



COSLA

EC&YP Executive Group Item 4

Education, Children and Young People Strategic Plan – November 2016

The COSLA Constitution contains four key principles which are intended to enhance the status and position of local government as part of the governance of Scotland. The principles are as follows:

- **Local Democracy must be empowered**
Local government needs an unequivocal place in Scotland's constitutional future
- **Services should be integrated and not centralised**
Power must be brought closer to communities not centralised
- **There should be a focus on outcomes not inputs**
All parts of government must plan for and resource the outcomes that communities want
- **Local choice should be defended and local accountability strengthened**
Excellent public services must be connected to the daily lives of communities

The purpose of this strategic plan is to provide an opportunity for the Executive Group to scrutinise the work of COSLA to ensure that it is consistent with the above principles.

Key to the Plan

Amber – current progress

(Green) – progress at November 2016

(New) - workstream that has changed significantly or was not present in the last iteration of the plan

Complete – workstream this is complete and will be removed from the workplan

Strategic Objective 1 – Local service provision is strengthened, accountable to local people and improves outcomes for children				
Outcomes	Work streams	Update on work stream	Political Priority	Progress
1. Local authorities are in a position to modernise and maintain a high quality school and pre-school estate	We will through contact with local authorities, SG and SFT keep a watching brief on implementation of Schools for the Future Programme. We will also, with ADES, influence SFT's work on the early year's estate to ensure that it is consistent with local government' position on early years policy.	See agenda item for on Early Learning and Childcare. We have sought an update from Scottish Futures Trust on the work they are leading to look at the infrastructure needs of each council in terms of the expansion, which so far we have not received. We will continue to press for an early meeting to discuss this issue.	Medium	Amber
2. Local government's position on education service delivery is supported and strengthened, with national policy clearly reflecting the views of local authorities.	We will work to strengthen local government delivery of school and pre-school education. This will include work to positively state the benefits delivered by local government for education, but also to respond to Government policy. This work will include an ongoing response to the 2015 OECD report on the curriculum for excellence and the theme of a strengthened 'middle' to Scottish education. We will, after the election, work to establish a joint COSLA/Ministerial improvement board for education and will report to members on progress.	See agenda item on the Education Governance Review. The LG position is being developed in partnership with officers, advisers and trade union colleagues. However, there is significant concern that the key role played by local authorities in delivering education to our communities is at risk and our response to the Education Governance Review Consultation will be key in lobbying for our position.	High	Amber

	<p>We will support and co-chair with the Minister for Learning and Skills the Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (SAGRABIS).</p>	<p>John Swinney the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills co-chairs SAGRABIS with Councillor Primrose. The most recent meeting took place on 18 October 2016 and there is a paper on the agenda relating to the monitoring of the risk of weapons in schools.</p> <p>The 3 yearly Behaviour in Schools research project was discussed and some of the union members raised concerns that reductions in support staff were impacting on disengagement and disruptive behaviour. The final report is likely to be published in early February 2017.</p> <p>There was also a presentation by Stonewall Scotland and LGBT Youth who say there is a lack of understanding around the repeal of Section 28 which took place 16 years ago. They wish to see all new teachers receive diversity training by 2017 and are developing guidance which should be available by March 2017.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Green (No Change)</p>
	<p>We will ensure that local government's position on 1 + 2 language policy is taken on board and the policy is funded for future years.</p>	<p>COSLA Officers continue to participate in the Languages Strategic Implementation Group (SIG) whose membership includes unions, teacher education providers, Education Scotland, SCILT, ADES, Scottish Government and the GTCS. This group is looking at how it can offer further assistance to local authorities to facilitate full implementation of the policy by 2021.</p> <p>In previous years a survey has been conducted by Scottish Government and Education Scotland to gather information on the progress local authorities are making. COSLA Officers are in discussions with Scottish Government on the content of a survey of activity in 2016/17.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Amber (No Change)</p>
	<p>We will attend the strategic board for teacher education and ensure that its work consistently supports delivery of wider education policy.</p>	<p>The last meeting of the Strategic Board took place at the end of October. The Board has agreed previously that the workforce planning process should be strengthened in two key ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firstly, the statistical model which projects student intake levels will now be supported by additional vacancies data supplied by local authorities. The vacancy survey was carried out in September with a letter signed jointly by Government and COSLA. All 32 councils submitted responses. Initial analysis suggests the survey has identified approximately 700-800 vacancies but further work will be done to clarify that position. This information will be used to support further refinement of the teacher workforce 	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Green (No Change)</p>

