

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 13 SEPTEMBER 2005

RESPONSE TO SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE DOCUMENTS “LEADERSHIP – A DISCUSSION PAPER” AND “STANDARD FOR HEADSHIP – A CONSULTATION PAPER”

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To inform the Education Committee of the Authority's response to a discussion paper from the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) entitled “Leadership – A Discussion Paper” (Scottish Executive, June 2005) and “Standard for Headship – A Consultation Paper” (Scottish Executive, June 2005).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Leadership Discussion Paper provides an update on the Scottish Executive's thinking on the leadership agenda set out in *Ambitious Excellent Schools*. It reflects the current stage of development of a significant initiative which will progress over 2005 and beyond. It provides some context, offers some guiding ideas and a framework for action over the next several months which the Executive hopes will encourage dialogue and discussion in the educational community.
- 2.2** A series of discussions forums have been set up to provide an opportunity for feedback. East Ayrshire Council will be represented at a forum in Glasgow on 12th September 2005.
- 2.3** The original Standard for Headship was published in 1998. The Standard could be achieved through the completion of a course of study and practical activity comprising the Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH). In recognition of the developments in leadership outlined above, a draft revised Standard has recently been issued for consultation.
- 2.4** The Standard for Headship Consultation Paper outlines the proposed key elements of professionalism and expertise required of those who lead and manage our schools. It defines the professional actions required of effective headteachers, acknowledges the changing context in which they operate and takes account of the many changes which they face.

3. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON LEADERSHIP A DISCUSSION PAPER

- 3.1** The Scottish Executive welcomes comments and responses to the Leadership Paper. The authority response is attached as Appendix 1.

3.2 The approach the Scottish Executive intends to take on the leadership agenda has developed considerably since the publication of *Ambitious Excellent Schools* which proposed the formation of a leadership academy. It is now recognised that the work of developing leadership broadly across the Scottish Education system involves many people, managing a variety of projects, harnessing resources and expertise nationally and internationally. It involves extending the good work that is underway in schools, local authorities and in collaboration with other partners, as well as accessing new thinking and approaches. *We welcome this approach and wish the East Ayrshire Leadership and Management Programme to be recognised at national level.*

3.3 The Executive now describe the leadership agenda in terms of building a broad programme of leadership development within Scottish education rather than establishing a single institution such as a 'leadership academy.' This broad programme will aim to bring coherence and connection to the many projects and initiatives already underway as well as provide a context for future innovation. *We welcome this approach.*

4. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON STANDARD FOR HEADSHIP

4.1 At present, the SQH is the only route to the Standard for Headship and it had been the intention of the Scottish Executive to require that all Head Teachers appointed after 1 August 2005 to have met, or to have been working to achieve, the Standard for Headship. The authority was not satisfied with this approach.

Several senior managers from East Ayrshire schools have successfully achieved the SQH qualification and there are a number currently participating on the course. However, it has been evident for some time that there have not been sufficient candidates coming through the SQH route at a national level to make this a viable single route to meeting the Standard, or for it to be reasonable or practical to require all new appointees who have not completed the SQH to embark on a course of study at the same time as they take on their new and additional duties.

4.2 The authority welcomed the proposals within the consultation paper and the full response is attached as Appendix 2. These proposals are in line with the recent development work in the area of Leadership and Management within East Ayrshire. The key points that we welcome within the consultation are:

- That the SQH will not be the only recognised route to achieving the Standard. We welcome proposals for flexible approaches to reaching the Standard.
- Within East Ayrshire, we wish to further develop our leadership and management programme and would hope that this programme would contribute formally to meeting the revised Standard.

5. LEGAL/POLICY/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Education Committee is recommended to:

- (i) approve the response to “Leadership - A Discussion Paper”
- (ii) approve the response to “Standard for Headship – A Consultation Paper”
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

JMcC/GH/EO’N

25 August 2005

List of Background Papers

1. Ambitious, Excellent Schools. Leadership – a discussion paper. SEED, 2005
2. “Standard for Headship – a consultation paper” Scottish Executive, June 2005
3. Education Committee Paper - Response to Consultation on The “Review of Standard for School Leadership (Headship)” – 25 May 2004

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**East Ayrshire Council
Department of Educational and Social Services**

**Ambitious, Excellent Schools
Leadership – a discussion paper
(Scottish Executive, 2005)**

Background

This discussion paper provides an update on the Scottish Executive's thinking on the leadership agenda set out in *Ambitious, Excellent Schools*. It reflects the current stage of development of this significant initiative which will progress over 2005 and beyond. A series of discussion forums have been set up to provide an opportunity for contributions from the educational community. East Ayrshire Council will be represented by ten educational leaders, at various stages of their career, at such a forum on 12th September, 2005.

