunities and early evaluations indicate an increase in their skill, confidence and ability to lead this learning outdoors more independently.</p>
Montrose	<p>A Transition Teacher (Literacy) is leading a reading intervention for all P7s which will continue on into S1; resources for all teaching staff across the cluster have also been purchased to ensure a more consistent approach to teaching reading and support moderation.</p> <p>Attendance data has highlighted that some families would benefit from support to improve attendance. A Family Support Worker has been appointed to work with identified families to improve this; equipping families with the organisational skills and confidence to ensure that attendance rates are improved and maintained. Already there have been marked improvements for some individuals with one example of attendance increasing by 50% over the duration of Term 3. Evaluation of this work is well underway; feedback from teachers and regular progress meetings show increased attainment; feedback from families indicates that the Family Support Worker is having a positive impact and improved attendance reflects this.</p>