

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 04 JUNE 2024

ANGUS SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE – INVESTMENT REQUEST

KELLY MCINTOSH, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

1. ABSTRACT

This report seeks approval for one-off investment to establish a small project team to progress the exploration and delivery of opportunities for improving the educational benefits and best value provided by the Angus learning estate.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES

Council Plan 2023-28

- We will support children, young people and adults to access appropriate opportunities which allow them to progress in their learning.
- We will deliver our statutory obligations and core functions, tailored to suit our available resources and making best use of our data/performance information.

Angus Schools for the Future Programme.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Approves the allocation of funding of up to £240,000 for the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning to establish a project team in the Education and Lifelong Learning directorate to progress the exploration and delivery of opportunities for improving the educational benefits and best value provided by the Angus learning estate;
- (ii) Approves that this request for funding be met from the £1.5 million Spend to Save allocation which was earmarked in the Council's Reserves as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process;
- (iii) Notes the expectation that this investment will enable options for educational and financial benefits to be identified for consideration by members; and
- (iv) Notes that a proposed consultation programme will be brought before Family, Education and Justice Committee by the end of 2024, including an outline of the educational benefits and potential financial benefits noting that any proposals which are subject to a formal consultation process cannot guarantee specific outcomes until they are concluded.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 As agreed by the Children and Learning Committee ([Report 160/23](#) refers), the Angus Council learning estate is managed by Education and Lifelong Learning (ELL) in accordance with the following framework:

- Capacity;
- Condition and Suitability;
- Best Value.

These principles are underpinned by the council-wide prioritisation of ensuring children, young people and adults have access to appropriate opportunities to progress in their learning.

- 4.2 As part of ongoing work to manage the Angus learning estate, potential opportunities have been identified to adapt and improve the learning estate, to ensure the needs of all children and young people are appropriately met. Delivery of improved educational benefits is central, in conjunction with considering the best value use of resources. These opportunities relate to reviewing the Early Learning and Childcare offer and the continuum of provision to meet additional support needs in Angus.
- 4.3 The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 sets out the requirement for local authorities to develop strong, accountable consultation processes in relation to changes to school provision in a local area. The 2010 Act applies to a wide range of changes to school estates (see [Schedule 1](#) for further details). There is an expectation that robust pre-consultation takes place to support the development of opportunities relating to school provision. Information gathered through the pre-consultation process should inform the development of formal proposals and in turn the statutory consultation process that is required to be undertaken prior to any decision being made.

5. CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 In order to fully explore the opportunities identified in paragraph 4.2, there is a requirement to plan and deliver a consultation programme. This will initially involve pre-consultation to engage with local communities which would be followed by statutory consultation if firm proposals are developed and agreed.
- 5.2 Prior experience of school consultations in Angus gives an indication of the time and people resources required to undertake high quality engagement. There is insufficient capacity within the Council to develop this project, without additional resources.

6. PROPOSALS

- 6.1 To enable this work to be progressed, it is proposed that a temporary multi-disciplinary project team is established consisting of existing council officers and supplemented by two additional fixed-term posts. This team will over the next three years fully explore and develop the opportunities to improve the educational benefits and opportunities for best value provided through the council's learning estate. An early priority for the team, if established, will be to develop educational benefits statements to underpin all exploratory work. To provide the temporary, additional staff resource required to undertake this work a request is made for one-off investment of up to £240,000.
- 6.2 If the request for additional funding is approved, Members are also asked to note that the project team will develop a proposed consultation programme to be brought before Family, Education and Justice Committee after the summer recess.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 As noted in Section 6, a request is made for investment of up to £240,000. The indicative expenditure profile is as follows:

Financial Year	Expenditure
2024-25	£90,000
2025-26	£120,000
2026-27	£30,000
TOTAL	£240,000

- 7.2 The majority of the expenditure is expected to be on staff costs. Options are being explored for the most appropriate way to establish the project team, including the use of temporary contracts and the potential to secure secondees with the required skills and experience from other local authorities. These options will be progressed in accordance with Angus Council's workforce policies and procedures.
- 7.3 The expectation is that the proposed investment of £240,000 will enable options for educational benefits and potential financial benefits to be identified for consideration by members. This investment is therefore being proposed with best value in mind and on a spend to save basis

given the pressures on the Council's finances. Further work is required to establish what the options for change may be. It is not therefore possible at this stage to be definitive on the level of financial benefits which may be achieved.

- 7.4 In view of the expectation that the proposed £240,000 investment will deliver potential financial benefit of at least an equivalent amount it is recommended that this be funded from the £1.5 million Spend to Save allocation which was earmarked in the Council's Reserves as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process. Report 65/24 refers.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 This report contributes to CORR0002 – Transforming for the Future.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

- 10.1 A screening assessment has been undertaken and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required for the following reason(s): it does not impact on people and as such is technical in nature.

11. CONSULTATION

- 11.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance and the Director of Legal, Governance and Change as well as the wider Corporate Leadership Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report. There will be further consultation if these proposals are approved.

NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

[Report 160/23](#)

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