		<p>planning model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondly, that there should be earlier meetings of Teacher Workforce Planning Advisory Group in advance of a final meeting in December. A meeting of this group took place in late October and the data from the survey was discussed. Government officials have acknowledged that further work is needed to refine how teacher workforce planning is better aligned to local circumstances and will be discussing this with the universities involved in teacher training. As previously mentioned, the final analysis will continue to be undertaken directly after the census results are published in December. 		
4. Local government has a clear position on the future early years' policy, including any further expansion for early learning and childcare.	We will work to develop a policy position on the future expansion of early learning and childcare. We will also develop a response to Government's policy of 1140 hours and to other, allied initiatives, such as degree qualified staff in nurseries in areas of deprivation.	See agenda item on Early Learning and Childcare	High	Amber
	We will monitor the percentage uptake up Free School meals provision for all P1-P3 pupils to ensure that LAs have sufficient resources to deliver the policy. We will also work with Scottish Government on future eligibility criteria for FSM in preparation for the introduction of Universal Credit	<p>The last monitoring undertaken on uptake by P1-3 pupils was in the latter half of 2015. At that time, returns did not indicate that overall there had been an increase beyond that estimated by SG.</p> <p>We have held initial meetings with SG on this matter as we understand that this beginning to be raised by parents in receipt of Universal Credit. Given changes in the arrangement on Universal Credit implemented recently, we have asked SG to prepare a brief advice note for councils on how to deal with enquiries by parents and we await sight of the draft guide. Colleagues dealing with Welfare Reform issues are in contact with SG to pursue this issue. At this time, we have not been provided with any sight of this draft guidance and will pursue with SG.</p>	Medium	Amber (No Change)

Strategic Objective 2 – Local government is supported by policy, legislation and resources to tackle inequality

Outcomes	Work streams	Update on work stream	Political Priority	Progress
1. Educational attainment and closing the gap in attainment between highest and lowest achievers is at the top of Government's agenda, and is improved by the coordinated work of local and Scottish Government.	We will work to establish more coordination on effort to improve attainment. This will include the development of data collection from the National Improvement Framework and ensuring that the attainment challenge develops in line with wishes of local government.	Attainment challenge authorities continue to work with schools to improve the attainment gap. The SG proposal to amend the council tax charge for bands E-H and use these funds for the attainment challenge continues to be a key concern. President David O'Neill wrote to the Cabinet Secretary setting out the concern of Leaders as agreed at their September meeting.	High	Amber (No Change)
2. Local and Scottish Government's collective response to child poverty is well coordinated and takes on board the wishes and expertise of local authorities	We will work to develop a coordinated local government response to child poverty and will ensure that this is taken on board by Government at the Ministerial Advisory Group.	See agenda item on Child Poverty	High	Green (No change)
3. Local government is in a good position to support young people into sustained, quality employment	We work with Government and SLAED on Scottish Employer Recruitment Incentive	Implementation of SERI is now an operational matter for local authorities following a pause on this at the end of last year. As such, the initiative started again from 1 April 2016 to 31 January 2017 and has a much sharper focus on improving the job prospects of young people who face the greatest barriers to employment. There are no further updates at this stage. We have been working with Government on some legacy issues stemming from the former Youth Employment Scotland fund, and we would expect to discuss employability with relevant new Ministers at some point in the near future. This work stream is also related to the agenda item on the Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.	High	Green (No change)
	We will work with Government and professional associations on the implementation of the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce. This will include work to lobby on the apprenticeship levy by	See agenda item on Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.	High	Green (No change)

	the UK Government.			
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Strategic Objective 3 – Local government is able to protect children, is a good corporate parent and provides high quality support for children with a disability or additional support need