The Scottish Executive's approach to leadership development has moved on considerably since the publication of *Ambitious Excellent Schools*, which proposed the formation of a leadership academy. A more appropriate way forward now appears to be to build a broad programme of leadership development within Scottish Education, rather than the establishment of one single institution. In developing such a programme, the Scottish Executive is aiming to bring coherence and connection to many of the projects already under way. In addition, it is hoped that such development work will provide a context for future innovation, such as the initiative with the Hunter Foundation to establish a team to develop leadership excellence.

Creating a focus for the Programme of Leadership Development

The discussion paper provides guiding ideas which the Executive thinks can help focus thinking for programmes of leadership development. These guiding ideas reflect East Ayrshire's own approach to leadership development, as outlined below.

Last session, two members of staff were commissioned to undertake development work in the area of Leadership and Management. These commissions resulted in a wide range of development work which complements, and contributes to, national developments.

East Ayrshire's Leadership and Management Development programme now provides CPD opportunities for staff who aspire to leadership posts as well as those already in middle and senior leadership. We continue to encourage and support teachers who choose to undertake the Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH), helping participants develop a practical and critical understanding of educational leadership challenges. Support from the Hunter Foundation has enabled a large number of senior managers from East Ayrshire to take part in the Head Teacher Leadership Academy in Skye, helping to develop leadership capacity that serves young people in Scottish Schools and the wider educational community.

Focusing on Leadership Priorities

The discussion paper suggests that a key aim of the broad programme would be to identify leadership development priorities, generate innovation and the introduction of new approaches. Currently the Executive sees priorities in these areas as:

- Developing for Headship and other key leadership roles
- Leading school transformation and improvement (perhaps with other community partners)
- Leading and managing in an integrated children's services context
- Leading teaching and learning as the "leading learner" or "leading professional"
- Leading broader educational communities

East Ayrshire welcomes the focus on these areas of priority. Learning Partnerships are now well established across the Authority, presenting challenges in leading and managing wider educational communities, and ensuring relevant CPD in this area.

Strengthening and Extending Leadership Development Activity

The Scottish Executive sees a growing consensus about the methods and approaches which contribute to effective educational leadership development. The document identifies approaches which should be included in leadership programmes designed to contribute to a general strengthening of leadership development. Many of the suggested approaches have already been established in East Ayrshire Council, as detailed below.

Collaborative networks which focus on the development of practice, problem solving and shared learning

Regular Head Teacher Meetings are arranged for Head Teachers in all sectors. Main agenda items at each meeting ensure sharing of good practice and focus on specific educational items. Curriculum Management Meetings (CMMs) are well established as a support mechanism and sharing of good practice for secondary Principal Teachers. Network meetings are also in existence for Mentors and Supporters of Probationers and Staff Development Co-ordinators. Last session, similar collaborative networks were established for Primary Principal Teachers and Chartered Teachers. This session, networks will be established for Depute Head Teachers.

Coaching and mentoring opportunities

As previously stated, a large number of senior managers from East Ayrshire have taken part in the Head Teacher Leadership Academy in Skye. Participation in the Leadership Academy provided participants with a valuable opportunity to step back, review, reflect and develop personal leadership practice. This experience included intensive training in non-directive coaching, providing participants with the necessary skills to enable them to use non-directive coaching strategies with their own school staff.

This session, training in coaching has been organised for interested Head Teachers, Depute Head Teachers and Principal Teachers. This will enable staff to develop coaching techniques for use with school staff, including probationers and students.

The increase in numbers of students and probationers in the Authority has focused thinking on coaching and mentoring in this area. In order to develop practice in this area, two members of staff have been seconded to take this forward on an Authority wide basis.

The recently appointed CPD Co-ordinators are involved in national developments in coaching and mentoring, ensuring that the Authority are at the forefront of developments and are kept up-to-date with most recent thinking in this fast developing area.

Formal programmes and frameworks designed to support progression and career development for educational professionals

East Ayrshire's Leadership and Management Programme is now in place. The programme supports staff at all levels, from aspiring Principal Teachers to established Head Teachers. The programme is progressive in nature, detailing CPD opportunities and programmes at all career stages. We would hope that in the near future, we will be able to gain formal accreditation for our Leadership and Management Programme, enabling participants to use the programme as part of an academic study route.

Research projects which contribute to new learning

The Authority recognises the important role research has to play in the development of new learning. In light of this, a twilight session has been arranged this session, when a member of staff from the GTC will speak to leaders and managers about carrying out small scale research projects within the Authority.

Seminars, master classes, conferences and speaker programmes which provide access to thought leadership and leading practice

The importance of providing leaders with high quality speakers for our leaders, in order to provide up-to-date thinking, the sharing of good practice at an international level and the opportunity to participate in high level educational debate, is reflected in East Ayrshire practice. World-renowned educationalists such as Michael Fullan, Andy Hargreaves and Tony Buzan are regular contributors to our conference programme.

