

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET - 16 DECEMBER 2009

UPDATE ON POST OF SCHOOLS' ALCOHOL EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR

Report by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update cabinet on progress and activity in relation to the post of Schools' Alcohol Education Co-ordinator.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will recall that following the development of the East Ayrshire Community Planning Alcohol and Drugs Pledge in April of 2008, and given the significant impact that alcohol has on individuals, families and communities, Cabinet, at its meeting on 4 March 2009, approved the post of Schools' Alcohol Education Co-ordinator. The post was advertised and was filled on 1st June.
- 2.2 The successful appointee has been seconded for a period of 23 months from Cumnock Academy, where she held the post of Principal Teacher of Guidance. Her substantive post was backfilled in the interim by a teacher from the academy.
- 2.3 The Schools' Alcohol Education Co-ordinator's remit includes the development of an evidence based, comprehensive and progressive Personal and Social Education (PSE) Programme on Substance Misuse for pupils S1 to S6. This programme will ensure there is a consistent message being given to all our young people. The programme has a focus on young people from aged 14-18. However links will be made during the course of the programme with primary schools, especially at key transition stages.

3. PROGRESS TO DATE

- 3.1 Since being appointed the alcohol co-ordinator has conducted research at a local level. 500 pupils, S1 to S6, from a variety of our secondary schools, were given questionnaires relating to alcohol, drugs, tobacco and PSE. A total of 450 responses were received and the data is currently being analysed by NHS Ayrshire and Arran Addiction Services. This partnership approach means that materials being devised on substance

misuse will be adapted to suit the local needs of pupils within particular areas of East Ayrshire.

- 3.2 The alcohol co-ordinator has also been involved in work with the University of Edinburgh, Health Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) regarding devising a framework for schools to use in the development of materials for Health and Wellbeing. The checklist will allow schools to focus on a variety of factors from resources to teaching methodology. It is anticipated that this checklist will tie in with HMIE Quality Indicators. This development ensures that East Ayrshire Council is now at the forefront of this important agenda.
- 3.3 A Peer Education programme on substance misuse is currently being piloted in James Hamilton Academy. S6 peer educators have been researching drugs, alcohol and tobacco. Workshop sessions from a variety of partners, including Fresh Ayrshire, Addiction Services, Trading Standards, Social Work, Peer Education and The Centre for Confidence and Wellbeing, are currently being delivered to senior pupils. It is anticipated that pupils will then prepare lesson plans and materials to teach to S1 pupils within their own school and also to primary 7 pupils in their learning community. The programme is being evaluated and if it proves successful, this peer education programme will be rolled out to other schools within East Ayrshire Council.
- 3.4 In terms of educational resources on substance misuse, a joint approach will be taken. The alcohol co-ordinator will be working with a variety of partners in the production of an education pack. This pack will take a holistic approach and input will be apparent on drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sexual health, risky behaviour, mental, social and emotional health and Hepatitis C. The course will be aligned with the experiences and outcomes of Health and Wellbeing in A Curriculum for Excellence. Staff training, for teaching and non teaching staff, will be provided not only on the educational pack, but also on substance misuse and sexual health. East Ayrshire has taken an innovative approach and have combined SHARE (sexual health) and substance misuse training. This is the first combined training of its kind.

4. CELEBRATING SUCCESS

- 4.1 In May of this year, 54 third year pupils from Doon Academy participated in a pilot Alcohol Awareness Programme run by the British Institute of Innkeepers (BII). The BII Schools Project was developed to help raise awareness of alcohol issues amongst children and young adults. BIIAB (British Institute of Innkeepers Awarding Body) is the dedicated awarding body for the licensed retail sector.

- 4.2 The British Institute of Innkeepers (BII) Scottish Certificate in Alcohol Awareness (SCAA) meets the need for alcohol education in the Personal and Social Education area of the school curriculum.
- 4.3 The certificate covers key subject areas including: The effects of alcohol on social, emotional and physical health, the dangers of alcohol, alcohol and the law, responsible drinking and how the license trade contributes to the local and national economy.
- 4.4 The BII SCAA pilot has been well received by pupils, parents, teachers and members of the local community. At present we have another pilot running in Loudoun Academy and it is hoped that if this proves successful, then there is scope to roll out the project to all nine secondary schools across the authority.
- 4.5 The dance group FLAVA, semi-finalists from the TV show Britain's Got Talent, arrived in East Ayrshire in October. FLAVA promote safety and responsibility, raise awareness of drug and alcohol related crime and help to promote self expression and communication skills. More Choices More Chances and Looked After pupils were given the opportunity to participate in dance workshops over a period of two days. Pupils from all secondary schools within East Ayrshire Council participated and the event was a huge success. Not only did pupils learn new dance moves, they also developed their communication skills, self esteem and confidence.

5. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The budget for the post and associated resources is funded from NHS Ayrshire and Arran's allocation to the Community Planning Partnership. As a result there is no direct cost to the Council for the post or associated activities linked to the post.

7. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The post of Alcohol Education Co-ordinator was established as part of the alcohol and drugs pledge, and supports the aims of the promoting lifelong learning and improving health and wellbeing elements of the community plan.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There is a risk that school time spent on 'substance use education' may impact on the time available for other curriculum priorities. However, the structures and systems currently being established should ensure that the highest levels of quality substance misuse education are maintained.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Cabinet is asked to:
- (i) Note the progress made in educating and informing our young people on alcohol and drug misuse in East Ayrshire;
 - (ii) Recognise that East Ayrshire Council is now at the forefront of developing national guidance around the substance misuse element within A Curriculum for Excellence;
 - (iii) Invite the Executive Director to further update Cabinet in 12 months and;
 - (iv) Otherwise, note the content of this report.

Graham Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

AS/AC/MM
30 November 2009

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Cabinet 4 March 2009 – School Alcohol Education Co-ordinator.

Members wishing further information should contact Andrew Sutherland, Head of Service: Schools, Tel: (01563) 576126.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER

Alison Crawford, Schools Alcohol Education Co-ordinator