Outcomes	Work streams	Update on work streams	Political Priority	Progress
<p>1. New, improved and sustainable models for children's services are developed and commissioned in line with local government's focus on outcomes</p>	<p>We will ensure that the Executive Group is informed on the operation and future of the national framework contracts for secure, residential and foster care.</p>	<p>See agenda item on General Updates.</p> <p>The new framework for the National Foster Care Contract tender documentation was published in September and was returned in October 2016 to enable the award of the new framework by 25 March 2017. The Children's Residential Framework Contract that was established in August 2014 will run until March 2018.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Green (No change)</p>
	<p>We will work with Government to promote strategic commissioning at the local and national level, including in the implementation of the Doran review for children with complex additional support needs. We will also keep members updated as required on issues arising from ASL provision and on policy affecting young carers.</p>	<p>The final statutory annual report by Ministers on implementation of the ASL Act was published in March. This year the report considers implementation of the Act in relation to mental health in schools. As happens every year, Ministers are under a requirement to publish, as part of the report, information about expenditure on ASL provision. A copy of the report is available on the Scottish Government's website: http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00497314.pdf</p> <p>Work on national commissioning for children with complex support needs (Doran review) continues although as we reported in September the pace of work is slower than hoped.</p> <p>We are also keeping a watching brief on developments on Government's work on realigning children's services. We hope to be able to say more about this at a future meeting.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Green (No change)</p>
	<p>COSLA will work with Social Work Scotland and Scottish Government</p>	<p>See agenda item on the child protection improvement programme</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Green (No change)</p>

	to raise awareness and promote the protection of children. We will work with partners on the establishment of a new child protection improvement service within centre for excellence for looked after children (CELCIS).			
2. Local and national policy for looked after children and youth justice continue to improve and deliver benefits for children and young people.	We will work with Government and SWS on policy related to looked after children. This will include monitoring of resource implication, corporate parenting and working on implementing changes to aftercare and continuing care.	Following the announcement of a review of care by the First Minister in October, we have had a first initial meeting with SG officers. They advised that this was a long term piece of work but that COSLA would be key partners in this matter going forwards.	Medium	Green (No change)
	We will work with Government and Social Work Scotland to ensure the successful implementation of our agreement on kinship care allowances and that we develop a sustainable longer term position which responds to the introduction of universal credit.	We will work with the Scottish Government and SWS to develop a new model for kinship care over the forthcoming months that is satisfactory from a local government perspective.	High	Green (No change)
	We will work to ensure that local government influences the work and considerations of the new Youth Justice Board and the wider youth justice agenda.	We will attend the next meeting of the Youth Justice Board on 8 December 2016.	Medium	Green (No change)
	We will work to ensure that practical issues identified by local authorities are taken on board by SSSC and SG during implementation of Level 9 qualifications for all residential care staff	A Government led group looking at issues relating to the introduction of the Level 9 qualification began meeting in May. The most recent meeting took place in August and discussions relating to this work were due to be focused on communications and workforce planning. COSLA's Employers team will also be involved in these discussion, as will a representative from SPDS. Key points arising from the August meeting still highlight the key concerns arising from the discussion:	Medium	Amber

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The costs which could be as much as £4200 per candidate.• Backfill issues, including cover costs for study leave• Costs associated with redeployment/release of employees who are unable to complete the degree due to capability and who require to be redeployed etc.• The impact on the cost of commissioned and contracted services and the likelihood that these costs will be passed onto employers• Lack of clarity around costs and how the degree will be funded and how this links to councils' budget position for 2017/18 and beyond. SG have indicated that monies are likely to be available, however how much this will be and how it will be allocated has not been decided.		
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Key to the Plan

Amber – current progress

(Green) – progress at November 2015

New) - workstream that has changed significantly or was not present in the last iteration of the plan

Complete – workstream this is complete and will be removed from the workplan

- **Low** No contention over the issue
No negative media risks

- **Medium** Low level tension in national/local positions
There are potential consequences for the public reputation of Local Government
There is potential for negative media coverage of the issue
There is a potential but manageable conflict of interests between Councils
There are financial implications for Local Government

- **High** There are divergent/polarised positions between the Scottish Government and Local Government
There is a substantial risk to the relationship between the Scottish Government and Local Government
There is an imminent risk to Local Government's reputation
There are substantial financial implications for Local Government
There is strong internal conflict between Councils over the issue

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