

**SPECIAL CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 2 MARCH 2023**

**BUDGET EFFICIENCIES – EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING DIRECTORATE**

**REPORT BY KELLY MCINTOSH, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

**ABSTRACT**

This report summarises the budget efficiencies identified by Education and Lifelong Learning for the Council's 2023/24 revenue budget. Identified budget savings for financial years 2024/25 and 2025/26 are included in this report on an indicative basis only. Final decisions on those savings will be made as part of the budget setting process for those financial years.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1.1 It is recommended that the Children and Learning Committee:

- a) note and discuss the Education and Lifelong Learning budget issues detailed in Appendix A in relation to inflationary increases, totalling £1,381,000;
- b) note and discuss the budget efficiencies identified for Education and Lifelong learning detailed in Appendix B, totalling £2,423,000 for 2023/24, £2,807,000 for 2024/25 and £1,402,000 for 2025/26;
- c) agree that feedback and comments will be reported verbally by the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning to the meeting of Angus Council on 02 March 2023, following the conclusion of this Committee.

Items a) and b) are before Angus Council for consideration later today as part of the Council's overall revenue budget for 2023/24.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN**

2.1 This report contributes as a whole to the delivery of the Council Plan.

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 Reference is made to [Report 95/22](#) which described budget efficiencies for Education and Lifelong Learning directorate for 2022/23. The identified savings and budget issues were agreed as set out in the Minute for the Angus Council budget meeting held on 03 March 2022.

3.2 Reference is made to [Report 8/23, Appendix 2](#) which sets out the latest risk assessment for Angus Council in terms of financial sustainability. At present this risk has been assessed at 25, the highest possible score. Angus Council has a funding gap of £52.1m over the next three financial years. Delivery of savings of this magnitude will require contraction across a range of services.

3.3 The Committee is also referred to Report 40/23 – Finance and Change Plan which is part of the agenda for the Special Angus Council meeting later on 02 March 2023. This plan provides further context for the 2023/24 budget setting process and why such significant savings are required.

## 4. CURRENT POSITION

### Budget Issues

- 4.1 As part of the budget planning process, officers from Education and Lifelong Learning have identified budget issues relating to inflationary increases for key services. Reference is made to Appendix A.

### Identified Budget Efficiencies

- 4.2 Reference is made to Appendix B, which sets out efficiencies identified for the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate in 2023/24. Items 2, 3a and 6 were previously agreed in 2022/23. Their inclusion in the budget for 23/24 reflects the efficiency associated with the remainder of the academic year to June 2023.
- 4.3 Item 1 refers to the further utilisation of Early Years Expansion revenue grant monies through apportionment of Early Years costs currently being contained within other service areas and the core budget. This includes realignment of costs associated with property maintenance, cleaning and facilities management and duplicate budget codes for other agencies. This efficiency is permissible within the terms of the ring-fenced revenue funding received from Scottish Government.
- 4.4 Item 3b refers to the further contraction of the Angus Virtual School (AVS) service. This efficiency removes the opportunity for secondment to AVS.
- 4.5 Items 4 and 5 refer to operational efficiencies for these services. At present there is a differential between funding received for universal free school meals and the actual uptake of provision. There is a risk that the terms of this funding change, or that uptake will increase significantly. Regular data monitoring takes place. In terms of school transport, work is ongoing to determine efficiencies to be realised aligned to the free U22 transport programme funded by Scottish Government.
- 4.6 Item 7 refers to a review of management time allocation for primary schools. This efficiency can be delivered while maintaining the existing Pupil : Teacher Ratio, and also ensuring adherence to Scottish Negotiating Council for Teachers agreements, [Report 83/15](#) and [Report 73/16](#).
- 4.7 Item 8 refers to the removal of the remaining visiting specialist role in primary schools. The role currently delivers specialist input in relation to the Arts and Physical Education. This proposal does not affect our ability to deliver on the statutory requirement to provide at least two hours of quality Physical Education provision per week. Arts input will be maintained through learning experiences as part of the Broad General Education. This efficiency will be effective from 2024/25.
- 4.8 Item 9 refers to a proposal not to fully utilise the additional settlement funding allocated by Scottish Government for increasing teacher numbers. The first element of this funding was ring-fenced and Angus Council appointed 22FTE additional teachers and 10FTE School & Pupil Support Assistants on a permanent basis. A portion of the second element of this funding is to be utilised towards the PACE / RISE Programme, which is set out in the Angus Education Plan 2022-27 as a Directorate priority. The utilisation of this funding is subject to ongoing national discussions between CoSLA and the Cabinet Secretary for Education.
- 4.9 Item 10 refers to a reduction in central budgets for supply staff. This proposal is based on an analysis of expenditure trends.
- 4.10 Item 11 refers to the remainder of Staffing Efficiencies which were previously identified and approved by Members in 2018 as part of Angus Council's Change Programme. Efficiencies included the removal of additionality to schools with the highest levels of deprivation, and the first phase of reduction of the visiting special service. As detailed in [Report 79/21](#) it was agreed to reprofile the delivery of these efficiencies. The revised programme is set out in Appendix B.
- 4.11 Item 12 refers to an additional £1.7million of efficiencies which will be required in 2024/25 and 2025/26. At this time there are no plans as to how this saving may be delivered. Careful consideration will be required in the context of national discussions regarding teacher numbers.
- 4.12 Item 13 refers to potential future savings which could be realised through a revision of the Angus Schools for the Future programme. At this time there are no firm plans, however consideration

