

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 8 NOVEMBER 2005

### COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the Education Committee of (i) the outcome of the inspection of Community Learning and Development Services in the Cumnock area; (ii) update members on the implementation of the Best Value Review and seek recommendations accordingly.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) is empowered under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to inspect the further education provision of local authorities. Under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act (2000) HMIE also inspects the education functions of local authorities. The scope of inspections of Community Learning and Development accordingly covers the work of local authorities themselves, and the work contracted by them to community, voluntary and public sector partners.
- 2.2 The basis for inspections is set out in the self evaluation framework published by HMIE in May 2002 as "*How Good Is Our Community Learning and Development*"?
- 2.3 The inspection of Community Learning and Development (CLD) in the Cumnock area took place in April 2005. The report focuses on the delivery of services and the operational management of CLD in the Cumnock area. The strategic management of Community Learning and Development is addressed in the pilot inspection of the education functions of East Ayrshire Council.

#### 3. KEY STRENGTHS AND MAIN POINTS FOR ACTION

- 3.1 A number of key strengths were identified in the report. Overall, CLD provided a good service to the communities in the Cumnock area. Commended was the variety of consultation methods with young people and partnership working which had resulted in a number of innovative and effective approaches to providing services within the area. It was identified that these services were having an impact on combating social exclusion.
- 3.2 The report set out that the local management of CLD was playing a key role in maintaining and developing services in a period of change for the service.

### **3.3 Key strengths identified in the report are:**

- The commitment of staff to the local area
- The use of the “*Dialogue Youth*” initiative in the area. This was having a positive impact in developing active citizenship amongst young people through effective engagement, consultation and empowerment
- The focus on literacies work for local residents
- The imaginative use of new resources such as the “*CHIP Van*” to address issues of health and wellbeing
- The good and effective training offered for community representatives
- The development of good collaborative working to build community partnerships

### **3.4 Main points for action**

The report highlighted a number of areas for further development. This included the challenge facing community facilities to be appropriate for learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There also required to be more imaginative and creative approaches to both youth work and adult learning that would provide participants with sufficient challenge and raise aspirations.

#### **The main points for action identified are:**

- The CLD Team and its partners should improve the co-ordination of services and the provision of quality information and advice for young people in the Cumnock area
- The CLD Team and its partners should develop creative and challenging programmes with clear educational outcomes within youth and adult provision in the Cumnock area
- East Ayrshire Council should address the access, reception, security and health and safety aspects of its facilities in the Cumnock area
- The CLD Team should further develop and embed its staff development, planning and self evaluation systems in the Cumnock area

**3.5** The Service, along with its partners is currently developing an action plan to take forward the main recommendations contained within the report.

## **4. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEST VALUE REVIEW**

**4.1** One of the recommendations arising from the Best Value Review was a new team structure. That team structure is now in place and there are three geographic teams covering the Authority. Senior Practitioners are also in post to support the operational management of the service and to secure continuous improvement.

**4.2** The post of temporary Team Leader (Partnerships) remains in the structure and is funded through Adult Literacy and Numeracy funding to support the key role which the Community Learning and Development Partnership plays in

East Ayrshire to support the strategic direction for all community learning and development services and specifically in relation to adult literacy and numeracy.

- 4.3** Members have separately been issued with information regarding the new structure for the Service.
- 4.4** One of the new issues emerging from the structure relates to the development of local Community Learning Plans. Community Learning Plans have been developed in all local committee areas with the exception of the Kilmarnock Central Local Committee. Community Learning Plans have proved to be very successful in bringing together statutory, voluntary and community representatives to plan for, and develop local learning opportunities in local areas. Although Community Learning Plans are developed on the basis of partnership working with key stakeholders, the lead remains with Community Learning and Development Service.
- 4.5** The new structure has reduced the number of teams in the Authority and subsequently the number of Team Leaders. This has required the service, along with the Community Learning and Development Partnership, to review its arrangements for the development of Community Learning Plans.
- 4.6** To reflect the new structure it is proposed to reduce the number of Community Learning Plans from seven to three Community Learning Plans plus two thematic Community Learning Plans, namely one for young people and one for adults with a disability. This will require a different approach to Community Learning Plans to ensure that local communities needs are both reflected and easily identified by the local community. In addition, in line with the recommendations in "*Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities*", Community Learning Plans will be renamed Community Learning and Development Plans.

## **5. FINANCIAL/PERSONAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1** None.

## **6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1** The Community Learning and Development Service delivers services in line with the priorities as set out in the Community Plan.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1** It is recommended that Members of the Education Committee:
- (i) note the outcome of the HMIE inspection of Community Learning and Development Services in the Cumnock area;
  - (ii) approve the recommendations regarding Community Learning Plans;

- (iii) ask the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services to provide an update to Local Committees regarding Community Learning Plans;
- (iv) ask the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services to inform Cumnock Area Local Committee of the outcome of the inspection of Community Learning and Development Services in the area; and
- (v) otherwise note the content of the report.

John Mulgrew  
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

17 October 2005  
KG/SR

#### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. HMIE Inspection of Standards and Quality in Community Learning and Development in the Cumnock Area, East Ayrshire Council : 16 September 2005
2. Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities: Scottish Executive – February 2004.

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR**