

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 4 MARCH 2009

## SCHOOLS' ALCOHOL EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR

### Report by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

#### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update members on recent developments to tackle alcohol misuse in East Ayrshire.
- 1.2 To seek approval for an initial two year appointment of a Schools' Alcohol Education Co-ordinator to lead and manage the substance misuse element of the Health and Wellbeing curricular area within the Curriculum for Excellence.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Statistics recently released by Scottish Government indicate that in Scotland 'pure alcohol' consumption (100% alcohol) was nearly 50 million litres in 2007. This equates to an annual intake of 11.8 litres of 'pure alcohol' for everyone over 16.
- 2.2 The level of alcohol use in Scotland is considerably higher than in England and Wales. In these countries alcohol consumption averages 9.9 litres per annum. Scotland has the eighth highest consumption of 'pure alcohol' in the world.
- 2.3 To tackle the rising levels of alcohol use, East Ayrshire Council has adopted a preventative focus in its work with children and young people.
- 2.4 The preventative focus is being progressed in schools through the Curriculum for Excellence which identifies 'health and wellbeing' as fundamental to effective learning and teaching. Within this curricular area the programmes cover misuse of drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- 2.5 Currently, education around drugs, alcohol and tobacco is taught as part of the Personal and Social Education programme (PSE) and focuses on knowledge and understanding. However, within the new health and wellbeing curricular area, acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding about health and wellbeing is not enough. The aim is that children and young people should develop a commitment to promoting their own health and wellbeing throughout their lives.
- 2.6 Given that approaches to learning and teaching need to emphasise participation in experiences as well as achievement of outcomes, activities need to be appropriate to the needs and stage of development of each child and young person. In order to achieve this, it is proposed to employ a teaching specialist to support schools achieve this aim. The resources for this have been allocated from the Community Planning Partnership alcohol allocation from NHS Ayrshire and Arran.

### **3. COMMUNITY PLANNING ALCOHOL AND DRUGS PLEDGE**

- 3.1 Members will be aware of the alcohol and drugs pledge that commits community planning partners to actively address issues relating to alcohol and drugs. This pledge, whilst recognising the need to support those currently experiencing problems in relation to drug and alcohol use emphasises the need to reduce the subsequent impact of alcohol and drug problems by adopting a preventative focus.
- 3.2 Given the significant impact that alcohol has on Scotland and East Ayrshire, Community Planning Partners agreed to pay particular attention to the problems associated with alcohol.
- 3.3 The significant concern around alcohol nationally saw Scottish Government release significant funding to NHS boards to address alcohol problems in their areas.
- 3.4 Following consultation with NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Community Planning Partners in East Ayrshire were allocated £250,000 per year until 2011. Five proposals for use of this funding were developed and supported by Community Planning Partners. These five proposals which include the appointment of a Schools' Alcohol Education Co-ordinator have a significant focus on the support of young people and in preventing further alcohol misuse by older people. All five proposals are noted below:
  - Schools' Alcohol Education Co-ordinator
  - Alcohol support for children and young people
  - New Start for young people offending due to alcohol misuse
  - Multi agency pre referral group for children at risk due to parental alcohol misuse
  - Support for older people experiencing alcohol problems

The five proposals are at an advanced stage of development and should be operational from April 2009.

- 3.5 To ensure that resource allocations are fully utilised, partners are examining additional opportunities for spend that will contribute towards and support the preventative approach to tackling alcohol misuse in East Ayrshire.

### **4. ALCOHOL EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The proposed Alcohol Education Co-ordinator would seek to ensure that all East Ayrshire Council's secondary establishments have a comprehensive alcohol education programme as part of the health and wellbeing curricular area within the Curriculum for Excellence.
- 4.2 In order to meet the outcomes for young people inherent within the Curriculum for Excellence, the proposed Alcohol Education Co-ordinator would require to work with individual schools to ensure that programmes offered are robust, comprehensive, and based on best available evidence of effectiveness.
- 4.3 The Co-ordinator would also be required to support teaching colleagues via the delivery of training programmes and guidance on using resources as they become available.
- 4.4 In ensuring that quality programmes are delivered to children and young people, it is proposed that the post is advertised at a Principal Teacher (guidance) level. This short term promoted post may provide career progression for teachers with a particular interest in guidance.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Alcohol Education Co-ordinator post, as well as any additional associated activities, is being fully funded until 2011 via the alcohol allocation from NHS Ayrshire and Arran to the Community Planning Partnership.

## **6. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no policy or legal implications.

## **7. COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Community Planning alcohol and drugs pledge has established alcohol misuse as a central theme across all community planning themes.
- 7.2 As a significant indicator of poor health outcomes in East Ayrshire, action on alcohol has a significant focus within the Single Outcome Agreement.

## **8. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Nil

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Cabinet is asked to:
- i) note the work being carried out by the Community Planning Partnership to address alcohol related activity;
  - ii) support the appointment of a Schools' Alcohol Education Co-ordinator for an initial two year period; and
  - iii) otherwise, note the content of the report.

Graham Short  
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

18 February 2009  
AS/EO'N

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: Andrew Sutherland, Head of Schools