will be made of the most efficient use of our learning estate, and associated management and operational models. A report will be brought before Children and Learning Committee in June 2023 providing an update on the Angus Schools for the Future programme.

### **Review of Charges**

- 4.13 The Council levies fees and charges for some of the services it provides. As set out in Appendix C, it is proposed that school meal charges increase by 10p for both primary and secondary. While acknowledging the cost-of-living pressures affecting families, it is more than five years since school meal charges were last revised. The impact of this is somewhat mitigated through the availability of free school meals for all children in Primary 1-5, and those eligible on financial grounds in P6-S6.

## **5. PROPOSALS**

- 5.1 Members of the Children and Learning Committee are asked to note and discuss the budget issues, efficiencies and increases to charges as set out in Section 4. The Director of Education and Lifelong Learning will provide verbal feedback to the Special Angus Council meeting taking place on 02 March 2023.
- 5.2 The Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate will continue to monitor the effective use of budgets and consult with Head Teachers and setting managers to evaluation the service provided to our children, young people and families.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no additional financial implications for the Council beyond those set out in the body and appendices of this report. All savings identified are considered necessary due to the continued pressure on the Council's finances and real terms reductions in government grant funding for core services. Members should note that any changes to the budget efficiencies identified in this report which have financial implications will impact onto the Council's overall budget and the basis for achieving a balanced budget.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 Equality Impact Assessments and, where required, Fairer Scotland Duty Assessments have been prepared for the items set out in this report.

EIAs and Fairer Scotland Duty Assessments covering Budget Savings – Appendix B1-5  
EIA covering review of charges – Appendix C1

Other proposals do not require full EIAs as they do not impact on people or are for information only. Screening EIAs have been prepared and are available on request.

**NOTE:** The following background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 were relied on in preparing the above report.

- Finance Circular 11/2022 issued by the Scottish Government
- [Report 79/21](#) – Staffing Budget Efficiencies
- [Report 95/22](#) – ELL Budget Efficiencies
- [Report 8/23](#) – Corporate Risks and Risk Management
- [Report 73/16](#) – Review of Management Structures in Primary Schools
- [Report 83/15](#) – Primary School – Teaching Staffing Standard

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### List of Appendices

Appendix A – Directorate Budget Issues

Appendix B – Directorate Budget Savings

Appendix C – Directorate Review of Charges

Appendix D – Directorate Net Expenditure Summary - 2023/24 Provisional Revenue Budget

Appendix E – Directorate 2023/24 Provisional Capital Budget

Appendix B1-5 – Equalities Impact Assessment – Budget Savings

Appendix C1 – Equalities Impact Assessment – Review of Charges

Also attached:-

Provisional Revenue & Capital Budgets 2023/24 – Background Report (Report 54/23 to be considered by Special meeting of Angus Council on 2 March 2023)