

## **EDUCATION, LEARNING & LEISURE COMMITTEE - 23 MAY 2013**

### **UP-DATE ON POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR ABERDEENSHIRE EDUCATION, LEARNING AND LEISURE SERVICE**

#### **1. Recommendations**

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1.1 Review the contents of this report.**
- 1.2 Approve the continuation of the Policy Framework Strategy Group (PFSG) to oversee the policy framework for the Education Learning and Leisure (EL&L) Services.**
- 1.3 Approve the PFSG action plan for the review and development of EL&L Services' policies.**

#### **2. Background / Discussion**

- 2.1 A policy framework brings together the guiding principles, policy commitments and long term goals that form the basis of policies and procedures which support the operation of the Service. A report was presented to EL&L Committee on 30 August which approved the Policy Framework Strategy Group (PFSG) to oversee the policy framework implementation.
- 2.2 The PFSG has co-ordinated the development of the seven policy statements (Appendix 1) which gives the framework for all of the EL&L policies:
  - Sustainable Communities & Economics
  - Culture and Leadership
  - Developing Systems, Structure and Staff Development
  - Effective Resources Management
  - Improving Learning
  - Planning and Performance
  - Promoting Inclusion
- 2.3 The PFSG has produced guidance for reviewing existing and developing new policies. This includes a policy checklist, template and flowchart. This guidance has been updated to include the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).
- 2.4 An Education, Learning & Leisure Action Plan for policy review and development has been produced (Appendix 2). This details the next steps in the process and identifies a Lead Officer for each policy statement area. Each policy Lead Officer has responsibility for servicing or developing their policy area, with the PFSG having overall responsibility for maintaining and carrying out the action plan.

2.5 The Head of Finance and the Monitoring Officer within Corporate Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and have no comments to make.

### **3. Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications**

3.1 An equality impact is not required because this report is for information on the policy framework. EIAs will be considered for all new or existing policies within the framework.

3.2 There are no direct staffing or financial implications arising from this report.

**Maria Walker**  
**Director of Education, Learning & Leisure**

Report prepared by: Wilf Weir, Head of Policy & Resources (EL&L)  
Fiona Cruickshanks, Quality Improvement Officer

May 2013

## **Education, Learning and Leisure: Culture and Leadership Policy statement 2012**

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### **Rationale**

An aim of the Service is to ensure that our culture and leadership provides a shared vision that inspires and promotes continuous improvement at all levels and for all members of the community.

In Aberdeenshire, best culture is described as being open, honest, fair and respectful. Best leadership is described as consistent, communicated, concise and collegiate.

It is recognised that leadership is important to Education, Learning and Leisure for effective service delivery and that the qualities of best culture are dynamic and should be shared with all.

### **Guiding Principles**

Our culture and leadership policy is linked closely to other Aberdeenshire and national policies.

The best culture and leadership policy should be based on:

- An inclusive community
- High quality leadership at all levels
- Statutory, national and local requirements

### **Outcomes**

- A working environment where people are supported, valued and respected
- Confident, focused and competent individuals that are empowered to lead
- Ambitious, innovative and forward thinking people
- High quality consultation, openness and communication
- A shared understanding of people and their diverse roles and responsibilities

These outcomes meet statutory, national and local requirements.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

All colleagues have a responsibility for building a culture of leadership that encourages mutual, professional development.

## **Education, Learning and Leisure: Effective Resources Management Policy statement 2012**

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### **Rationale**

Aberdeenshire Council aims to ensure the allocation of resource policies in an effective, efficient and robust manner. Transparency of allocation is led by identified need and best value principles. Allocations will respond flexibly to local and national requirements.

Aberdeenshire Council pledges that available resources will be allocated as fairly as possible to meet need identified through our Quality Improvement process.

