

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 20 November 2012

BY: Executive Director (Services for People)

SUBJECT: School Clothing Grants

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To request that Committee approve the amendments to the list of qualifying benefits families have to be in receipt of to be eligible to apply for a school clothing grant.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Committee is asked to:-

- i. Approve the amendments to the list of qualifying benefits to meet the requirements set out by internal audit. It should be noted that there is not a change or increase to the number of benefits accessing clothing grants.
- ii. Note that the qualifying benefits are:
 - Income Support;
 - Income Based Job Seekers Allowance;
 - Employment and Support Allowance (income related).
- iii. Note that the Department will continue to assess any requests made by families for a clothing grant on the basis of financial hardship, ensuring that the grant continues to target families most in need.
- iv. Note the East Lothian Council Internal Audit Report entitled “Audit Report on Free School Meals and Clothing Grants”, which has been lodged in the Members Library (248/12 (October 2012 Bulletin)).

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Clothing grants are awarded to families in receipt of Income Support/Income Based Job Seekers Allowance/Employment and Support Allowance. A recent internal audit highlighted that Employment and Support Allowance was not

actually quoted on the application form as a passport to this grant. The recommendation from Internal Audit was that this anomaly should be rectified.

- 3.2 The current budget for clothing grants is £92,845. The recommendation to update the form to reflect current Income Support/Income Based benefits will not introduce new eligible applicants. However, it should be noted that the current economic climate may increase the number of future applications.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no policy implications.

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 This report is not applicable to the well being of equalities groups and an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - None
6.2 Personnel - None
6.3 Other - None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 East Lothian Council Internal Audit Report entitled "Audit Report on Free School Meals and Clothing Grants", which has been lodged in the Members Library (248/12 (October 2012 Bulletin)).

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