Organising and Developing Resources to Support the Programme

In order to support the programme, the Executive aims to extend collaboration among the key groups who contribute to the development of leadership capacity in Scottish schools and to create a shared agenda for action. Although still in the early stages of development, the Executive plan to focus on:

- Minimising formal structure or central resource to only what is necessary
- Fostering communication, creating connection and learning transfer
- Promoting, supporting and contributing to the forming of professional networks

Whilst the Authority welcomes the autonomy to develop its own programmes, we feel it is important for developments at National level, particularly in the national

leadership team, to be shared widely. If Local Authorities are developing programmes independently of each other, we feel that it is vital to establish leadership networks to facilitate the sharing of good practice nationwide.

Actions on the Ambitious, Excellent Schools Leadership Agenda

The discussion paper describes ongoing areas of work in:

- developing coaching and mentoring opportunities
- enhancing leadership development opportunities and developing leadership practice
- developing collaborative networks
- developing expertise and resources for the wider educational community
- promoting dialogue and discussion
- growing skills, developing resources, investing in development methods and practice

East Ayrshire has been at the forefront of national developments in many of the above areas and would welcome the opportunity to continue to be involved at national level.

The Executive also recognises that there is a significant amount of activity at local authority level involving other groups with an interest in leadership development which is consistent with the thinking and approaches described in the discussion paper. The Executive is keen to continue to identify and connect this pattern of activity and creating new connections across this work. The newly appointed CPD Co-ordinators have an important role to play to ensure that the on-going good work in the Authority is recognised at National level and that good relationships continue to be developed with other Local Authority Co-ordinators, ensuring the sharing of good practice.

In closing, East Ayrshire Council considers the discussion paper to be an accurate reflection of the leadership agenda at national level. The paper also endorses the on-going work within the Authority, providing reassurance that we are developing in line with national guidance.

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES

RESPONSE TO A “STANDARD FOR HEADSHIP CONSULTATION PAPER”

1. FLEXIBLE APPROACHES TO ACHIEVING THE STANDARD

East Ayrshire Council welcomes the revised Standard. Over the course of last session, a Leadership and Management Development programme has been established, and will be implemented from the start of this session. The Standard for Headship is an integral part of this programme. The Authority is keen to develop future leaders and the achievement of the Standard for Headship plays an important part of this. The Authority supports and encourages staff to undertake the current Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH), from main grade teacher level and above.

Until now, the authority has been concerned that the SQH has been the only recognised route to the Standard. This current route is not appropriate for all aspirant leaders and we welcome proposals in the consultation paper for flexible approaches to reaching the Standard.

In East Ayrshire, we are keen to develop flexible approaches to meeting the Standard for Headship and this revised document should assist us in our developments. The current SQH programme requires candidates to reflect critically and read widely and we would ensure that more flexible approaches would continue to develop these skills. In light of these developments, we would wish our leadership and management programme to be available for accreditation under the revised Standard in order that appropriate professional development is undertaken by our teachers. It is important that Local Authorities continue to have a sense of ownership of the process at local level.

2. PROFESSIONAL ACTIONS AND CONTRIBUTORY ELEMENTS

We consider the Professional Actions identified in the revised Standard to be appropriate. The Contributory Elements provide valuable statements which further exemplify how head teachers can demonstrate ability in the professional actions. In addition to these, the document also contains valuable appendices to assist in assessment procedures. Whilst it is clearly stated that this information is not intended for use as a checklist, there will be a temptation on the part of school staff and local authorities to develop this in this very way – this must be resisted.

3. SELF-EVALUATION

National guidance suggests that there will be a formal self-evaluation module available to all teachers after Year 6 of their career. This will focus on self-reflection, similar to Chartered Teacher module 1. At this stage, teachers

would have three choices in terms of career planning: leadership, chartered teacher or enhancing classroom practice. The Professional Review and Development (PRD) process would support decision making. In East Ayrshire, we would very much welcome the introduction of such a module. Our Leadership and Management Development Programme encourages all teachers to become reflective practitioners and the introduction of such a module would support this process.

The introduction of a Leadership Development Plan (LDP) will also assist teachers in decision making between SQH or the flexible programme. Again, East Ayrshire Council would welcome this as it would marry with our current PRD process.

4. POINTS FOR CLARIFICATION

Whilst the draft document is a helpful and concise guide, there are some areas which we feel require increased levels of detail. We would welcome clear guidance on plans to introduce the revised Standard at National level. Initial information on the assessment procedures for the flexible route are still vague and the Authority would welcome further information in this area. Clarity is also required on the role of existing Local Authority Field Assessors.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we hope that the revised Standard will provide sufficient flexibility to allow us a local authority to continue to develop our leadership and management programme to best meet the needs of our teachers and schools and to develop high standards of leadership within East Ayrshire.