### **Guiding Principles**

Allocating our resources effectively is linked closely to other Aberdeenshire Council and national policies:

- Resources should be allocated in an open and transparent manner and decisions taken following appropriate collegiate discussions
- A balance is required between nationally set standards and sensitivity to local need
- Flexibility is required within a central framework as statutory requirements meet local needs
- Employee empowerment and accountability in all aspects of resource and asset management is paramount
- Changes to resources, whenever possible, should be well-planned and timely with adequate consultation
- The use of resources should be maximised at all times
- Management of risk is central to the effective delivery of resources

### **Outcomes**

- Effective decision making on resource allocation at all levels
- Effective and efficient allocation of resources
- Matching resources to identified need
- Effective partnership working to enhance resource provision
- Good governance of resource management and allocation
- Effective engagement with national partners in the active pursuit of external funding to meet and enhance resource provision

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

All employees will be responsible for maximising the use of resources within the service, ensuring support, monitoring and appropriate training is given.

## **Education, Learning and Leisure: Sustainable Communities & Economies**

### **Policy statement 2012**

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#### **Rationale**

Aberdeenshire Council will support communities to identify and achieve a high quality of life with improved socio-economic prospects.

We will work with committed partners in the community and other key agencies to ensure common goals are achieved.

Services will be prioritised on a clearly identified needs and demand-led basis, which will be evidenced in appropriate service strategies and service plan.

This policy supports the principles of increased social returns on investment, employment and retention of local spend.

#### **Guiding Principles**

Developing sustainable communities and economies is linked closely to other strategic documents within Aberdeenshire Council, as well as nationally.

It is envisaged that the vehicles for delivering on this objective will be Service strategies.

However, it is accepted that:

- There should be a balance to be struck between locally adopted strategies and national documents /frameworks.
- There should be a need to develop particular skills both in the community and within the council.
- Community empowerment and leadership is paramount in terms of achieving objectives.
- Equity, fairness and respect are key principles that underpin this policy.
- Partnership working with communities, stakeholders and external funding agencies will be key in achieving outcomes expected.

#### **Outcomes**

- Proactive and ambitious communities which have confidence in the support infrastructure
- Communities which are skilled, competent and resourceful, with an understanding of Aberdeenshire Council support and shared responsibility.
- A sense of community, place, pride and identity
- Improved quality of life, economic expectations and opportunities.
- Enhanced local environments and place-making agendas
- Integrated cross-sector and cross-service working to benefit local communities

#### **Roles & Responsibilities**

All employees have a role to play in creating a climate which encourages inward investment and maximises resources by working with volunteers and key partners.

## **Education, Learning and Leisure: Promoting Inclusion**

### **Policy statement 2012**

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#### **Rationale**

This policy statement takes forward Aberdeenshire Council's vision of inclusion and equality which is inherent in all policies, procedures and practices takes account of related legal contexts and which promotes the dignity of all individuals through the values of:

- openness, honesty and integrity;
- fairness, understanding and compassion;
- mutual trust, tolerance and respect.

Being inclusive means thinking and planning to take account of the circumstances of individuals, groups and communities in relation to their opportunities for participation.

Barriers to participation will be removed wherever possible or alternative measures implemented to enhance opportunities for learning throughout life.

#### **Guiding principles**

Aberdeenshire Council should:

- Place the inclusion of all groups and individuals in society at the heart of all policies
- Formulate policies which promote inclusion and value diversity
- Address discrimination and barriers to access
- Provide active intervention and support at crucial stages

#### **Outcomes**

The main outcomes arising from this policy are:

- Access to appropriate lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Targetted measures to enable everyone to become successful responsible, confident, contributing and valued citizens
- Participation and achievement that are maximised, valued, recognised and celebrated

#### **Roles and responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of individuals and groups at all levels of Aberdeenshire Council to promote a culture of inclusion.

# Education, Learning and Leisure: Improving Learning

## Policy Statement

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### Rationale

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to improving learning to meet the demands of a continually changing society. Education can transform lives by developing the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to support all learners to achieve their aspirations. The core business of the Education Learning and Leisure Service (E, L & L) is to improve quality of life through learning and achievement. The aim of a Learning and Teaching Policy for Aberdeenshire is to support all those engaged in delivering learning experiences to provide the very best service and to improve opportunities for all.

