

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 22 November 2016

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Resources and People Services)

SUBJECT: Delivering Excellence and Equity

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the Scottish Government's Education Delivery Plan Delivering Excellence and Equity which sets out the steps the Scottish Government will take to achieve improvements in both excellence and equity through closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- 1.2 To inform the Committee of the Empowering teachers, parents and communities to achieve Excellence and Equity in Education Governance Review.
- 1.3 To seek the Committee's agreement to provide an East Lothian Council response to the Governance Review to help shape future proposals for the governance of Scottish education.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
 - i) note the contents of this report;
 - ii) note that a range of consultation activities will be undertaken to gather the views of key stakeholders;
 - iii) agree to delegate to the Head of Education, in consultation with the Education Convener, that East Lothian Council will provide a response to the Governance Review as outlined in paragraph 3.10 to help shape future proposals for the governance of Scottish education.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Scottish Government commissioned the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to undertake a policy review of

Scottish education. The purpose was to inform the ongoing development of education policy, practice and leadership in Scotland, by providing an independent review of the direction of Curriculum for Excellence and emerging impacts seen in quality and equity in Scottish schooling.

- 3.2 The Improving Schools in Scotland: An OECD Perspective report published December 2015 set out 12 key recommendations to improve excellence and equity in Scottish education. The OECD believes that these recommendations can help move Curriculum for Excellence and the Scottish system to be among those leading the world. The OECD state that Curriculum for Excellence needs to be less managed from the centre and become a more dynamic, highly equitable curriculum being built constantly in schools, networks and communities with a strengthened “middle” in a vision of collective responsibility and multi-layered governance.
- 3.3 The National Improvement Framework published by the Scottish Government January 2016 sets out to address one of the key issues identified by the OECD. The Scottish Government’s Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education, A Delivery Plan for Scotland published June 2016 builds on the work contained within the National Improvement Framework and addresses the recommendations set out in the OECD review.
- 3.4 The Delivery Plan identifies three core aims under which priorities and actions are grouped. The three core aims are:
 - A Relentless Focus on Closing the Attainment Gap,
 - A Curriculum which Delivers for Children and Teachers, and
 - Empowering our Teachers, Head Teachers, Practitioners, Parents Communities and Children and Young People.

A Relentless Focus on Closing the Attainment Gap

- 3.5 In its ambition to close the attainment gap: the Scottish Government sets out a range of actions, including expanding the reach, scope and investment of the Scottish Attainment Challenge to make progress in closing the attainment gap. These actions include a proposal to increase the hours of early learning and childcare to 1140 hours per year by 2020. The Scottish Government also sets out a proposal to allocate the additional £100 million per annum that will be raised each year from Council Tax reforms directly to schools from financial year 2017-2018. Our latest understanding is that the proposed funding mechanism for the distribution of this additional funding will be based on the numbers of children in primary school and young people in S1 to S3 who meet eligibility for free school meals (FSM). The new funding is expected to reach around 95% of schools in Scotland.

A Curriculum which Delivers for Children and Teachers

- 3.6 The “Tackling Bureaucracy” report 2013 set out a number of recommendations and actions to be taken at a national, local and school level to address concerns around over-assessment and bureaucratic arrangements in planning learning, teaching and assessment. These recommendations have still to be fully implemented across every local authority. Education Scotland conducted a review of CfE workload, visiting every local authority across Scotland to determine progress made and actions being taken forward to address unnecessary bureaucracy and workload. Education Scotland reported that East Lothian Council provides support and guidance that places reasonable workload demands on its staff
- 3.7 Education Scotland published a National Statement providing key messages about what teachers and practitioners are expected to do to effectively plan learning, teaching and assessment. This Statement clarifies key information on the curriculum framework within which they are expected to teach. East Lothian Council is supporting schools to take forward this new guidance through newly formed Curriculum Development Groups.

Empowering our Teachers, Head Teachers, Practitioners, Parents Communities and Children and Young People

- 3.8 Empowering teachers, parents and communities to achieve excellence and equity in education - a Governance Review published by the Scottish Government September 2016 will examine the system changes required to devolve decision making and funding directly to schools and communities. The review seeks views on the governance of education in Scotland and how the Scottish Government can further empower teachers, practitioners, parents, schools and early learning and childcare settings. Responses should reach the Scottish Government Consultation Hub by 6 January 2017.
- 3.9 Currently, legal responsibilities for delivering education and raising standards sit largely with local authorities. The Scottish Government seeks to address this by extending to individual schools responsibilities that currently sit with local authorities and to allocate more resources directly to Head Teachers. The Scottish Government’s intention is to introduce a new Education Bill in the second year of Parliament to extend legal responsibilities for delivering education and raising standards to individual schools. Building on the responses to the Governance Review, a consultation on a Bill will be held early in 2017.
- 3.10 East Lothian Council’s education service is engaging actively with all key stakeholders to inform its response to the Governance Review and to help shape future proposals for the governance of Scottish education.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no immediate direct policy implications associated with this report. Pending the outcome of the Governance Review, any future policy implications will be the subject of a future report to Committee.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and no negative impacts have been identified.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - none
6.2 Personnel - none
6.3 Other - none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education A delivery Plan for Scotland <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00502222.pdf>
- 7.2 Empowering Teachers, parents and Communities to Achieve Excellence and Equity in Education A Governance Review <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/empowering-schools/a-governance-review>

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