Participation in lifelong learning:

- Provides enjoyment and personal fulfilment
- Contributes to better physical and mental well-being
- Improves employment opportunities
- Increases confidence, ability to participate fully and have influence in the wider community

### Guiding Principles

Aberdeenshire E L & L should provide:

- Effective learning, teaching and assessment practices matched to the needs of all learners
- A curriculum which aligns with the seven principles of curriculum design
- A broad general education and a senior phase appropriate to the needs of learners and local contexts
- Resources to support Getting it Right for Every Child and Young Person (GIRFEC) and Aberdeenshire's Inclusion Policy
- Support for partnerships, collegiality and professional learning which has a positive impact on learners
- New technologies in learning, appropriate learning environments and best value, through effective resource management

Aberdeenshire is committed to providing learning and teaching which:

- Is engaging and active within the context of positive learner – teacher relationships
- Provides opportunities for learners to collaborate and share learning
- Delivers appropriate pace and challenge
- Shares expectations and standards including clear learning intentions and success criteria
- Provides accurate and timely feedback including peer and self evaluation to support learners to understand their own learning
- Is responsive to the different ways in which learners learn and progress
- Promotes equality and celebrates diversity

# Education, Learning and Leisure: Planning and Performance

## Policy statement 2012

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### Rationale

Aberdeenshire Council Education, Learning and Leisure Service serves a large population covering a wide geographical area with a substantial budget and approximately 10,000 employees.

In order to best serve our residents, our visitors, our children and young people and our staff, it is imperative that the council has effective and robust planning and performance management procedures in place.

Planning and performance policies should clearly set out our approaches to:

- Strategic and operational planning
- Quality assurance and improvement
- Management and monitoring of performance

### Guiding Principles

Improvement planning should be based on the following:

- A clear vision of the outcomes to be delivered and a flexible, forward-looking strategy for achieving these.
- A culture within which all staff and volunteers take responsibility for improvement.
- A commitment to engage with a range of stakeholders and partners as part of the improvement process.
- An evidence-based approach to identifying future priorities.
- Support for staff through professional learning opportunities, encouraging a culture of learning and development.
- An open and transparent approach to managing and reporting performance.

### Outcomes

- A range of effective quality assurance procedures.
- Relevant performance measures and systems which link strategy with outcomes.
- Evidence showing improved performance reflected in effective arrangements for reporting performance.
- Evaluation by service users used to inform planning.
- A strategic approach to planning for improvement.

### Roles and Responsibilities

- Senior managers should promote a culture of excellence and maintain a focus on performance delivery.
- Managers and leaders should lead a dynamic process of planning, reflection, performance management and evaluation.
- It is the responsibility of all employees to engage in the processes which relate to planning for improvement.

# Education, Learning and Leisure: Systems, Structure and Staff Development

## Policy statement 2012

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### Rationale

Systems, structure and staff development within the Education, Learning and Leisure service are:

- the procedures and tools which enable management of and access to information
- the organisational structures and methods of communication within the Service and wider council
- high quality professional learning for all staff within available resources and in relation to annual reviews and service priorities.

Aberdeenshire Council aims to ensure a consistent approach to all policy documents, in terms of format and language used.

Policies should be easily accessible to all stakeholders, including all employees and the wider community, and should be organised and titled in such a way that information is easy and quick to locate.

### Guiding Principles

- Systems should be logical, transparent and open and linked to legislation and the Single Outcome Agreement.
- Policies should be regularly reviewed, updated and subject to consultation with any changes clearly communicated.
- It should be clear who to contact for further information on each policy.
- The organisational structures of the Education, Learning and Leisure service should be flexible, transparent, logical, accessible and relevant.
- Staff development is a two way process and both the employee and the Service have responsibilities in the process.
- All employees should have an entitlement to Corporate and Service induction.
- If an employee moves to another Service, the review processes should be linked.

### Outcomes

- Development of a range of effective professional learning opportunities
- Relevant performance measures systems and structures in place which link outcomes with strategy
- Evidence showing improved performance.
- Evaluation by service users to inform planning and improvement strategies.
- A strategic approach to planning for improvement.

### Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that current policies are followed at all times. Employees should notify the relevant colleague where a policy requires reviewing.

**EDUCATION, LEARNING & LEISURE POLICY ACTION PLAN 2013/14**

**Appendix 2**

| <b>TITLE</b>  | <b>AVAILABILITY</b> | <b>NEXT STEP</b>   | <b>LEAD OFFICER</b>              |
|---|---------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Promoting a Culture of Leadership                     | Work in Progress    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft produced and to be discussed by group members teams May/June 2013</li> <li>• Draft finalised June 2013</li> <li>• To PFSG September 2013</li> <li>• Consultation October/November 2013</li> <li>• SMT December 2013</li> <li>• EL&amp;L Committee 2014</li> </ul>   | Elaine Duffy/ Fiona Cruickshanks |
| HT Recruitment & Selection Learning & Teaching Policy | Work In Progress    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To go to Area Committees</li> <li>• Learning &amp; Teaching Group producing draft policy</li> <li>• To PFSG October 2013</li> <li>• SMT November 2013</li> <li>• EL&amp;L Committee 2014</li> </ul>   | Andrew Ritchie<br>Helen Shanks   |
| Modern Languages Policy                               | Work in progress    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working group to be established May/June 2013</li> <li>• Draft interim policy to be developed – start date August 2013</li> </ul>   | Sheila Marr                      |
| Assessment Policy                                     | Work in progress    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment Group producing draft policy May 2013</li> <li>• Draft policy finalised July 2013</li> <li>• To PFSG September 2013</li> <li>• Consultation October/November 2013</li> <li>• SMT December 2013</li> <li>• EL&amp;L Committee 2014</li> </ul>   | Helen Shanks/Gordon Lennon       |
| Learning through Technologies                         | To be developed     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation work in progress May 2013</li> <li>• Policy development to begin August 2013</li> <li>• EL&amp;L Committee 2014</li> </ul>  | Jim McLean                       |
| Literacy Policy                                       | To be developed     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft policy being finalised</li> <li>• SMT June 2013</li> <li>• EL&amp;L Committee August 2013</li> </ul>  | Vicky Roberts                    |
| Numeracy Policy                                       | To be developed     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working group establish</li> <li>• Briefing Paper to SMT 27 May 2013 re 3 year Action Plan</li> </ul>   | Audrey Gregor                    |
| Inclusion Policy and Framework                        | Work in progress    | Launch October 2013  | Pauline Stephen                  |
| Enhanced Provision Policy and Practice                | Work in progress    | Phone 2 Review Outcomes to EL&L Committee October 2013   | Pauline Stephen                  |
| School Discipline and the Use of Exclusion            | Available           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of current policy and guidance underway across Aberdeenshire</li> </ul>  | Audrey Hendry                    |
| Anti-Bullying Policy                                  | Work in progress    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek approval from EL&amp;L Committee March 2013</li> <li>• Awareness raising within EL&amp;L establishments April 2013</li> <li>• Advertise for Youth Commissioners, establish Advisory Board May 2013</li> <li>• Select Youth Commissioners June 2013</li> <li>• Initial meetings – training and team building July 2013</li> </ul> | Audrey Hendry                    |

|                             |                  |   |               |
|-----------------------------|------------------|---|---------------|
|                             |                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly meetings to plan and prepare consultation process Term 1 Aug 2013</li> <li>• Carry out consultation re policy Term 2 Oct 2013</li> <li>• Review data and prepare new policy recommendations Term 3 Jan 2014</li> <li>• Present evidence and recommendations to EL&amp;L Committee Mar 2014</li> <li>• Launch new policy Apr 2014</li> <li>• Policy Review Apr 2015</li> </ul> |               |
| Attendance                  | Work in progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHT Working Group carrying out review of current guidance May 2013</li> <li>• Draft revised policy expected September 2013</li> </ul>  | Audrey Hendry |
| Quality Assurance Framework | Work in progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To SMT 27 May 2013</li> <li>• Integrated service self-evaluation being piloted. Report due May/June 2013</li> <li>• Schools Quality Assurance Group developing guidance with briefing paper due to go to SMT</li> </ul>  | Kay Gwynne    |